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# ***TENDENCIES IN INTONATION RESEARCH***

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The research works devoted to the role and the place of intonation in language and its role as a phenomenon are one of the most interesting in linguistic literature. This paper is a view over directions in intonation researches.

We have to notice that the most of early scientific researches, Bulgarian as well as foreign, are turned mainly to the phonetic method of approach. In Bulgarian phonetic literature is well known that intonation is defined as a certain indication of speech, as a complex phonetic phenomenon, a combination of tone, intensity and temporal changes of the tone (Tilkov, 1981). By the way intonation is accepted as a device for expressing syntactic and communicative meanings at phonological and functional point of view, as well as an important and sometimes the only element for expressing emotions and attitude.

In their early work the majority of Russian linguists also represent intonation from a phonetic point of view as a component structure with a different number of components. For example Svetozarova writes that intonation is a suprasegmental component, a complex of specific prosodic components, with different functions (Svetozarova, 1995).

In a narrow sense in the bigger part of Bulgarian and Russian scientific research intonation is identified with melody/tone. That is accepted for sure from the majority of American and West European linguists. Scientists noticed that the changes of intonation contour lead to changes in meaning. That is why some scientists divide the intonation constructions in two main symptoms – phonetic and semantic (Ceplitis, 1974), and phonetic and functional (Brizgunova, 1977). Also they co-ordinate the acoustic and the semantic analysis. As a consequence some ideas appeared as that which introduces different intonation units with a definite meaning and permanent acoustic indications, and every unit with its meaning is different from the others. Russian linguists divide intonation components as dependent by the word meaning, syntax phrase and by the intention and the purpose of the speaker.

Similar to their Bulgarian and Russian colleagues the West European and American linguists divide the analyzed text into units which vary in length and are called in different ways by the authors. Also there is a variation into the number of speech characteristics, or as some linguists define them, into characteristics of intonation. Most of the researches reveal the idea of segmental and suprasegmental speech system, accepted by Bulgarian linguists too – the sounds are a part of the segmental and the intonation – of the suprasegmental system. Some linguists think that every language has a number of tone models/tone structures as well as a number of phonemes. So, many of them decide to describe intonation/tone levels with their meaning. Halliday offers a similar description of tone meaning and the role of tone system in grammar (Halliday, 1994). He uses the opposition High – Low as a basic one. He accepts that low tone means certainty and high tone – uncertainty. So both tones are contrary in meaning – low tone means something known and the high one means something unknown.

The intonation researches from last 20 years also perceive those basic tone levels. Among those researches there is an attempt for many languages synthesis,

which as a matter of fact is an attempt to show what exactly effects the tone change and is it possible to use one and the same model for all languages.

An important tendency in intonation research is its connection with the syntax. Linguists offer a two-way model of co-operation between syntax and phonology. This model gives the possibility every level of representation to be restricted by the other one. Selkirk is one of those linguists who has an intention to show that the tone accent distribution in English sentences directly effects on its focus structure, which for its part offers a number of meaning appropriate for the sentence. Selkirk describes a kind of a tone grammar which considers the phonologic representation of intonation (Selkirk, 1984).

Selkirk based her work on the research of Pierrehumbert, who offered a new way for studying intonation at that time. She perceives that one and same sentence with one and the same accent model could be pronounced in many different ways. Here intonation has three components - a grammar of possible phrase tones/accent, which produces consequences of low (L) and high (H) tones and a metrical representation of the text. Her main purpose is to develop an abstract representation of intonation, which makes possible the description of different models one text could receive. Her second purpose is to study the rules that reduce phonologic representation to phonetic one. As a matter of fact Pierrehumbert accepts that the relative changes of the tone from high to low and back to front could introduce precisely enough characteristics with an attitude towards syntax as well as characteristics with an attitude towards the emotional side of the language (Pierrehumbert, 1980).

The choice of a tone for to express a meaning is that on which linguists focus their attention mainly. The research of intonation meaning is interesting and important but there is a problem for making a list of such tone meanings because they are too dependent on the context.

The intonation research at the end of the last and the beginning of this century creates an impression that the phonetic method of approach is less interesting for linguists than the study of the co-operation “intonation – syntax”, “intonation – semantics”.

An experimental research on this base is accomplished in a Ph.D. work “An Experimental Research Of Intonation (Semantic Model)”, 2006. The model of Pierrehumbert is accepted and compared with classic semantic theories that express the connection “meaning – sound”. A conclusion could be made that the connection of semantic structure and its phonetic representation is similar to the phonetic representation of the meaning as a row of intonation elements. The research shows that such a model as the above mentioned could successfully be applied in Bulgarian too. It could also reveal the connection “sound – form – meaning”.

So, the research of intonation using different knowledge is may be the future of linguistic work.

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