

FUNCTIONS OF ACCENT PROMINENCE IN SPEECH

TATIANA SKORIKOVA

The Pushkin Institute
of Russian Language
Moscow, USSR, 117485

ABSTRACT

A new method of intonational analysis is presented with two communicative directions in view: text → intonation (a word's accent prominence as effect of text parameters) and intonation → text (accent prominence as a text-formation factor).

tures, reports, etc.). Oral scientific text is characterized by specific accent markers, i.e. words whose AP serves to intensify the communicative message of the utterance /2/.

His public verbal event being limited in time, the speaker has to use a specific text-production program which should provide (besides some cognitively relevant information) argumentation (to convince the audience) and modality (revealing the speaker's attitudes). The study of AP's role in pragmatic constituents of a text may thus involve a number of particular tasks, such as analysis of AP in notional or synsemantic syntactic constructions; syntactic position of AP in the utterance, text-formative functions of AP depending on the kind of texts and so on. Our approach to AP problems calls forth the role of the speaker himself. In the course of speech the attitudes of the speaker are not inflexible nor intentionally static: "...the speaker's point of view is constantly sliding like the camera man's objective thus exposing the object from different angles" /3, p.155/. Can we relate the changing semantic role of a word in speech continuum to the word's AP? To answer the question we'll first delineate our theoretical departure position.

L.A.Gogotishvili /3/ distinguishes three subsidiary pragmatic sense components which are usually fixed: point of view, attention focus and discourse pivot. Point of view is determined by the directness (speaker → hearer); hence, we have two positions that of the speaker (=I), and that of the hearer (=You).

Attention focus is some semantic component of the situation chosen as centre for all the other components. Various authors connect the focus with the theme/theme notion having the prosodic correlate on the surface structure of the sentence: "...roughly speaking, the presence of a pitch accent correlates with a focus (and thus with "new information"), while the absence of a pitch accent indicates the lack of focus (or "old information")" /4, p.200/. We assume that AP should have

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays linguists have evidently ceased to limit accent prominence (AP) to some single language phenomena - be it an intonation pattern, a category of definiteness/indefiniteness, significance, contrast or emphasis of the utterance /1/. Now one is inclined to consider AP as a multi-aspect object of study, which has to do with the semantic framework of a text rather than with semantic meaning

of isolated utterances. Hence, AP may be ranked together with general categories of covert grammar of text thus helping to reveal interdependency of text constituents, i.e. text → intonation (AP as effect of certain text parameters) or intonation → text (AP as a text-formation factor).

The analysis of the intonation of immediate oral speech seems worth-while for both studying the speech-production mechanism and context-bound regularities of AP. In the present paper special attention is paid to the functions of AP in spontaneous monologue of a scientific character (lec-

more ingenuous semantic interpretation: it may highlight, in particular, within one and the same utterance, old as well as new components of sense which become significant for either the speaker or the hearer at a given moment. Hence, using the term "attention focus" we stress the role of AP as a text component /5/. Discourse pivot is a certain intentional position committed by either the speaker or some generalized social opinion. Our main postulate comes as follows: all the pragmatic sense components mentioned above are prosodically manifested on the acoustic level in the form of AP of some lexical elements. Now we'll discuss the idea in detail using Russian adjectives and adverbs: as we showed elsewhere /6/ attributive words and word combination prove to be good lexical material to study the role of AP in a nexus of meaning, purposes, motivations and other components of a text.

Point of view

Speaking of AP's function to indicate the direction of message orientation (onto the speaker or onto the hearer) we should note that it is possessed by different classes of lexemes in quite different degrees. That's why it seems fruitful to analyze general and particular properties of various lexical classes with the view of their different ability to AP.

Utterance formation is allegedly a multi-stage process beginning with the emergence of some vague semantic concept, then going to the creation of the logical and structural plan and finally producing lexical and phonemic contour. If this model holds true then there should be three groups of words which bear the greatest semantic load and hence are prone to AP: a) prop words carrying the message of the utterance;

b) deictic words supplying structural and content support to the spoken chain;

c) modal and quantifying words. AP words can accordingly have the functions of nomination, communicative message (or text formation proper) and modality.

Distributive analysis shows clearly that different classes of words differ both in the intensity of AP and in the frequency of appearing in functions (a-c): accented nouns are mostly nominative; verbs, adjectives and adverbs fall mainly into the second (communicative message) function whereas modal function is performed by predicative words (i.e. verbs, adjectives and adverbs of specific semantics).

To evaluate the ability for AP we introduced index $i = \frac{AP}{NAP}$, where AP

is the number of cases when the word (group of words) was found in accent position and NAP - the number of cases of non-accent positions in the texts of special type /7/.

Unlike terminological adjectives whose i lie near to 0 (0,37) words denoting attitudinal meanings have the highest values of i : adjectives denoting negative attitude have $i = 3,3$; those denoting the highest degree of some property have $i = 2,2$; adjectives denoting positive attitude, intensifiers and modal words have medium i - values (0,69, 0,59 and 0,57 accordingly).

As might be expected adverbs are very much similar with adjectives: they have a strictly limited number of high i - value words; there exists positive correlation between frequency of a word's AP position and its total text frequency; adverbs with high i - values show much common in semantic features with their adjective counterparts. Within both adjectives and adverbs there are groups of words which are especially apt to AP. These include: 1) words with high text-forming potential (pervyj, vtoroj, odin, drugoj, etc.); 2) words having attitudinal or intensifying function in the text (osnovnoj, sušestvennyj, boľšoj, isključitel'nyj, neobyknovennyj, pravilno, prosto, ves'ma, ocen', sovershenno, vsegda, voobšče, etc.); 3) words denoting casual/resultative and some other relations (novyj, poslednij, očerednoj, bližajšij, sledujušij, protivopoložnyj, obratnyj; togda, teper', sejčas, poetomu, zdes', etc.).

Accented adjectives and adverbs are often characterized by extremely wide range of semantic values and by high degree of semantic generalization which enables their use in deictic function (i.e. function of direct or indirect reference to the preceding or following context). To sum up, the high i - value words usually possess presuppositional and deictic properties. The more distinct are the word's attitudinal semes (orientation towards the speaker) or its deictic semes (orientation towards the hearer), the greater would be its AP ability.

Attention focus

By changing the attention focus the speaker can direct the hearer's "view" to various aspects of his message thus bringing home sense pivots. In dealing with the attention focus one should coincide AP with the word's semantics and context.

Different meanings of a word have different AP abilities. The degree of AP of a given meaning depends on the pre-

sence (or lack) of elements that make this meaning explicit. Let's consider a group of possessive adjective pronouns as an illustration. This class of words is frequently used to express the notion of I (author) in the text /8/. In Russian scientific style tradition my 'we' often stands for ja 'I'. Nash 'our' has the highest value of i in the group ($i_{nash} = 0,44$; $i_{vash} \text{ 'your'} = 0,22$; $i_{moj} \text{ 'my'} = 0,11$). It's worth mentioning that nash has the widest range of meaning among the words of the group in question:

- 1) 'moj' (my, the speaker's);
- 2) 'moj i vash' (my and the hearer's);
- 3) 'nash' (belonging to us). The first meaning usually has no AP whatsoever;

the other two have much higher values ($i_{nash2} = 0,41$; $i_{nash3} = 0,50$).

Meaning 2 ('moj i vash') is coincident with the moment of the speech act. In the course of public speech the speaker draws attention of the audience to this or that item trying to get them share his meditations and to make them part and parcel of the verbal event. The meaning 'moj i vash' is introduced onto a given audience by additional aids of the context, such as: 1) tautological word combination nash s vami (e.g. s točki zrenija našej s vami raboty...; naše s vami zasedanije posviašeno voprosu...) 2) indirect appeal to the hearer to follow the speaker's way of thinking (e.g. nu vot esli vozvras'atsa /k našej klassifikatsii tipov norm/...); adverbial modifiers of time which refer to the moment of speech act (e.g. Ia dumaju što telesoobrazno v naših diskussijah / segodn'a / i zavtra obsudit'...).

Meaning nash₃ has no additional support from the context (e.g. takogo roda rabota / ne provodilas' / ni v našej rustike / ni / voobšče v tselom). That's why AP of nash₃ is not so forcible in speech continuum.

Analysis of a number of meanings in AP position indicates that there exists inverse correlation between frequency of meaning's AP and the degree of its contextual markedness: less text-bound meanings have higher values of i . As to the degree of AP forcibility it is directly dependent on whether the context contain elements reinforcing the meaning in some way or another: the more is the meaning in need of contextual support the more forcible it is marked on the prosodic level.

Discourse pivot

The change of discourse pivots in a scientific oral monologue does not coin-

cide with the change of the speaker's communicative behaviour (as is usually the case with dialogues). Hence, the text of a monologue calls for greater amount of specific markers both to distinguish stages in the speaker's communicative strategy and to outline content and structural parts of the text in the course of speech. It is here that AP undertakes its text-forming functions. For example, a group of adverbs with markedly forcible AP (dašše, teper', zdes', sejčas, ocen', ves'ma, sovershenno, vsegda, voobšče, etc.) have proved to possess the following text loads: 1) promotion of the information; 2) reference to the message that follows; 3) pointing to the previously mentioned fact; 4) stressing the actual moment of speech; 5) intensification of expressive means of the utterance; 6) logical emphasis on some fact.

Within these one can easily distinguish three groups of adverbs with different function loads: a) text-forming elements; b) intensifiers; c) agents of time actualization.

In the adverbs mentioned above the word's semantics is fused with the semantics of AP and their contextual load is assumed in the form of a few typical function and sense combinations: 1) promotion of the information + reference to the forthcoming message or stressing the actual moment (e.g. dašše, teper'); 2) pointing to the previously mentioned fact + reference to the message that follows (e.g. poetomu, togda); 3) intensification + logical emphasis on some fact (e.g. ocen', ves'ma, sovershenno, vsegda); 4) logical emphasis + intensification (e.g. voobšče); 5) pointing to the previously mentioned fact + time actualization (e.g. zdes'); 6) time actualization + logical emphasis (e.g. sejčas).

The sense load of the element in AP position attains the greatest functional significance at the moment when a discourse pivot is changed. It seems worthwhile to enumerate the possible lexical variants of most frequent AP words within different discourse pivots and to try to correspond the AP words to a set of means which serve to carry out the sense in oral scientific speech.

CONCLUSIONS

We've discussed some important functions of AP in oral speech stressing the bidirectional character of the text-forming process (text ↔ intonation). Pragmatic components of the utterance are singled out particularly when the change of points of view, attention focus and discourse pivots take place.

The discourse pivot (making explicit the functional goal of the message) is responsible for interdependence between AP and

various stages of the utterance-formation process. It also determines spatial and temporal limits of the message and contributes to text formation. In this case the text is regarded of paramount importance, the task being to find textual loads of speech elements in AP position (text → AP).

The attention focus corresponds AP with a word's semantic and elements of the immediate context rather than with text parameters. Here we have the reverse direction (AP → text), whose function is to orient the hearer in the speech continuum. Further analysis of AP in this respect may contribute to reveal semantic potential of words in AP position. The point of view involves speaker/hearer parameters. It is responsible for a general accent contour of the utterance, including AP which helps explicate the speaker's position and AP which takes account of the hearer's needs. Hence, this component functions as a bidirectional text-forming mechanism (text ↔ intonation).

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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