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Larisa A. Piotrovskaya
Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia
St. Petersburg, Russian Federation
larisa11799@yandex.ru

DIFFERENTIATED APPROACH TO STUDYING THE EMOTIVE FUNCTION OF INTONATION

Abstract

The current paper has several aims: on the one hand, it is meant to determine the principles for selecting language material for experimental phonetic research of prosodic means to express emotions, on the other hand it applies the results of this study (i) to determine the place of emotive intonation patterns in the Russian intonation system, (ii) to provide enough ground for identifying 3 aspects of emotive function of intonation: communicative-emotive, emotive-differentiating and form-building. I argue that, first, the focus of the corresponding phonetic studies should be emotive utterances that present a separate utterance communicative type but not emotionally colored statements, interrogative or imperative sentences, and second, that there are definite principles to differentiate between them. The paper provides a detailed description of the experimental material used in this study of emotive utterances intonation including 134 text samples containing emotive utterances of 18 structural types pronounced by 11 native Russian speakers. These gave 1474 samples of emotive utterances from which 424 samples were selected based on the results of auditive analysis and perceptual study. From them, 406 samples were chosen for further acoustic study. A thorough description of the six-step method of study is also presented. In addition to the first finding about the 3 aspects of emotive function, other conclusions were made: 1) emotive intonation patterns form a separate sub-system and they should be differentiated from modal realizations of intonation patterns marking emotionally colored statements, interrogative or imperative sentences; 2) adequate interpretation of the results of the experimental phonetic research can only be possible under the condition of independent performance of an acoustic and perceptual studies, the latter with the preferable technique of “free instructions”.

Keywords: emotive intonation, emotive utterances, emotionally colored utterances, utterance communicative type, expression of emotions, communicative-emotive function, emotive-differentiating function, form-building function.

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