**Linguostylistic analysis of the text “Feet, dollars and inches”** (from *The Economist* print edition, April 3rd 2008)

The text is a magazine article, its style is publicistic. The aim of most publicistic texts is not only to inform readers, but to influence their way of thinking and their behaviour. The *theme* of the text is the interdependence between the height of a human being and his/her level of income.

All the elements of the *plot* of the article (exposition, conflict, complicating action, climax, falling action and denouement) serve to expose this theme. In the *exposition* we get to know the historical background of the problem – how the measuring of height was used to define the employability of a person in the Victorian epoch. The *conflict* of the text is between those who think that taller people are richer and those who believe that the height and the prosperity of a person are not connected at all. The *complicating action* of the text consists of the account of the scientific evidence for both opposing hypotheses mentioned above. The *climax* of the story is concentrated in the following sentence: ‘… the stature of society may reflect equality as well as prosperity.’ (the author directly expresses his point of view). The *falling action* is the argumentation of the statement that the stature may reflect the equality of certain society. The *denouement* of the text is in the last sentence, where the author, to make his opinion influential, gives a quotation of a famous scientist, who claims that the variation of human height is the reflection of everyone’s possibilities.

The *mood* of the story is unemotional. The *tone* is dry and matter-of-fact. This is explained by the huge number of scientific data given in the article. These data add credibility to the author’s argumentation. Nevertheless, one can find a couple of deviations from unemotional mood to:

1) pathetic mood – ‘Pale and haggard faces, lank and bony figures… boys of stunted growth, and others whose long meager legs would hardly bear their stooping bodies’;

2) humorous mood – ‘Height rises with prosperity, but at a diminishing rate.[…] Otherwise, Mr Steckel points out, Bill Gates would be a giant’.

It should be stressed that the shifts from unemotional mood are mostly seen in quotations, not in the author’s own words.

The author’s *idea* is that the height of a person influences his/her level of income only to a certain extent, but the key factors are features of character not the appearance. The *message* of the article is to persuade readers that financial success depends mostly on person’s persistence and hard work, so if one does everything to reach the aim, he/she will eventually do it.

To deliver his idea and message the author attracts the reader’s attention to his text by means of different stylistic devices. The text starts with an intertextual stylistic figure – quotation from Dickens. Later in the article the author gives several more citations of scientists (Charles Roberts, Richard Steckel, James Tanner). Such stylistic devices serve as evidence for the thoughts expressed by the author.

In the sentence ‘Indeed, by the 1870s factory owners claimed that it was they who were stooping under the burden of regulation’ we come across the emphatic construction *It was they who* which points out the complaining of the factory-owners. The word ‘*stooping’* is repeated (it was used to describe the ‘*stooping bodies’* of the children in the quotation from Dickens), and now it becomes a part of a metaphor describing the state of factory owners as they see it. Such repetition serves as the means of the cohesion of the text and proves that all the stylistic devices are dedicated to realization of the author’s aims.

We must admit that repetition is widely employed in this text. It is caused by the theme of the article – the words ‘short’, ‘tall’, ‘height’ are constantly found. The repetition of these words is widely merged with antithesis: ‘the tall and the short’, in the next paragraph we find the opposition ‘The tallest quarter of the population earns 9-10% more than the shortest quarter, according to two recent studies’. One more factor causing the high frequency of repetition is the publicistic style intertwined with elements of scientific prose, for example there are 5 instances of using the detached construction ‘on average’ and 4 instances of using the word ‘average’. Repetition is mostly used as a cohesive construct. The following words, word combinations and even proper names are repeated in adjacent paragraphs: ‘Roberts’, ‘enigma’, ‘arc’, ‘Indian’. Among other means of cohesion are introductory words and phrases, such as ‘nonetheless’, ‘on the other hand’.

As the text abounds in scientific hypotheses, arguments and conclusions, it also contains a considerable number of chiasmi:

1) ‘Later scholars have explored the economic determinants of height (rich people are taller, on average), its economic consequences (tall people are richer, on average), and the clues it gives about a society's standard of living.’;

2) ‘[…] Mr Roberts could say that the average height of 11-year-old boys was 52½ inches, but not that this boy of 52½ inches was 11.’;

3) ‘Height adds to income, income also adds to height.’.

The article is made more vivid by introducing the contextual transposition of a phrasal verb ‘to look up to’: ‘In India adults still look up to their parents. But only figuratively.’ In this case two meanings are actualized: ‘to look in upward direction as when one person is shorter in height than the other’ and ‘to have respect for’. The hint that there are two meanings to be actualized is hidden in the next sentence, which itself is an example of parcellation (its function is to attract attention to the word ‘figuratively’ and thus make the reader think about the direct and figurative meaning of the phrasal verb).

Among the stylistic figures of the text there are also two allusions. The first one is in the subtitle ‘Tall men are created equal’; it refers the reader to the Declaration of Independence. It serves to underline that all people are equal (especially in the USA, as the Declaration of Independence was written in this country) and if they are wealthy and tall, it is because they deserve it, not because of some genetic predisposition. The hint that the allusion has the sense described above is given in the sentence: ‘The grandchildren of American immigrants, for example, reach similar statures, whatever their ancestry.’

The second allusion is an intratextual allusion. The final sentence of the text is: ‘James Tanner, a giant among growth scholars, puts it this way: the great variation in human height, he writes, is “not a curve of God's errors, but of everyone's possibilities.” This phrase refers us to the third paragraph of the article: ‘This distribution was viewed by the 19th-century Belgian mathematician Adolphe Quetelet as God's “curve of error”[…]’. The function of this allusion is to provide the coherence not only of the article but also of the entire scientific discussion; this allusion also suggests that the author is sure that this final sentence is the resolution of the dispute, he supports James Tanner’s point of view.