

Uptalk, Vocal Fry and, Like, Totally Slang: Assessing Stylistic Trends in American Speech

TADEUSZ LEWANDOWSKI
(Opole)

In his essays on English, the American critic and intellectual Dwight Macdonald (1906-1982) wrote of the language's corruption in one of its primary homelands: the United States. In large part, Macdonald was referring to two complementary trends: the growing prevalence of slang in mass culture and everyday speech, and structural linguists' permissiveness in embracing these developments as value-neutral changes in English's evolution. As one committed to the traditional cultural standards of hierarchy and heritage, Macdonald warned that if such trends continued, the cultural climate would inevitably deteriorate and the English language would suffer an eventual massacre. To avoid this awful fate, he called for a preservation of English through the work of lexicographers, educators and professional writers, who together were to rigorously appraise linguistic novelties, determine their worth, and accept or reject changes on the basis of whether they brought greater clarity and beauty to expression. In particular, Macdonald insisted in "The String Untuned", a critique of the third edition of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, that the purpose of dictionaries stay "prescriptive", delineating proper usage rather than providing a "descriptive" function in which usage is purely recorded (Macdonald 1962). Only through these efforts, he counseled, could the rolling tide of slang be stemmed, and English retain its aesthetic status above mere definition as a means of communication.

Though Macdonald's injunctions may sound old-fashioned or arch-conservative to many today, they are nonetheless pertinent to recent linguistic

debates surrounding new stylistic conventions in American English, namely the use of *uptalk* (speaking statements with a rising note at the end, as in a question), *vocal fry* (the injection of creaky, glottal vibrations at the end of words), and the increasing appearance of slang in the US's school system. As well, the effects of technology have accompanied these tendencies, gradually cementing textural abbreviations in the American lexicon that likewise filter into standard written English as acceptable forms (Lytle 2011). Contemporary linguists have been quick to defend such changes. For instance, Professor Penny Eckert of Stanford University maintains that uptalk and even the multiple slang uses of the word *like* are legitimately employed to "achieve some kind of interactional and stylistic end" (Quenqua 2012). Some academics and commentators, however, still remain unconvinced. This paper examines uptalk and vocal fry in the larger context of American slang, detailing the claims of both supporters and detractors, and the potential for a global alteration of English through American popular culture.

Though uptalk and vocal fry are now often exercised in connection, each must be treated separately, as the former has a comparatively longer history that is thought to derive from the California "valley girl talk" of the 1980s (Couglan 2005). Uptalk, also referred to as HRT (high-rise terminal), is described as a speech pattern in which every sentence ends with a rise in pitch or carries a rising intonation, making statements sound like questions: "My name is Jacob? I am here to apply for a job?" – as opposed to – "My name is Jacob. I am here to apply for a job". It bears mentioning that aside from its present manifestation in the United States, the use of a mounting intonation contour is hardly a new phenomenon in language. Some Irish and South American dialects are marked by such rises, though they have only recently been made a feature in declarative sentences in English. The phrase uptalk was coined by Professor James Gorman in the article "Like, Uptalk?" for the *New York Times Magazine* in 1993. In it he described how teenagers and twentysomething-year-old Americans, mostly female, had appropriated the style of speaking to indicate their "cool, ironic, and detached" approach to life. He as well stressed the irritating and contagious nature of the style, opining that the affectation frequently sounded "tentative, testing, [and] oversensitive" (Gorman 1993). By this point uptalk had already been the subject of a 1991 study by the University of Pennsylvania linguist Cynthia McLemore, in which the intonation of Texas sorority members was examined to better understand its occurrence. She found that among the participants uptalk was a tool "to signal identity and group affiliation", bonding those who used it (Seaton 2001). Given its predominance, McLemore termed the spread a "dialect shift" that would engender

a fundamental change in the way Americans verbalize (Gorman 1993). There turned out to be truth to the claim, as uptalk was soon increasingly noticed not only among young women, but professionals male and female, in radio, television and film, and even in the speech of the President of the United States, George W. Bush, who was observed recurrently resorting to uptalk in his 2010 State of the Union address (Burkhalter 2010).

Though Bush (perhaps not the most stellar rhetorician in English's history) seemed to indicate uptalk's ubiquity as a mode of speech, the President was nonetheless behind the times in missing a newer element connected with its utilization: vocal fry – defined as “a form of phonation, characterized by a distinct laryngeal vibratory pattern” in the vocal cords that produces a creaky or glottal sound (Wolk, Abdelli-Beruh and Slavin 2011). Once classified as a speech impediment, it has now risen to the status of a stylistic flourish that signals one is uninterested, detached or unenthusiastic, or just *cool*. Vocal fry at the close of a sentence would sound something like this – “That’s totally interesteeaaaaang” – creating a “lazy, drawn-out effect”, as one commentator puts it (Quenqua 2012). Like uptalk, it is usually associated with young women. Scrutiny over vocal fry has lately come to the fore due to a 2011 study entitled “Habitual Use of Vocal Fry in Young Adult Female Speakers”, published in the *Journal of Voice*, in which researchers from Long Island University, New York, examined the occurrence of vocal fry in thirty-four female university students and found that two-thirds of the participants’ speech exhibited the mannerism, typically at the end of sentences (Fessenden 2011). The origin of vocal fry’s emergent prevalence is not yet precisely determined, though some posit that the likely culprit is pop culture. Vocal fry has become a standard emission in pop songs, as heard when singers such as Britney Spears and Ke\$ha attempt to hit low notes and add a stylistic ornament. It is also incessantly implemented by reality star Kim Kardashian in normal conversation (Anderson 2011). Vocal fry has also been observed in films, marking the speech of Gwyneth Paltrow and Reese Witherspoon (Quenqua 2012). It is little wonder then that teenage and college-age females, wanting to emulate their idols, have willingly adopted the speech pattern and normalized it, making it – for the moment – a gender marker (Anderson 2011). Within the pop-cult saturated world many young American women inhabit, the authors of the *Journal of Voice* study note that the employment of vocal fry is perhaps a way to fit in and gain acceptance. “Young students use it when they get together”, says Professor Nassima B. Abdelli-Beruh, “Maybe this is a social link between members of a group” (Engel

2011). To those of older generations, however, vocal fry can sound wholly grating (Anderson 2011).

Regardless of the annoyance provoked by vocal fry and uptalk, both have been integrated into American slang as a distinguishable and defined means of expression for the present generation of teenagers, and even those as old as their mid-thirties. And it is within the context of American slang that they coalesce around a number of older and newer affectations (the later inspired by technology's influence on communication), creating almost what could be loosely called a growing dialect. It has been observed that now more than ever Americans of college age are using slang – though for less than sophisticated purposes (Ren 2009). A study of college slang conducted by Professor of linguistics Connie Elbe found that the forty most common slang words overwhelmingly signaled only two main emotions: approval or disapproval. For instance, synonyms for *good* included: *cool, killer, bad, sweet, and awesome* (Lapidos 2011). Slang also often appears in the form of abbreviations for multi-syllable words, as in *ridic* for *ridiculous* (Quenqua 2012). These days, the use of such lexical items inevitably goes hand in hand with *like*, a word that has more and more peppered the sentences of young Americans since the early 1990s when it was, like uptalk, adopted from those highly influential California valley girls. *Like* was first used as a conversation filler, performing no purpose other than to give the speaker time to formulate his or (usually) her next thought. However, over the course of the last two decades *like* has taken on other functions, the two most common being as a quotative or substitution for *he/she said* – “She was *like*, ‘You’re *totally* dumb,’ and I was *like*, ‘Step off, homegirl.’” – or an expression indicating exaggeration: “I was, *like*, whoa!”. But crucially, as with uptalk and vocal fry, invoking the power of *like* most significantly signals, according to Professor Clive Upton, belonging to a group, as if to say: “I’m one of the club” (Winterman 2010). That club, naturally, boasts vocal fryers Britney Spears and Kim Kardashian as members. Both women overuse *like* on a regular basis, not to mention the ever-present *totally* and *whatever* (Quenqua 2012).

The specter of popular culture icons aside, nowadays the issue of socializing with peers is deeply connected to communication through social media, which has added its own twists to the ever-expanding lexicon of American slang. *Twitter* (which limits messages to 140 characters), *Facebook*, and particularly text messaging have given rise to a host of new abbreviations, such as *SHM* (shaking my head), *BTW* (by the way), and *IDK* (I don’t know). It is estimated that eighty-five percent of US high school students use electronic communication, a

Uptalk, Vocal Fry and, Like, Totally Slang:

TADEUSZ LEWANDOWSKI

medium that often eschews punctuation, full sentences, and even full words. This fact has not gone unnoticed by schoolteachers, who report that students regularly employ slang terms in written assignments, seemingly unaware that they do not constitute what could be termed standard written English. Reports have also surfaced of younger teachers accepting such forms, raising the question whether a large shift in English usage is occurring in America (Lytle 2011). The existence of this type of phenomenon would not be surprising, as slang words in the cyber-sphere are thought by some to have a greater chance of gaining permanency and ubiquity than the spoken word, because they “reach across age groups, demographics, cultures, and societies” (Bennett 2007).

As hinted at previously, slang forms and affectations frequently cause exasperation among those of the older generations, and critics have not sat silent with regard to the latest preponderance of linguistic change, whether it be uptalk, vocal fry, or slang abbreviations in the classroom. Together, the style has been derogatorily called “mall-speak”, which has taken on a negative, feminine connotation imbued with immaturity and even idiocy (Seaton 2001). Carmen Fought, Professor of linguistics at Pitzer College, California, has observed: “If women do something like uptalk or vocal fry, it’s immediately interpreted as insecure, emotional, or even stupid” (Quenqua 2012). For this reason, women are admonished to avoid the habit for risk of not being taken seriously. Cindy Dachuk has written that: “The use of uptalk is one of the most common elements undermining women’s credibility” due to its seemingly hesitant nature (Dachuk 2012). Author and women’s advocate Diane DiResta, meanwhile, sees no value in the trend whatsoever, labeling it “an outgrowth of our politically correct society where people tiptoe around their beliefs by monitoring their language”. She therefore encourages women to bring their voices down at the end of sentences in order to sound more commanding and authoritative (Seaton 2001).

But while uptalk and vocal fry find cause for censure among commentators and aggravate those more attuned to standard English, more serious implications for America’s scholastic future potentially loom. The growth of slang, specifically that used in electronic communication, is exerting a pronounced influence on high school students’ writing skills. Teachers have noted a “dramatic decline” in the quality of students’ writing due to social media, says Terry Wood, foreign language teacher at St. Mary’s Ryken High School in Maryland: “They do not capitalize words or use punctuation anymore. ...Even E-mails to teachers or [on] writing assignments, any word longer than one syllable is now abbreviated to one”. Though to many students this is now normal communication, the effect on their

literacy levels and personal futures could be detrimental. According to Professor Chad Lassiter of the University of Pennsylvania, who studies the development, “We’re looking at these writing skills and what I’m noticing is [that] there is miscommunication due to the fact that [students’] communication is so limited”. He notes that the problem is bursting out of the confines of high school and spilling over into college admissions essays: “Admissions officers have shared with me that a lot of the essays there’re encountering now are deeply rooted in this technological culture of cut-off sentences where you’re writing like you speak” (Lytle 2011). Such applications are inevitably rejected.

Though Lassiter sees the entire slang movement as a “dumbing down of culture” and a “broken level of communication”, many other academics and lexicographers in the linguistics and humanities communities have fully embraced uptalk, vocal fry, *like*, slang, and abbreviated social media-speak as natural and inventive modifications in the evolutionary path of the English language (Lytle 2011). In America, this “prescriptive” vs. “descriptive” divide goes back to 1961, with the appearance of the third edition of *Webster’s New International Dictionary* (which so irked Macdonald). Edited by Dr. Phillip Grove, who explicitly condemned “artificial notions of correctness”, *The Third* included thousands of entries that had formerly been categorized as slang, while giving definitions based on common usage rather than previously established meanings (Macdonald 1962). For material, the makers of *The Third* used popular magazines rather than authorities on English, provoking many critics to label the volume “a scandal”. Nonetheless, since that time the descriptive linguistic movement has largely grown unabated. Its victory can be easily observed today in the words of contemporary linguists, who laud slang unconditionally, and like Professor of English at Cedar Crest College, Carol Pulham, call the prescriptive approach “ego-centric”. “Slang is wonderful”, she continues, “It’s fast, expressive, and creative.” She further argues that: “The early function of dictionaries was to tell people how to speak. But who has the authority on language? ...If experts say a word is incorrect, and 99 percent of people use it, what is really correct?”. James Bloom, Professor of English and American Studies, seconds this opinion, stating that all language belongs in the dictionary and has equal value: “The main consideration”, in his view, “is being understood”. Communication, hence, is the only real consideration. Opponents of this view term academics such as Pulham and Bloom “lexicographers” for their relaxed attitude towards standards of traditional English, yet a fundamental shift has already occurred in their favor (Friedman 2006).

Today, of course, all dictionaries include slang. In the past slang entries had to pass the test of being in circulation for ten years, though now it has been cut to a mere four. *Webster's Colligate Dictionary Eleventh Edition*, for instance, includes 10,000 new slang entries from *gangsta* to *goth* (Friedman 2006). Amidst this wave of approbation for slang, even the constant injection of *like* has found sympathizers. John Ayto, editor of the *Oxford Dictionary of Modern Slang*, defends its use on practical grounds: "It's not lazy use of language", he claims, "that's a common fallacy among non-linguists. ... We use fillers all the time because we can't keep up highly-monitored, highly grammatical language all the time". Robert Groves, editor of *Collins Dictionary of the English Language*, concurs: "When words break out from a specific use and become commonly used in a different way, the more that use stands out." Therefore what sounds unacceptable to older ears, is untroubling to those of the younger generation (Winterman 2010). Predictable, then, is the listing of *like* in *Webster's New World College Dictionary*, defined as "apparently without meaning or syntactic function, but possibly as emphasis". The example provided – in an unwitting nod to reality star and linguistic trendsetter Paris Hilton – reads: "It's, like, hot" (Quenqua 2012). Summing up modern lexicographic perspectives on slang, Katherine Barber of *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* declares nothing less than that it should be viewed in a highly positive light: "If the kids are picking up new words and new meanings then that means that they're playing with the language". New texting abbreviations, she adds, indicate an "active role" in the progress of English (Bennet 2007).

The invention of slang and shortcuts aside, linguists following the descriptive method also express an approving view of uptalk and vocal fry. Indeed, many feel that the young women who pioneered the innovations should be lauded for affecting the English language so thoroughly, and insist that both are employed in complex ways to enhance communication (Quenqua 2012). With regard to uptalk, linguist Deborah Tannen of Georgetown University disagrees with any assessment that suggests it signals uncertainty or deference. Instead, she casts it as a marker of age and a route to social acceptance: "Teen-agers talk this way because other teen-agers talk this way and they want to sound like their peers". Professor Mark Arnoff of SUNY Stony Brook as well believes that uptalk serves a function in signifying: "I have more to say. Don't interrupt me". It can also be used to inquire whether the listener has understood the message or agrees. In her groundbreaking study, Cynthia McLemore noted that uptalk is employed as a way of "being inclusive" or highlighting new information (Gorman 1993). Penny Eckert, quoted

earlier as saying uptalk and vocal fry are rationally utilized to “achieve some kind of interactional and stylistic end”, further states that because “language changes very fast” what sounds “excessively ‘girly’” to the older generation may sound “smart, authoritative and strong” to younger peer groups. Carmen Fought, also quoted earlier admitting that uptalk might make one sound “stupid” to some, says the truth is that college age women take these “linguistic features and use them as powerful tools for building relationships” (Quenqua 2012). These mannerisms are thus not a tasteless linguistic quirk spread by popular culture, but a valuable mode of communication. It is a matter, then, of assessing the changes from an age-related perspective.

Despite such praise for uptalk, vocal fry and slang, one cannot deny the link to popular culture, the values of which can certainly be debated. It is likely, however, that the promoters of such changes in English will win simply because they have popular culture on their side. Contemporary television and film are spreading uptalk, vocal fry, and slang globally, whether through Hollywood blockbusters, talk shows, or sitcoms (Coughlan 2005). The teen movie *Clueless* (1995), for instance, was one of the main forces behind the dissemination of *Whatever...* (Lapidos 2011). Professor Abdelli-Beruh, coauthor of “Habitual Use of Vocal Fry in Young Adult Female Speakers”, has also noted that the phenomenon is now common on pop radio stations (though not those that cater to more a mature demographic) (Fessenden 2011). Uptalk, however, has in the past twenty years already traversed “the age range” and “the gender boundary” to the point where even grandparents use it (Quenqua 2012). Uptalk’s partner in crime, *like*, has crossed gender lines as well – a 2011 study found that while young people use *like* more, men now use it more than women (Quenqua 2012). All the while, such linguistic trends are becoming common in Britain, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia (Coughlan 2005) (Seaton 2001). Professors have even reported receiving emails in uptalk – “I couldn’t be in school today? I had a doctor’s appointment?” (Coughlan 2005) – and questions remain as to whether in a generation, slang and texting abbreviations will filter into American university courses and ultimately be considered normal (Lytle 2011).

Considering how the rise of new speech patterns associated with slang have begun to achieve global predominance, and how the “message intended, message received” school prevails in the fields of lexicography and the humanities, it is perhaps cogent to look back to Macdonald’s writings on English in order to both assess and bring some perspective to the linguistic transformation discussed in this paper (Friedman 2006). Macdonald, representing the old guard of English

tradition, was of course against both tendencies, and as a result appears today as a lumbering dinosaur of a prejudiced, bygone era of misguided elitism. Yet one would be remiss not to point out some of the value in his standpoint. In "The Decline and Fall of English" Macdonald described the language as not merely a simple means to transmit messages, but "an especially important part of a people's past, or culture" – "a capsule history of the race" that constitutes a tradition. Slang, mannerisms, simplifications and fillers such as *like* challenge this tradition, and without a selective, rather than permissive, approach to language, the "vague and formless" prevails. "Language does indeed change", Macdonald wrote, "but there must be some brakes and it is the function of teachers, writers and lexicographers to apply them. It is their job to make it tough for new words and usages to get into circulation so that the ones that survive will be the fittest" (Macdonald 1962). For those with an interest in the aesthetics of language, this apparently sensible attitude speaks to the possible overenthusiasm of contemporary linguists in extolling change whatever its form or direction, and as well to the temporal vetting process to which slang itself is subject. While lexicographers have been quite perspicacious with regard to recording slang in dictionaries, the effort is akin to that of Sisyphus. Slang is by nature transitory. Once recorded, it quickly finds itself out of usage as a new set of expressions (which of course must, too, be recorded) arise out of the mouths of babes to grace the pages of the next round of dictionary reissues. *Webster's Eleventh*, for example, includes the word *phat* (meaning *good*), which nowadays is all but forgotten. Slang is always novel, and old slang, when it is remembered and used, garners only opprobrium and derision among those that create the new (Friedman 2006). Nonetheless, in the realm of everyday speech and popular culture Macdonald would certainly see his personal fears realized were he alive today, though only in time will it be clear if texting abbreviations, for instance, become part of standard English. The issue seems to be then, a question of language's function. Today's American academics, in their unqualified endorsement of new trends, stress little but the value of communication patterns among peers and social groups, while Macdonald wanted more for English in terms of precision, expression, beauty, and connectedness among all speakers of the language. When assessing uptalk, vocal fry, and, *like*, totally slang, this division of perspectives and values defines both the rift from past models of lexicography and culture, and the current trajectory, for better or for worse, of English's stylistic future.

Literature

- Anderson R., 2011, *Vocal Fry: Young Women Now Speak in Creaky, Guttural Tones like Ke\$ha, Spears*, „IBTimes”, December 13, Accessed May 5, 2012. <http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/266328/20111213/vocal-fry-young-women-speak-creaky-guttural.htm>
- Bennett D., 2007, *Thumb Typist Reshape Language*, „London Free Press”, February 18. Posted under the blog: „Slang? Maybe Not Such a Bad Thing.” Accessed May 6, 2012. [Http://www.oxfordlearning.com/letstalk/2007/03/20/slang-maybe-not-a-bad-thing/](http://www.oxfordlearning.com/letstalk/2007/03/20/slang-maybe-not-a-bad-thing/)
- Burkhalter N., 2010, *Uptalk: Speaking of a Cautionary Tale*. Accessed May 5, 2012. <http://www.lifeintheusa.com/everyday/uptalk.htm>
- Coughlan S., 2005, *Uptalk Becoming Standard Speech*, „BBC News”, June 25, 2005. Accessed May 4, 2012. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/education/4116788.stm
- Dachuk C., 2012, *Uptalk – What it is and Why You Don't Ever Want to Do it!*, *EnzineArticles.com*. Accessed May 3, 2012. [Http://ezinearticles.com/?Uptalk-What-it-is-and-Why-You-Dont-Ever-Want-to-Do-it!&id=3244110](http://ezinearticles.com/?Uptalk-What-it-is-and-Why-You-Dont-Ever-Want-to-Do-it!&id=3244110)
- Engel M., 2011, *Vocal Fry: Your Creaky Throat Noises are Now an Actual Scientific Trend*, „Metro”, December 12. Accessed May 5, 2012. [Http://www.metro.us/newyork/life/article/1048319-vocal-fry-your-creaky-throat-noises-are-now-an-actual-scientific-trend](http://www.metro.us/newyork/life/article/1048319-vocal-fry-your-creaky-throat-noises-are-now-an-actual-scientific-trend)
- Fessenden M., 2011, *Vocal Fry Creeping into US Speech*, „ScienceNOW”, December 9, Accessed May 6, 2012. <http://news.sciencemag.org/sciencenow/2011/12/vocal-fry-creeping-into-us-spec.html>
- Friedman R., 2006, *Slinging Slang: Linguistic Movement or Verbal Shortcut?*, „The Allentown Times”, May 12. Accessed May 7, 2012. <http://www.robinfriedman.com/articles/slang.html>
- Gorman J., 1993, *Like, Uptalk?*, „The New York Times Magazine”, August 15. Accessed May 4, 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/08/15/magazine/on-language-like-uptalk.html>
- Lapidos J., 2011, *Slang Tenacity: What Makes Slang Stick?*, „Slate.com.”, August 18, Accessed May 6, 2012. [Http://www.slate.com/articles/life/the_good_word/2011/08/thats_so_mysto.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/life/the_good_word/2011/08/thats_so_mysto.html)
- Lytle R., 2011, *How Slang Affects Students in the Classroom*, „US News”, June 13. Accessed May 1, 2012. http://education.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/education/highschools/articles/2011/06/13/how-slang-affects-students-in-the-classroom?s_cid=rss:how-slang-affects-students-in-the-classroom
- Macdonald D., 1962, *The Decline and Fall of English*, Reprinted in Macdonald, *Against the American Grain: Essays on the Effects of Mass Culture*. Da Capo Press, New York, 1983.

Uptalk, Vocal Fry and, Like, Totally Slang:

TADEUSZ LEWANDOWSKI

- Macdonald D., 1962, *The String Untuned, Reprinted in Macdonald. – Against the American Grain: Essays on the Effects of Mass Culture*. Da Capo Press, New York, 1983.
- Quenqua D., 2012, *They're, Like, Way Ahead of the Linguistic Currrrrve*, „The New York Times” February 28, 2012. Accessed May 1, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/28/science/young-women-often-trendsetters-in-vocal-patterns.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all
- Ren R., 2009, *Campus Talk*, „EduFire”, October. Accessed May 6, 2012. <http://edufire.com/content/articles/532-campus-talk-long-article-about-slang>
- Seaton M., 2001, *Word Up.*, „The Guardian” September 1. Accessed May 3, 2012. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2001/sep/21/referenceandlanguages.mattseaton>
- Winterman D., 2010, *Teen Slang: What's, Like, so Wrong with Like?*, „BBC News Magazine” September 23. Accessed May 6, 2012. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-11426737>
- Wolk L., Nassima B. Abdelli-Beruh, and D. Slavin, 2011, Habitual Use of Vocal Fry in Adult Female Speakers, „Journal of Voice”. Vol 26, Issue 3. Accessed May 5, 2011. [http://www.jvoice.org/article/S0892-1997\(11\)00070-1/fulltext](http://www.jvoice.org/article/S0892-1997(11)00070-1/fulltext)

Uptalk, Vocal Fry and, Like, Totally Slang: Assessing Stylistic Trends in American Speech

This paper examines linguistic debates surrounding new stylistic conventions in American English, namely the use of *uptalk* (speaking statements with a rising note at the end, as in a question), *vocal fry* (the injection of creaky, glottal vibrations at the end of words), and the increasing appearance of slang in the United States school system. These phenomena are assessed through the prism of Dwight Macdonald's essays on English from the 1960s, and the “prescriptive” vs. “descriptive” debate on lexicography born in that same decade. While this division of perspectives and values defines the rift from past models of language and culture, the current prevalence of the descriptive school in American academia and its endorsement of *uptalk*, *vocal fry*, and slang designate the trajectory of English's stylistic future.

Key words: *uptalk, vocal fry, slang, lexicography, Dwight Macdonald.*

The following is a list of the members of the American Medical Association for the year 1914. The list is arranged in alphabetical order by state and territory.

Alabama: [Faded text]

Alaska: [Faded text]

Arizona: [Faded text]

Arkansas: [Faded text]

California: [Faded text]

Colorado: [Faded text]