ПРОФЕСІЙНА ІНШОМОВНА ПІДГОТОВКА В ПРОЦЕСІ МІЖКУЛЬТУРНОЇ ІНТЕГРАЦІЇ

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PROSODIC ORGANISATION OF REFUSAL UTTERANCES: THEIR CORRECT CODING, DECODING AND ACTUALISATION IN ENGLISH DIALOGUE SPEECH

The article focuses on the specificity of correct coding and decoding of refusal utterances in English dialogue speech and their intonation patterns taking full account of the importance of a communicative context in which the utterances occur. The author states that the communicative context to be considered while perceiving the refusal intonation patterns includes the following complex of factors: the communicative situation (formal, informal), the relation of speaker's social status to the recipient's status (higher, equal, and lower), the explicit or implicit form of the refusal, the speaker's socio-cultural level (high. mid, low), emotional-and-pragmatic potential of the utterance (high, mid, low) as well as the class of reasons for the refusal utterances generation "I do not want to", "I cannot", "I can but I do not want to", "I want but I cannot"). In this paper the author studies the suprasegmental level means contributing to correct coding and decoding of the utterance information and the speaker's emotional state and his/her pragmatic intention. 70 students of Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute aged 18-21 took part in the experiment. The author reports the results of the study of difficulties experienced by learners while mastering intonation patterns of English refusal utterances. The results of the research prove that intonation plays the leading role in correct encoding and decoding of refusal utterances' meaning.

Key words: *English pronunciation, refusal utterance, encoding / decoding, interpersonal communication, prosodic means, intonation pattern, practical phonetics.*

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ПРОСОДИЧНА ОРГАНІЗАЦІЯ ВИСЛОВЛЕНЬ ВІДМОВИ: ЇХ КОРЕКТНЕ КОДУВАННЯ, ДЕКОДУВАННЯ ТА АКТУАЛІЗАЦІЯ В АНГЛІЙСЬКОМУ ДІАЛОГІЧНОМУ МОВЛЕННІ

Стаття спрямована на вивчення специфіки правильного кодування та декодування висловлень відмови в англійському діалогічному мовленні та їх інтонаційних моделей, враховуючи важливість комунікативного контексту, в якому вони актуалізуються. Автор зазначає, що комунікативний контекст, який слід розглядати під час сприйняття інтонаційних моделей відмови, включає наступний комплекс факторів: соціокультурний рівень мовця, емоційно-прагматичний потенціал висловлювання, а також клас причин породження висловлень відмови. У цій роботі автор вивчає надсегментний рівень засобів, що сприяє правильному кодуванню та декодуванню смислу висловлювання, емоційного стану мовця та його прагматичного наміру. Автор аналізує результати дослідження труднощів, з якими стикаються учні під час засвоєння інтонаційних моделей англійських висловлень відмови. Результати дослідження доводять, що інтонація відіграє провідну роль у правильному кодуванні та декодуванні смислу висловлень відмови.

Ключові слова: *англійська вимова, висловлення відмови, кодування / декодування, міжособистісна комунікація, просодичні засоби,інтонаційні моделі, практичні фонетика.*

In the process of constant development and broadening of international communication, cultural and business interpersonal contacts, changing socio-functional regularities of language and dialogue speech, prominent scholars, in particular phoneticians, inevitably come to the necessity to study the specificity of encoding and decoding of emotional utterances and their proper actualisation in communication during speech interaction with the representatives of different cultures. Estimating the problem in general, it is worth mentioning that some issues of social, cultural and psycho-physiological features of emotional utterances' actualisation have been outlined in the papers focused on the research of speech prosody in general [2; 7; 8] and on studying different emotional types of utterances, refusal utterances including as well as on the problem of teaching English pronunciation to Ukrainian learners [3].

The findings of the mentioned research sufficiently prove that correct actualization and perception of different emotional utterances is one of the most difficult issues to master by foreign learners of English. Besides, the communicative competence of non-cooperative speech acts is the least studied aspect of the foreign language education. In view of this, a profound research of cultural and sociolinguistic aspects of English refusal utterances actualisation as one of the frequently occurring types of emotional

utterances, related to non-cooperative speech acts, becomes undoubtedly relevant. The topicality of the problem is also enhanced by the lack of this aspect in foreign language teaching, especially considering the present-day requirement to train students to maintain contacts with the representatives of different countries at the international level during their studies and after university graduation. This situation demands from them the skills of adequate understanding of the received information and correct expression of the utterance meaning.

Therefore, the **aim** of the present paper is to define and outline some peculiarities of the formation of phonetic communicative competence in foreign language learners by means of analysing typical prosodic patterns of refusal utterances actualised by the speakers of different socio-cultural levels in various communicative situations.

The hypothesis of the research is based on the idea that the effectiveness of realisation of English refusal utterances' pragmatic setting is reached due to the use of socially determined variants of their intonation patterns within each class of reasons of the refusal generation [4, p. 219] targeted at a certain recipient. To prove the hypothesis as well as the effectiveness of teaching English intonation on the basis of refusal utterances we initiated an experimental study conducted in the autumn semester of a 2019–2020 academic year in Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute. Research *participants* included 70 students of Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute aged 18-21 (8 females and 62 males). All groups of students involved in the experiment were previously assessed. The level of phonetic competence in all groups was rather heterogeneous but sufficient enough to conduct such a type of experiment.

To perform the experiment, it was necessary to make the previous theoretical research and substantiate its theoretical background in order to facilitate the achievement of the research goals. The analysis of existing in linguistics definitions of the notion of utterance and our attempt to highlight its main characteristics allowed us to formulate its following definition: *utterance is a thought materialized according to the laws of a definite language in the form of a sentence which in accordance with its functional aim and due to its semantic integrity conveys certain information* [6, p.293]. The given definition and conducted comparison and analysis of the known in linguistics interpretations of refusals made it possible to define the linguistic status of *refusal utterance*, according to which we view it as *a unit of speech, actualized in oral or written speech as a reaction to the speaker's query, that expresses a negative response to the request, demand, offer or suggestion, unwillingness to agree with something, to do, accept or allow something or the addressee's refusal from something offered or avoiding to perform an action* [6,p. 293].

To achieve the goals of the experiment we applied such methods as the analysis of the problem (generalization, induction and deduction); theoretical empirical methods (synthesis, modelling, classification, quantitative and qualitative data processing methods) as well as auditory analysis and descriptive method.

To conduct the experiment, the students were given hand-outs with dialogues containing refusal utterances grouped according to the four classes of reasons of refusal, namely: "I do not want to", "I cannot", "I can but I do not want to", "I want but I cannot" [4, p. 219]. Besides, we grouped all the refusal utterances considering their leading linguistic features: the communicative situation (formal, informal), the relation of speaker's social status to the recipient's status (higher, equal, and lower), the explicit or implicit form of the refusal, which are shown in tables 1 and 2 [6]. All the dialogues are taken from modern English and American literature and are voiced by British speakers and professional actors.

At the first stage of the experiment the students were offered to read the dialogues and define the emotional-and-pragmatic potential (high, mid, low) of the refusal utterances on the basis of their lexical and grammatical features. Apart from that, the students were asked to mark with a tick the utterances which they viewed as the utterances of other emotional types but with a similar pragmatic orientation, like the utterances of negation, disagreement etc. rather than the refusals.

It is worth mentioning that the results of surveys carried out by the representatives of Alla Kalyta's experimental phonetic school [3; 6] show that the main factor influencing the prosodic organisation of English dialogue speech is the energetic interaction of emotions experienced by the speaker and his/her pragmatic intentions. In the works [1; 2] aimed at the scientific research of this phenomenon it was proposed to differentiate the utterances according to the level of emotional-and-pragmatic potential of their actualization into those with low, mid or high level.

At the second stage of the experiment the students were offered to listen to 64 voiced fragments of the same dialogues from British texts containing the refusal utterances and make notes in questionnaire on whether they view these dialogues as refusals or not and after listening define the emotional-and pragmatic potential of the utterance.

Table 1

The example of the questionnaire for defining the emotional-and-pragmatic potential and the type of refusal utterance related to class of reasons "I do not want to"

Class of reasons "I do not want"							
№	*Example of the dialogue containing refusal utterances*	*The communicative situation (formal, informal)*	*The relation of speaker's social status to the recipient's status (higher, equal, lower)*	*The form of expressing the refusal: explicit, implicit*	*Emotional-and-pragmatic potential: high, mid, low (**reading stage**)*	*The refusal*	*Emotional-and-pragmatic potential: high, mid, low (**listening stage**)*	*The refusal*
1.	"Alan, they will have to interest you. This one will have to interest you. <…> When he is missed, there must be no trace of him found here. You, Alan, you must change him, and everything that belongs to him, into a handful of ashes that I may scatter in the air." **"You are mad, Dorian"** [13, p. 92–93].	Formal	Equal	Implicit	High	Yes	High	Yes

2.	"Fifty?" Harry gasped – they would lose the lead, the lead he'd won in the last Quidditch match. "Fifty points each," said Professor McGonagall, breathing heavily through her long, pointed nose. "Professor – please..." "You can't…"; **"Don't tell me what I can and can't do, Potter. Now get back to bed, all of you. I've never been more ashamed of Gryffindor students."** [11, p. 195]	Informal	Higher	Explicit	Mid	Yes	Mid	Yes

Table 2

The example of the questionnaire for defining the emotional-and-pragmatic potential and the type of refusal utterances related to class of reasons "I want but I cannot"

	Class of reasons "I want but I cannot"							
№	*Example of the dialogue containing refusal utterances*	*The communicative situation (formal, informal)*	*The relation of speaker's social status to the recipient's status (higher, equal, lower)*	*The type of expressing the refusal: explicit, implicit*	*Emotional-and-pragmatic potential: high, mid, low (reading stage)*	*The refusal*	*Emotional-and-pragmatic potential: high, mid, low (listening stage)*	*The refusal*
1.	"Beyond tonight, will you stay with us?" Sophie asked. "At least for a few days?" Langdon sighed, wanting nothing more. **"You need some time here with your family, Sophie. I'm going back to Paris in the morning"** [9, p.378].	Informal	Equal	Implicit	Mid	Yes	Mid	Yes
2.	LADY WINDERMERE: This afternoon? But I wanted so much to come and see you. MRS. ERLYNNE. **How kind of you! – But I am afraid I have to go** [12].	Informal	Equal	Explicit	Mid	Yes	Mid	Yes

The third stage was a practical one. The teacher offered the students to choose the cards with some dialogues analysed by the learners at previous stages of the experiment. The students had to act out these dialogues in pairs. The teacher controlled their speaking and corrected pronunciation mistakes, if any. The students were instructed to imitate the intonation contour of the recorded utterance, its word stress as well as practise pronunciation of sounds and syllables.

The final stage of the experiment was devoted to quantitative and qualitative data processing and the analysis of the results of the experiment with the help of mathematical statistics methods. For assessing the results we invited phoneticians and native speakers. After the experiment was finished, the teacher provided the students with their results which allowed them to reflect on the work done, their mistakes and possible ways of their correction. After the discussion the students gave their feedback to the teacher.

The data obtained as a result of quantitative and qualitative analysis of the experiment proved the effectiveness of the used teaching and scientific methods in forming phonetic competence. A comparative analysis of the results showed a positive dynamics in acquiring phonetic competence by the students from the experimental group during all the stages of the experiment. The students demonstrated a good level of lexical, grammatical, phonetic, socio-cultural and pragmatic competences as is shown in table 3.

Table 3

The differences between learners results at the first and second stages of the experiment

Class of reasons of refusal utterances	*The first stage of the experiment (reading)*		*The second stage of the experiment (listening)*	
	% of students who successfully defined the level of emotional-and-pragmatic potential	% of students who gave wrong answers	% of students who successfully defined the level of emotional-and-pragmatic potential	% of students who gave wrong answers
I do not want to	72%	28%	93%	7%
I cannot	74%	26%	91%	9%
I can but I do not want to	74%	26%	93%	7%
I want but I cannot	71%	29%	92%	8%

As is shown from the table, during the reading stage of the experiment 71-74% of the students belonging to the experimental group could interpret the refusal utterances and its emotional-and-pragmatic potential correctly, while 26-29% failed to decode it

properly. In contrast to this, listening to the experimental dialogues gave the possibility to understand the experimental material correctly to 91-93% of the students. This proves that intonation and its components play a very important role in correct coding and decoding of information which leads to its further correct actualization that was practised during the third stage of our experiment.

The number of correct answers greatly depended on such linguistic features as the relation of the speaker's social status to the recipient's one (higher, equal, lower) and the speaker's socio-cultural level which, as it was emphasised to students, is *determined by the degree of the speaker's language competence, a set of acquired knowledge and skills, means and techniques of communicative behaviour, ability to adequately encode / decode information in its correlation with the specific situation and goals of communication* [6, p. 294].

It is worth mentioning that the dialogues which caused the difficulties with correct decoding of refusals were mainly actualised implicitly by the speakers of a high socio-cultural level. It can be illustrated by the following example of the utterance belonging to the class of reasons "I can but I do not want to":

"This is the concierge, monsieur. I apologize for this intrusion, but you have a visitor. He insists it is urgent."

"I'm sorry" Langdon said, *"but I'm very tired and* – *"Mais, monsieur",* the concierge pressed, lowering his voice to an urgent whisper. *"Your guest is an important man."*

"If you would be so kind," Langdon said, doing his best to remain polite, *"could you take the man's name and number, and tell him I'll try to call him before I leave Paris on Tuesday? Thank you"* [9, p. 6].

In the given example, an implicit refusal is uttered in a formal situation by the speaker who has a higher socio-cultural level in relation to the addressee. The emotional-and-pragmatic potential is defined as the one of a middle level. Most of the students coped with the task and qualified the utterance as the refusal during the first stage of the experiment with the help of its lexical and grammatical means. The listening stage justified the results obtained at the previous stage since on the prosodic level the utterance is actualized within a middle voice range, has no special rises or high falls, the tempo is moderate and smooth, pauses are quite short. These are the very prosodic means that designate the refusal as the one belonging to the class of reasons "I can but I do not want to".

The next example illustrates the refusal utterance included into the class of reasons "I cannot" and actualised by the speaker of the mid socio-cultural level in the informal communicative situation:

'Jacob,' he said, imploringly. *'Old Jacob Marley, tell me more. Speak comfort to me, Jacob.'*

'I have none to give,' the Ghost replied. *'It comes from other regions, Ebenezer Scrooge, and is conveyed by other ministers, to other kinds of men. Nor can I tell you what I would. A very little more is all permitted to me. I cannot rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger anywhere. My spirit never walked beyond out counting-house-mark me!- in life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole; and weary journeys lie before me'* [10, p. 22].

This utterance is an example of an implicit refusal actualised in the informal situation by the speaker of the same social status as the recipient's. Due to the lexical and grammatical means of the utterance, it was interpreted by the students during the first stage of the experiment as the refusal having the middle level of its emotional-and-pragmatic potential. However, the context of this dialogue caused difficulties for students to interpret this utterance as the refusal. About half of an experimental group of students defined it as non-cooperative speech act which is close to the refusal due to its pragmatic setting but they did not mark it as the refusal.

Taking abovementioned into consideration, we can assume that all classes of refusal utterances have a specific prosodic organisation serving as a crucial element of their oral actualisation and as the intensifier of the speaker's pragmatic intention, which in combination with other language means influences the sender's generation and recipient's perception of the utterance's meaning. This specificity is viewed in our research on the basis of the substantiated model (Sokyrska, 2013a), representing the mechanism of encoding and decoding the refusal utterances' meaning in English dialogue speech. This model shows that the process of correct generation and perception of the utterance meaning occurs simultaneously and largely depends on the correct language means chosen by the speaker as well as the addressee's ability to perceive their meanings which is impossible without the presence of the overlap area of interlocutors' cultures.

The experiment conducted in this research was determined by the need to advance the phonetic communicative competence, improve the ability to encode and decode the addresser's information and teach the students of Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute to correctly actualise the meaning of different classes of refusals as the frequent types of emotional utterances in English dialogue speech which are widely used in interpersonal communication and whose correct interpretation can directly influence business and cultural international contacts.

The comparative analysis of the utterances having a similar lexical and grammatical structure showed that prosodic means perform the leading role in contribution to correct encoding and decoding of the utterance information. Thus, the results of this research can be useful for teaching Practical English Phonetics.

The data obtained in the result of the study and implementation of the offered approach into teaching English pronunciation allowed us systematise and analyse typical errors and difficulties experienced by the students while working on English intonation. The reflections made on the work done helped understand how to diagnose, correct and overcome pronunciation mistakes in future training in class or working independently.

We hope that the ideas advanced in this paper can be integrated into practical classes and will be useful for elaboration of practical guidelines on teaching English intonation of refusal utterances and encourage further studies of the role of intonation in correct encoding and decoding of the utterance prosodic features contributing to more effective acquisition of communicative competence.

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