

# LINGUISTIC MECHANISMS OF WORD ACCENTUAL PROMINENCE IN THE TEXT

Tatiana Skorikova

Russian Language Department, MIIT  
Moscow, USSR

## ABSTRACT

A new approach in intonology - the introduction of lexics into intonological analysis is put forward in this paper. We try to show that the relationship between lexical meaning and accentuation is based on certain linguistic factors. The mechanism of this relationship can be described if we take into account the text-forming potential of word accentuation.

## INTRODUCTION

Following T.M. Nikolayeva we distinguish two functionally different types of word prosodical prominence in the utterance:

1) the neutral sentence stress (SS) which refers to the plan of expression and serves as a means of syntagma phonetic organization and intonational segmentation of speech;

2) the sentence accent (SA) which is related to the semantic aspect of the utterance and is determined by the context and communicative intention of the speaker [4, p. 486-487]. Our research deals with SA or accentual prominence (AP) (the term was proposed by T.M. Nikolayeva [5]) as "a textual communicative phenomenon" [5, p. 9]. In the recent years scien-

tists accepting the idea of functional difference between these types of accent are inclined to treat AP as a multi-aspect object of study. Nowadays the attention of Russian intonologists is concentrated on such problems as the description of linguistic factors as regards the SS and SA [1]; the accentual phrase structure [3]; the interaction between words semantics and AP [6, 10] on the one hand, and AP and text organisation [1, 8], on the other hand.

Taking into account the latest results in the investigation of AP's functions in Russian spontaneous speech we state that there exist certain semantic regularities in the accentuation of various lexical classes within a given type of the text. We try to establish these regularities by examining modern Russian Scientific Discourse (RSD) the linguistic properties of which have recently been described in the fundamental work by O.A. Lapteva and others [2].

We would like to put forward an idea that AP helping to reveal the speaker's intentions in the communicative act plays an essential role in text-forming process as its one

of the main pragmatic components.

To give prove to the proposed point of view we consider two main questions:

1. What are the linguistic factors of AP realisation in RSD?

2. Can the degree of word accentuation potential in discourse be evaluated objectively?

The following material served as the basis for our research:

- spontaneous uttered texts of a scientific character (lectures, reports, discussions);

- summarized phonetic transcription of text fragments;

- listener's reactions to different types of accentual patterns. The experiment on perception shows that AP in RSD is perceptually marked for the audience and can be considered as a relevant linguistic feature of the text prosodical structure.

## RESULTS

### 1. Linguistic Factors of AP Realization in RSD

The context analysis of accentually marked elements in the utterance brings us to the conclusion that word accentuation in RSD is regulated by a number of closely interrelated factors such as: thematic and situational text parameters; lexical meaning of the word and its syntactic position; different contextual loads as well as pragmatic orientation of the utterance.

Let's consider the mentioned factors in detail:

1. Strong AP in RSD may be laid on the so-called keywords of the message: (terms proper names, titles, etc.)

conveying information about the theme and communicative act.

2. Regularly accentually prominent become groups of words with appraisal, qualitative and attitudinal semes in their meanings.

3. As a rule, thematic and other lexical elements in the utterance are emphasized within given syntactic contexts (connections may be expressed in the following ways: x, y...; i X, i Y; X ili y, Y i Y; ne tol'ko X, no i Y; ne X, a Y; kak X, tak i Y etc.).

4. With the help of AP the speaker often singles out and determines the boundaries of speech segments in RSD thus facilitating auditive perception of a spontaneous monologue. In this connection, certain types of functional and auxiliary words at the beginning of syntagmas and utterances as well as initial components of nominative word-combinations and attributive constructions may acquire a strong AP.

5. Accentually marked in RSD are usually words connected by theme/rheme relations (AP marks either theme or rheme  $\underline{R} - T$ ;  $R - \underline{T}$ ).

6. Semantically interrelated lexemes may also be marked with strong phrase accent in the context. AP here performs its deictic function in RSD exposing more explicitly the semantic ties of the text components.

7. Text lexical signals facilitating the orientation in the discourse and conveying different pragmatic loads (adresation, motivations, qualifications, attitudes etc.) are usually accentually emphasized and serve as prosodi-

cal markers for the listeners in RSD.

## 2. Evaluation of Word and a Group of Words Accentuation Potential in RSD

Examining different parts of speech accentuation in RSD we came to a conclusion that word accentual potential in discourse can be evaluated objectively. For this purpose we introduce a special criterion - the relative accentuation index (i) showing the ratio between the number of cases when the word (group of words) is found in the accent position and the number of cases of words non-accent positions in the text. Accentuation of the parts of speech in RSD may be presented as a following scale:

	i
Adjectives	0,335
Adverbs	0,320
Predicatives	0,289
Nouns	0,278
Verbs	0,227
Numerals	0,217
Parentheses	0,173
Pronouns	0,144
Particles	0,135
Conjunctions	0,122
Prepositions	0,053

As seen from the scale, adjectives, adverbs and predicatives - words with wide qualificative semantics - top the list as regards the relative accentuation index. Accentuation potential of auxiliary words is lower if compared with meaningful words.

In this way we qualified the AP indexes of particular meanings of the most frequently used in RSD words as well as accentuation indexes of some lexemes, lexico-semantic

groups\* and wide semantic zones of the text\*\*.

It is necessary to note that AP potential of different lexical groups, separate lexemes and their meanings varies greatly within one particular part of speech.

The analysis of accentual structure and semantics of attributive word-combination (adjective+substantive) in RSD [9] testifies to this fact.

The latest results of our research can be presented in the following way:

1. If we consider nouns, we'll see that the greater accentual load is laid on the lexical units characterizing an object or a person from different points of view (i = 1,30) as well as on those denoting qualities, properties and speaker's attitudes (i = 1,27).

2. Among the adjectives high i-valued are lexemes with opposition/comparison senses (i = 2,7) as well as lexemes denoting the highest degree of some proper-

\* Under the term of "lexico-semantic group" we mean "any semantic class of words (lexemes) characterized by at least one lexical paradigmatic seme in common" [12, p. 110].

\*\* Considering the text semantic zones we follow N.Yu.Schwedova stating that according to language functions we can single out in any text such semantic areas as nomination, communication proper, qualifications and attitudes, connections and correlations [7].

ty (i=2,2) and attitudes (i=1,1).

3. We can observe different AP abilities of words within separate lexical classes. For example, among Russian pronouns declined like adjectives high accentually marked is lexeme drugoi (i=1,55), medium AP-index characterizes lexemes odin (i=0,83) and kazdyj (0,59). The majority of pronouns of this type are within the range of low accentuation indexes: nas (0,44), nikakoj (0,41), ves' (0,40), tot (0,39), etc.

4. As regards the total accentual loads in RSD qualificative semantic zone possesses the highest degree of AP (i=0,733) and nominative one - the lowest (i=0,427).

## CONCLUSIONS

1. The results obtained give sufficient grounds to state that such parameter as relative index of accentuation should be listed as one of linguistic characteristics of a word when it is regarded as a discourse unit.

2. As soon as we can measure AP potential of words we can take a new approach towards classification of lexics based on the relative accentual values of lexemes and their text loads. This research will contribute to composing "a dictionary of prosodical potentiality of lexemes (their prominence and phonation possibility)" [4, p.490].

3. The main thesis of our work comes as follows: all the pragmatic sense components (denoting qualifications, speaker's attitudes, modality, various text orientations) are usually prosodically marked in the

form of AP of some lexical elements in RSD.

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