

ON THE ROLE OF PROSODIC MEANS FOR COMMUNICATIVE MOVES ACTUALIZATION IN PRESIDENTIAL DISCOURSE

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The article presents the results of an experimental phonetic study of such prosodic component as accidental rise. It discusses its peculiarities in assisting a president to meet his strategic and tactical objectives. The US presidents' addresses were classified into three types according to such characteristics as situation and subject. It also examines how a topic of speech effects its prosodic organization.

Key words: *presidential discourse, prosodic means, communicative tactics and moves, presidential address, auditory analysis.*

Analysis of presidential rhetorical activities, carried out in the framework of linguistics, rhetoric, cultural studies, political science and ethnolinguistics, takes a special place in modern political discourse studies.

When giving a speech, a president, like any other speaker, transitions from the conceptual level of communication, i.e. a level of strategies and tactics, to more concrete forms of their manifestations, communicative moves. This is attained through the use of semantically and contextually relevant language units. Consequently, it is quite obvious that a speaker involves a wide range of language means of lexical, grammatical, and phonetic levels to make a communicative move as persuasive as possible. Herein, a complex nature of interactions between the elements that convey the meaning of the utterance by intensifying its semantics and more importantly, they conduce the realization of pragmatic objectives can be presented by the following types: lexical + phonetic; grammatical + phonetic; lexical + grammatical + phonetic and the like [3, p. 21]. The speaker uses the type of intensifiers which possess the communicative and pragmatic potential to fully actualize a set of strategic and tactical goals of the delivered speech.

Despite the type of interaction of language means, the prosodic system, signaling the dynamics of speech event, combining lexical and grammatical devices into a coherent unit [1, p. 8], is one of the crucial factors in speech delivery which is not always achieved by units of other language levels. It is due to intonation committing either a parallel (i.e. enhances the semantics of lexical and grammatical units) or contrastive intensification of the language units used as actualization agents of communicative moves, that a listener perceives general

acoustic tonus of the speech (repetitions, hesitations, stops, rising and falling in pitch), connects and evaluates the ideas of the speaker's message [2, p. 101].

Thus, to understand the role of intonation and its components as a powerful tool for rendering the string «strategy – tactic – communicative move» in presidential addresses, it is of primary importance to examine prosodic elements which are most likely able to intensify an utterance in their close relation to the means of other language levels. It also should be mentioned that our previous studies allowed us to distinguish a basic strategy of preserving the president's image through informing the listeners and three tactics: object / referent situation enhancement and detracting, and a tactic of theatricality in the presidential addresses to the nation and to Congress. The later ones include a range of communicative moves such as analysis-«minus», accusation, promise, self-presentation and the like.

Here we are focusing on such an important prosodic means for actualizing some communicative moves as accidental rise. The results of auditory analysis have found that accidental rise, as a means of marking semantically important segments in intonation groups, occur in the implementation of communication moves analysis-«+» (24,04 %), self-presentation (22,76 %), analysis-«-» (21,59 %), promise (21,43%), warning (20,15 %), motivation (20,15 %), and cooperation (19,72 %). What matters here is the interdependence between the frequency of accidental rise use and a type of situational and thematic dominant. The results of the analysis suggest that it most commonly occurs when speeches are delivered in case of crisis (25,28%), a slightly lower number is found in electoral situation (23,64%), while the speeches clarifying the US military actions have the least amount of communicative moves intensified by accidental rise (19,79%).

Accidental rise primarily marks adjectives, e.g., *new, real, extraordinary, long, single, large, incredible, strong, massive, great, murderous, tough, global* (which are commonly found in the following communicative moves: analysis-«+», cooperation, self-presentation and promises), pronouns, e.g., *every, those, all, our, such* (communicative moves of motivation, cooperation, forecasting), negative particles and auxiliary verbs, e.g., *not, no, will* etc. the semantics of which is directly related to a specific communicative move actualization: *In ¹these efforts, ¹we continue to have the ²strong support ²of the ³world community. ³||* [4] (communicative move of cooperation).

As we can see from the example, qualified as communicative move of cooperation with a low level of emotional and pragmatic potential (EPP), the

phenomenon first introduced and studied by A.A. Kalita [See, 2; 3], and a rational type of argumentation, the utterance contains three intonation groups. In case this communicative move has no explicit lexical agents or their effectiveness is low, its actualization is mainly achieved by the combination of accidental rise on the word $\uparrow$ *strong* and medium falling tone on the nuclear syllable (*sup* $\downarrow$ *port*) in the second intonation group.

A similar effect is also achieved by the use of adverbs, e.g., *probably, only, never, severely* (communicative moves of self-presentation, promise, and prediction) and intensifying particles, e.g., *just, simply, even, only* (communicative moves of self-presentation, analysis-«–», and motivation). The following example demonstrates this peculiarity: *And to en[\]sure¹ § that a [\]crisis of this [\]magnitude § [\]never [\]happens a gain,² | I [\]ask [\]Congress to $\uparrow$ move [\]quickly § on [\]legislation³ | that will [\]finally re[\]form § our [\]out^odated [\]regulatory [\]system.⁴ || [7] (communicative move of motivation).*

It is quite obvious that the prosodic organization of the communicative move with a rational type of argumentation includes four intonation groups. The first intonation group has a wide range with a rising pre-head and ends in the medium-high falling terminal tone (*en[\]sure*) which aims to emphasize how important for Congress to adopt the bill initiated by President.

The second intonation group, where the president declares his desire to avoid a recently overcome crisis in the future, is characterized by a medium-high tone level of its beginning with the expanded range which is achieved by the medium-high falling head (*crisis*). However, the most intensified element here is the adverb *never* marked by the high full non-nuclear stress.

Moderate tempo and increased loudness of the second intonation group as well as a short pause provide a dynamic transition to the third intonation group which is of primary importance for the realization of the communicative move. It has an expanded tonal range of both the intonation group and the head achieved by the rising tone movement on the verb *ask* and medium-high falling tone at the end of the intonation group (*legislation*). The inner syntagmatic pause also makes this segment prosodically prominent.

During auditory analysis we also found out that the majority of communicative moves with a rational type of argumentation has accidental rise on the numerals (54,17%), for example: *If we [\]just [\]stay § with the [\]same [\]trends of the $\uparrow$ last [\]four [\]years,¹ | by the [\]end of the [\]decade² | the [\]deficit will be $\uparrow$ six [\]hundred*

and ¹*thirty-five* ²*billion* ³*dollars a year,* ⁴*almost* ⁵*eighty per cent of our* ⁶*gross do mestic product.* ⁷|| [6] (communicative move of warning).

In this context it is noteworthy that the actualization of the communicative move in the situation of crisis rhetoric, where 10,5% of the total number of utterances have two intonation groups with accidental rise, while their number does not exceed 3,75% in case of electoral and military situational and thematic dominants. The following example demonstrates this peculiarity: *I will* ¹*not* ²*put A merican* ³*boots* ⁴*on the* ⁵*ground in* ⁶*Syria.* ⁷|| *I will* ⁸*not pur sue* ⁹*an* ¹⁰*open ended* ¹¹*action* ¹²*like I,raq* ¹³*or Afghanistan.* ¹⁴|| *I will* ¹⁵*not pur sue* ¹⁶*a* ¹⁷*pro longed* ¹⁸*air cam paign* ¹⁹*like* ²⁰*Libya or* ²¹*Kosovo.* ²²|| [8] (communicative move of promise). It is quite obvious that besides a number of syntactic repetitions represented in all parts of the fragment by the combination of personal pronouns, auxiliary verbs, and negative particles, the communicative move of promise is actualized prosodically through the double emphasis on such words as *not* and *American boots*. In the initial part of the fragment they attract the listener's attention to the president's assurance.

This peculiarity is explained by the need for a much wider variety of expressive language means, prosodic in particular. They result from the topics and problems which the audience find very important and require the most appropriate forms of persuasion. This increases the number of forms of emotional argumentation correlating with functional and semantic properties of the delivered speech.

The results of the analysis of accidental rise as a means for actualizing communicative moves prove that the nature of their implementation depends on several factors. First of all, it is the minimal presence of semantic and suggestive units which are able to provide a high persuasive level. This can be commonly found in the communicative moves where rational type persuasion predominates. For example, *There are* ¹*still* ²*almost* ³*eight* ⁴*million unemployed.* || [9] (communicative move of analysis-«—»). The use of accidental rise in this utterance does not provide any increase in EPP, which remains low. Instead, it allows the president in a quite dispassionate manner to focus the audience's attention on the urgency of the ideas he mentions. Secondly, the very lexical and grammatical structure of the utterance, with certain words highlighted, are completely natural and predictable. For instance, *Our* ¹*leadership* ²*in* ³*world affairs* ⁴*would be* ⁵*under mined at the* ⁶*very* ⁷*time* ⁸*when* ⁹*people are* ¹⁰*looking to America* ¹¹*to* ¹²*help*

pro|¹mote ↑²peace and √³freedom ⁴| in the |⁵post-cold-⁶war √⁷world. ⁸|| [5]
(communicative move of analysis-«→»). The fragment containing the communicative move of analysis-«→», emotional type of argumentation and middle level of EPP demonstrates that there should be a semantic link between the word ↑*very* and √*looking to America* achieved by increase in loudness and higher level of falling terminal tone.

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