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GLOTTAL STOP AND PHONOSTYLISTIC VARIETY IN GERMAN MEDIA SPEECH

Summary. The article presents a comprehensive analysis of phonostylistic variation in German media discourse, taking into account the interaction of prosodic, articulatory and communicative factors. The object of the study is the sounding speech of news anchors, presenters of informational programs and talk show moderators, which is considered as a representation of the contemporary supraregional pronunciation standard of the German language. The aim of the study is to identify the regularities of glottal stop realization and to determine its dependence on the degree of stress, speech tempo and type of discourse.

The methodological framework of the research includes phonetic analysis, quantitative processing of empirical data, elements of auditory analysis, as well as the interpretation of results within modern phonostylistic approaches. It has been established that the realization of the glottal stop is gradient in nature and directly correlates with the degree of accentuation: it occurs significantly more frequently in primary stressed syllables, whereas reduction processes and coarticulatory phenomena dominate in unstressed positions.

It has been demonstrated that speech tempo functions as a key regulator of phonostylistic variation: its acceleration leads to decreased articulatory clarity, segmental elision and increased coarticulation, while slower tempo ensures greater explicitness and stability of phonetic realization. It has been determined that prepared speech (news broadcasts) is characterized by a high level of normativity, standardization and prosodic organization, whereas spontaneous speech (interviews and talk shows) demonstrates increased variability, reduction and flexibility of articulatory strategies.

The results obtained confirm that phonostylistic variation in German media discourse is a dynamic and gradient phenomenon determined by the interaction of prosodic structures, articulatory mechanisms, speech tempo and communicative conditions, which shape the realization of the pronunciation standard in different types of sounding speech.

Key words: phonostylistics, German language, media discourse, glottal stop, speech tempo, prosody, articulation, reduction, pronunciation standard.

Problem Statement. Language is increasingly viewed as a dynamic adaptive system whose structure continuously changes under the influence of communicative, cognitive, and social factors. This perspective has substantially transformed the study of phonetic variation, shifting attention from static pronunciation norms to the mechanisms governing variability in authentic speech. Within this framework, phonetic phenomena are interpreted not as random deviations from the norm but as systematic adaptations to communicative conditions, speech tempo, discourse type, and speaker intention [1; 2].

German media speech represents a particularly suitable object for investigating phonostylistic variation because it combines codified pronunciation standards with naturally occurring stylistic flexibility. News broadcasts, interviews, and talk shows differ considerably in the degree of speech preparation, communicative spontaneity, and prosodic organization, creating favorable conditions for observing pronunciation variation. One of the most sensitive indicators of such variation is the realization of the glottal stop (Glottisschlag), whose occurrence depends on stress, prosodic boundaries, speech tempo, and articulatory precision [3].

Although German pronunciation has been extensively described in phonetic literature, most studies focus either on codified pronunciation norms or on general phonetic reduction processes. Considerably less attention has been devoted to the interaction between glottal stop realization and phonostylistic variation across different types of contemporary German media discourse. At the same time, current broadcasting practice demonstrates increasing diversity in speech production, resulting from the coexistence of prepared reading, semi-prepared presentation, and spontaneous interaction.

The purpose of this study is to identify the regularities governing glottal stop realization in contemporary German media speech and to determine its dependence on syllabic stress, speech tempo, and discourse type. Particular attention is paid to the interaction between prosodic organization, articulatory variation, and communicative conditions that shape pronunciation patterns in modern German media discourse.

Analysis of Recent Research and Publications. Research on phonostylistic variation has developed at the intersection of phonetics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, and communication studies. Contemporary linguistic theory increasingly interprets pronunciation as a dynamic phenomenon whose realization depends not only on the phonological system but also on communicative conditions, speech planning, discourse type, and stylistic adaptation. This approach reflects the understanding of language as a complex adaptive system characterized by variability, self-organization, and continuous interaction between linguistic structure and language use [1; 2].

One of the principal directions of modern phonetic research concerns the relationship between pronunciation and communicative context. Functional stylistics considers speech variation as a systematic consequence of communicative purpose rather than as a deviation from linguistic norms. Functional styles are therefore understood as relatively stable systems of linguistic means that demonstrate internal variability depending on register, communicative situation, and discourse type [4; 5; 6]. Within this

framework, phonostylistics investigates how phonetic parameters change under the influence of formality, spontaneity, and speech planning.

A separate line of research focuses on speech production and articulatory reduction. Lindblom's Hyper- and Hypo-articulation (H&H) theory explains phonetic variability as an adaptive balance between articulatory effort and communicative efficiency. According to this model, slower and carefully planned speech is characterized by greater articulatory precision, whereas accelerated speech promotes reduction, coarticulation, and segmental weakening [7]. Similar conclusions have been reached by Aylett and Turk (2004), who demonstrate that speech tempo directly affects phonetic realization and prosodic organization.

Considerable attention has also been devoted to speech production models. Levelt [8] describes speaking as a multistage cognitive process involving conceptualization, formulation, and articulation. His model provides a theoretical explanation for differences between prepared and spontaneous speech, which are reflected in phonetic variability. These ideas were further developed by Koch and Oesterreicher [9], who proposed the continuum between the language of immediacy and the language of distance, emphasizing that the degree of communicative planning substantially influences linguistic realization.

Within German phonetics, the most comprehensive description of pronunciation norms is presented in *Deutsches Aussprachewörterbuch* [3]. This work remains the principal codification of Standard German pronunciation and provides detailed information on stress placement, prosodic organization, segmental realization, and glottal stop occurrence. The authors distinguish between prepared reading, semi-prepared speech, and spontaneous speaking, demonstrating that each communicative mode is characterized by specific phonetic and phonostylistic features. Their observations also indicate that glottal stop realization is influenced by prosodic boundaries, syllabic prominence, and speech tempo.

The relationship between media discourse and pronunciation has likewise attracted increasing scholarly attention. Media speech is regarded not merely as a vehicle of information transfer but as an important mechanism of social influence and language standardization. News broadcasts, interviews, and talk shows differ substantially in communicative organization and therefore represent different phonostylistic conditions [10; 11]. At the same time, the speech of professional broadcasters contributes to the dissemination of suprasegmental pronunciation standards and influences public perceptions of normative pronunciation.

Despite the extensive body of research devoted to German pronunciation, speech tempo, prosody, and media discourse, several issues remain insufficiently investigated. Existing studies primarily examine glottal stop realization either within the framework of codified pronunciation or as part of broader descriptions of connected speech. Much less attention has been paid to the interaction between glottal stop realization, speech tempo, syllabic stress, and different types of German media discourse. Furthermore, relatively few studies combine phonetic, phonostylistic, and discourse-analytical approaches within a single analytical framework.

The present study seeks to address this gap by investigating glottal stop realization as a phonostylistic parameter of contemporary German media speech. Unlike previous research, which mainly describes pronunciation norms, this study analyses

glottal stop distribution across different communicative formats and examines its interaction with stress patterns, speech tempo, and discourse type. Such an approach makes it possible to explain phonostylistic variation not only as a phonetic phenomenon but also as a communicatively motivated feature of modern German media discourse.

Aim and Objectives of the Study. The object of the study is the sounding speech of German news anchors, presenters of informational programmes, and talk show moderators, regarded as a representation of the contemporary suprasegmental pronunciation standard of the German language. The subject of the study is the realization of the glottal stop as a phonostylistic feature and its dependence on syllabic stress, speech tempo, and discourse type in contemporary German media speech. The aim of the study is to identify the regularities of glottal stop realization and to determine its dependence on the degree of stress, speech tempo, and discourse type.

To achieve this aim, the following objectives were formulated: to analyse the theoretical approaches to phonostylistic variation and glottal stop realization in contemporary phonetic research; to determine the relationship between glottal stop realization and syllabic stress; to investigate the influence of speech tempo on glottal stop realization; to compare glottal stop realization in prepared and spontaneous German media speech; to identify the phonostylistic functions of the glottal stop in contemporary German media discourse.

Main Material. Contemporary phonetic theory considers pronunciation variation as a natural consequence of the interaction between linguistic structure, communicative conditions, and speech production mechanisms. Consequently, the realization of the glottal stop should not be interpreted as a fixed articulatory feature but rather as a dynamic phenomenon whose occurrence depends on prosodic organization, speech tempo, syllabic prominence, and discourse type.

Within German phonetics, the glottal stop (*Glottisschlag*) primarily occurs before word-initial vowels and serves as an important boundary marker. However, its realization is gradient rather than categorical. Empirical observations demonstrate that its frequency decreases in unstressed syllables and in rapid connected speech, where coarticulation and reduction processes become increasingly prominent. Conversely, primary stressed syllables and carefully articulated speech favour stable glottal stop realization, contributing to clearer segmentation and greater perceptual distinctiveness [3; 6; 7].

From a phonostylistic perspective, German media discourse provides particularly favourable material for investigating these processes because it combines several modes of speech production. News broadcasts represent highly prepared reading characterized by controlled pronunciation, stable prosodic organization, and limited phonetic reduction. Interviews and talk shows, by contrast, include semi-prepared and spontaneous speech, where increased tempo, spontaneous planning, and interactive communication result in greater articulatory variability and more frequent reduction phenomena. These differences create favourable conditions for examining the distribution of the glottal stop across different phonostylistic environments.

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The theoretical assumptions outlined above are confirmed by authentic examples from contemporary German media discourse. Particular attention was paid to the realization of the glottal stop in *internal vowel junctions*, where a stressed vowel follows another vowel within the same lexical item. Unlike absolute word-initial position, these environments reveal the interaction between lexical stress, syllabic structure, and connected speech processes, making them especially relevant for phonostylistic analysis.

The collected material demonstrates that such lexical items occur regularly in contemporary German news broadcasts and informational programmes. Reports on the Russian-Ukrainian war frequently contain the words *Ukraine* and *ukrainisch*, whose standard pronunciation includes a glottal stop before the stressed vowel /i:/. Similar articulatory patterns are observed in reports concerning the Korean Peninsula, where the lexical items *Koreaner* and *koreanisch* contain a glottal onset before the stressed /a:/

vowel. Comparable realizations are also found in media reports on the Middle East, where *Schiiten* and *schiitisch* regularly occur. In addition to proper names and ethnonyms, the same phonetic pattern is characteristic of frequently used German lexical items such as *Reaktion*, *Kooperation*, and *chaotisch*, all of which exhibit an internal vowel sequence preceding a stressed syllable.

Table 1 presents representative examples of lexical items identified in contemporary German media discourse together with their phonetic transcription and the position of glottal stop realization.

The examples presented in Table 1 demonstrate that glottal stop realization in contemporary German media speech is not restricted to absolute word-initial position. It occurs systematically within lexical items containing adjacent vowels before stressed syllables, regardless of whether the words denote proper names, ethnonyms, political terminology, or general vocabulary. In prepared broadcast speech, such pronunciation contributes to clearer syllable boundaries and greater articulatory explicitness, whereas spontaneous interaction shows a higher degree of reduction and coarticulation.

These observations confirm that glottal stop realization in contemporary German media speech is not restricted to absolute word-initial position. It also occurs regularly within lexical items at internal vowel junctions preceding stressed syllables, where it performs both articulatory and prosodic functions. In prepared

Table 1

Representative lexical items with internal glottal stop realization in contemporary German media discourse

Lexeme	Phonetic form	Position of glottal stop	Representative media source
Ukraine	/ukra'ʔi:nə/	V#V	Tagesschau
ukrainisch	/ukra'ʔi:nɪʃ/	V#V	Deutsche Welle
Koreaner	/koʁe'ʔa:nə/	V#V	ZDFheute
koreanisch	/koʁe'ʔa:nɪʃ/	V#V	Tagesschau
Schiiten	/ʃi'ʔi:tn/	V#V	Deutsche Welle
schiitisch	/ʃi'ʔi:tiʃ/	V#V	Deutsche Welle
chaotisch	/ka'ʔo:tiʃ/	V#V	Tagesschau
Reaktion	/ʁe'ʔak'tsjo:n/	prefix + vowel	ARD
Kooperation	/ko'ʔopeʁa'tsjo:n/	V#V	ZDFheute

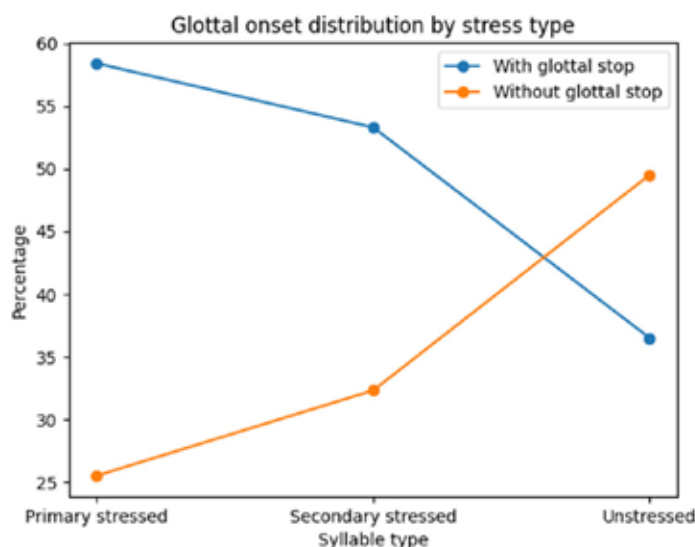


Fig. 1. Distribution of glottal stop realization across syllable types according to the degree of stress (author's empirical data)

news broadcasts, such pronunciation contributes to clearer syllable segmentation and greater perceptual distinctness, whereas spontaneous interaction demonstrates a considerably higher degree of reduction and coarticulation.

Thus, the realization of the glottal stop in German is systematically conditioned by the interaction of prosodic structure, speech tempo, syllabic stress, and communicative conditions. The empirical observations presented above are consistent with the general phonostylistic tendencies identified in the author's previous phonetic research.

Figure 1 demonstrate a clear gradient relationship between syllabic prominence and glottal stop realization. The highest frequency of glottal stop occurrence is observed in primary stressed syllables, where articulatory tension and prosodic boundary marking are strongest. In secondary stressed syllables the frequency decreases moderately, whereas unstressed syllables show a predominance of glottal stop omission, reflecting increased coarticulation and reduction processes typical of fluent speech.

The obtained results indicate that glottal stop realization is not categorical but probabilistic. Its occurrence depends on the interaction between stress, speech tempo, and communicative conditions. Consequently, glottal stop should be interpreted as a dynamic phonostylistic feature rather than as an invariant component of German pronunciation.

The findings also confirm that prepared media speech demonstrates greater articulatory stability than spontaneous interaction. Accordingly, the realization of the glottal stop may serve as one of the phonetic indicators of phonostylistic differentiation in contemporary German media discourse.

The graphical representation confirms that the realization of the glottal stop in German is systematically conditioned by prosodic structure and reflects the interaction between stress, speech tempo, and communicative context.

Conclusions. The analysis of phonostylistic variation in German media discourse has demonstrated that the realization of the glottal stop is systematically conditioned by the degree of syllabic stress. The highest frequency of glottal stop occurrence is observed in primary stressed syllables, whereas its realization decreases progressively in secondary stressed and unstressed positions.

It has been established that speech tempo constitutes a key factor influencing phonetic realization. Increased speech rate leads to segment reduction and decreased articulatory precision, while slower tempo ensures greater phonetic clarity and stability.

The study confirms that prepared speech, such as newsreading, is characterized by a higher degree of standardization and explicit phonetic realization, whereas spontaneous speech in interactive formats demonstrates increased variability and reduction processes.

Thus, phonostylistic variation in German should be interpreted as a dynamic and gradient phenomenon determined by the interaction of prosodic, articulatory, and communicative factors.

Conflict of interest: The author is a member of the journal's editorial board. To ensure the independence of the editorial process, the manuscript was handled by a designated editor who was not subordinate to the author and had no conflict of interest. The author did not participate in the selection of reviewers, the peer-review process, or the decision to publish the article. The manuscript underwent the standard double-blind peer review process.

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Фрумкіна А. Фоностилістична варіативність глотального приступу у німецькому медійному дискурсі

Анотація. У статті здійснено комплексний аналіз фоностилістичної варіативності в німецькомовному медіадискурсі з урахуванням взаємодії просодичних, артикуляційних і комунікативних чинників. Об'єктом дослідження є звучне мовлення дикторів новин, ведучих інформаційно-пізнавальних програм та модераторів ток-шоу, яке розглядається як репрезентант сучасного надрегіонального вимовного стандарту німецької мови. Метою роботи є виявлення закономірностей реалізації глотального приступу та визначення його залежності від ступеня наголосу, темпу мовлення і типу дискурсу. Методологічну основу дослідження становлять методи фонетичного аналізу, кількісної обробки емпіричних даних, елементи аудиторського аналізу, а також інтерпретація результатів у межах сучасних фоностилістичних підходів. Установлено, що реалізація глотального приступу має градієнтний характер і безпосередньо корелює зі ступенем акцентуації: у головно-наголошених складах він реалізується значно частіше, тоді як у ненаголошених позиціях домінують редукційні процеси та коартикуляційні явища. Доведено, що темп мовлення виступає ключовим регулятором фоностилістичної варіативності: його прискорення зумовлює зниження артикуляційної чіткості, елізію

окремих сегментів і посилення коартикуляції, тоді як уповільнення забезпечує підвищення експліцитності та стабільності фонетичної реалізації. Визначено, що підготовлене мовлення (новини) характеризується високим рівнем нормативності, стандартизації та просодичної впорядкованості, тоді як спонтанне мовлення (інтерв'ю, ток-шоу) демонструє підвищену варіативність, редукцію та гнучкість артикуляційних стратегій. Отримані результати підтверджують, що фоностилістична варіативність у німецькомовному медіадискурсі є динамічним і градієнтним явищем, зумовленим взаємодією просодичних структур, артикуляційних механізмів, темпу мовлення та комунікативних умов, що визначають специфіку

реалізації вимовного стандарту в різних типах звучного мовлення.

Ключові слова: фоностилістика, німецька мова, медіадискурс, глоттальний приступ, темп мовлення, звучне мовлення, просодія, артикуляція, редукція, мовний стандарт.

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