

The Business Style

- 1) The substyle of official documents
- 2) The substyle of business letter-writing

Of all the styles it is the most conservative.

Lexical features:

- Each variety of this style (depending on the area of activity) has **its own peculiar terms and expressions**. Thus in finance we find terms like *tax revenues, income tax, VAT*. Terms and phrases like *to ratify an agreement, memorandum, pact, Charge d'affaires* are immediately recognizable as diplomatic.
- A feature common to all these varieties is the use of abbreviations and symbols. E.g. *an M.P. for a member of parliament, Gvt for government, HMS for Her Majesty's Steamship, the symbol \$ for the dollar*. Especially many of them in military documents.
- Another feature is the use of formal vocabulary (bookish words), words in their **logical dictionary meaning** (there is no room for contextual meanings, any kinds of expressive means like in the B-L Style).
- clichés, archaic forms (conjunctions): *thereby – в связи с этим, вследствие этого, therewith – с этим, с тем, к тому же; thereof – из этого, из того, herein – при сём, hereby – сим, настоящим* (e.g. *Hereby I promise – настоящим я обязуюсь*).

Syntactical features:

- Use of long complex sentences (with coordination, subordination)
- Use of passive and participial constructions

Compositional features:

Clear-cut subdivision of texts into units of information, logical arrangement of these units, order-of-priority organization of information, wide use of formal connectives (e.g. *thus, therefore: We therefore strongly reaffirm the principles and objectives stated in the agreement...*), some syntactical devices such as parallel constructions, repetition (without any emotive colouring, ... for emphatic

purposes). In an official document such as a Treaty (a political document), Charter of the United Nations.

Dear Mrs. Henderson,

We would like to apologise for the failure of our computer ordering system last week. Please be reassured that the system is now fully functional again. It is anticipated that the goods ordered will be delayed by two or three working days. The estimated arrival time for your latest order is Thursday.

We are grateful to you for reporting the defect in the ZP200 model. We are happy to announce that the defect has now been remedied.

You mention the possibility of taking goods from us 'on sale or return' at an exhibition you are organising. We can certainly confirm our interest, but we would like to request further information before we commit ourselves to a decision.

Please be advised that as of 1 May our warehouse is now open 24 hours a day.

Yours sincerely,

David Smith