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# Pragmatics via prosody in interaction optimization

Pragmatika per prozodiją optimizuojant tarpusavio sąveiką

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## Abstract

The article represents a case study of Joaquin Phoenix's acceptance speech, aimed at examining the interface of pragmatics and prosody. Relying on research into prosodic-pragmatic relationships and employing auditory prosody analysis combined with methods of pragmatic and discourse analysis, the article explores the interaction of prosody with speech acts, as well as with their related politeness and discursive strategies. Direct expressives are associated with three positive politeness strategies and are prosodically characterized by a normal or slow speech rate, normal or reduced volume, short intonation groups, very short pauses, a narrow pitch range, clear timbre, and a regular rhythm. The illocutionary force of indirect expressives relies on stylistic devices and markers of positive politeness, connoting emotional closeness and "sincerity" as components of felicity conditions for such acts. Indirect expressives are signaled by very short, short, or medium filled pauses, resonant timbre, low fall and stressed syllable, a descending stepping scale followed by a falling nucleus, high fall intonation groups, a rising intonation before key concepts, accelerated speech tempo, increased loudness, and emphasis on key words. The prosodic signals of expressive syntax and positive politeness coincide, except for markers emphasizing commonality. The "ecocentric" part of speech is constructed by representatives-reasoning that stimulates reflection without imposing views. This aligns with the negative politeness of non-imposition, marked by mitigators like hedges, bushes, and shields. The intonational accent on words with denotative or connotative meanings related to "discrimination" contributes to the discursive strategy of group polarization.

**KEYWORDS:** prosody, speech acts, politeness strategies, acceptance speech, institutional strategy.

## Introduction

The correlative aspect of pragmatics and prosody is a recent and relatively unexplored topic in modern linguistic research, which focuses on the semantic-pragmatic functions of prosody, its role in signaling speech acts, politeness, affective and emotional states (for an overview, see Prieto 2015; Pronina et al., 2021, p. 2; Valigura et al., 2020, p. 40; Wharton, 2012, p. 568). Investigating the relationship between prosody and pragmatics is somewhat challenging, given the nature of both phenomena as additional rather than denotative meanings that overlay linguistic units. Along with pragmatic functions, several points of intersection between prosody and pragmatics define the prospects for studying their interaction. These phenomena intersect through factors that influence them, primarily the speakers' social and individual characteristics, as well as the correlative functions of pragmatics and prosody as a constitutive feature of a specific genre. A significant body of research justifies the role of prosodic models in signaling politeness and impoliteness (Hidalgo & Nebot, 2014), including the transformation of polite expressions into impolite ones and vice versa (Culpeper, 2005, p. 53). The study of prosodic correlates of politeness focuses on parameters such as pitch range and pitch height, speech rate, duration variability, voice quality, and intonation contours (Campbell, 2004; Chen et al., 2004; Gussenhoven, 2004). Less explored is the interface between prosody and speech acts, which is investigated in terms of the correlation of specific intonational patterns with types of speech acts, the identification of prosodic cues signaling the intention of directives, expressives, and assertives (Hellbernd & Sammler, 2016), and the establishment of the relationship between illocutionary acts, modality, and attitude "with special attention to the Pragmatics/Prosody interface" (Mello & Raso, 2011, p. 1).

However, the interface between prosody and pragmatics has not been studied in cases involving the attraction (Kravchenko & Pasternak, 2018) of various pragmatic means, their accumulation, and interdependence in specific communicative situations (such as expressive acts and positive politeness, negative politeness and certain types of representatives). Hence, this study attempts to fill this gap. In turn, similar prosodic models across different pragmatic devices shed light on the semiotic aspects of such correlation when melodic, temporal, and dynamic elements, on the one hand, and pragmatic means, on the other, exhibit certain indexical and iconic properties (Verschueren, 2000) in terms of their isomorphism with the connotative meaning of utterances (Kravchenko & Zhykharieva, 2020). In addition, the article can make a specific contribution to the as-yet-unstudied, as far as we know, issue of the impact of prosodic parameters on the felicity conditions of speech acts when prosody can be the sole signal of the illocutionary force of indirect acts.

In light of this, the relevance of this research is associated with its potential contribution to current questions at the intersection of pragmatics and prosody, related to (a) determining the role of intonation in facilitating interaction, maintaining attitudinal and interpersonal meaning, through signaling proximity and psychological connection with the audience, correlated with positive politeness; (b) establishing the role of prosody in shaping discourse by marking the illocutionary force of speech acts that construct discourse; (c) identifying the role of prosodic speech parameters in highlighting discourse's semantic dominants through accentual emphasis by creating local prominences; (d) determining how prosodic parameters signal the speaker's position and serve as phonetic correlates of emotions, thus reproducing an iconic connection between prosodic and emotional meanings. The choice of Phoenix's acceptance speech to address these pertinent issues of the pragmatic-prosodic interface is motivated by the fact that despite its uniqueness in terms of emotionality and genre hybridity, the speech serves as a prototype for a specific type of awards speech, namely, activist acceptance speech (Parkinson, & Herring, 2023), with elements of a redemption narrative. The redemptive aspect in Phoenix's passionate speech is noted both in the press (Murphy & Vary, 2020) and in scholarly research, asserting that "Phoenix made a point of using his speech as a form of redemption narrative", made redemption a key theme of his speech by stating that we are at our best "when we guide each other to redemption", and asking "for forgiveness for what is, in part, an aspect of his star persona" (Parkinson & Herring, 2023, p. 596). This allows us to assert the relevance of our research findings for identifying some common characteristics of the pragmatics and prosody of the genre model of activist acceptance speech with elements of a redemption narrative.

The urgency of the article is justified by the fact that the interface between prosody and pragmatics is predominantly studied in talk-in-interaction. However, monologic discourse, including acceptance speeches, remains understudied in this regard. Emphasizing the interaction between prosodic and pragmatic parameters can

shed light on which elements can make a speech more memorable and effective in conveying emotions and influencing the audience.

The novelty of the article lies in its multi-faceted approach to exploring the role of prosody in shaping the pragmatic parameters of Joaquin Phoenix's acceptance speech, which appears important for analysis due to its uniqueness and, simultaneously, a certain prototypicality for the activist acceptance speech genre. Some extraordinary features of the speech manifest in its genre hybridity and emotional components. The speech combines characteristics of the acceptance speeches genre and institutional discourse, drawing attention to racial inequality and environmental issues. As indicated in the literature, "not many contenders have so closely wed promotional duties with radical activism" (Baum, 2020). The fusion by the speaker of communicative roles of celebrity and animal rights and a vegan activist creates a certain tension between the institutional role and norms of celebrity behavior, which is evident both in prosodic markers and in the selection of various pragmatic devices in the two conditional parts of the speech. In this context, what is novel is the establishment of correlations between, on the one hand, expressive speech acts, prosodic markers, and strategies of positive politeness, and on the other hand, prosody, negative politeness strategies, and representational speech acts in the eco-centric part of the speech, as well as correlations between prosodic signals and the explicitness/implicitness of illocutionary force in speech-structuring acts. The speech is unique in terms of its emotional components, making it particularly suitable for identifying stable connections between pragmatics and prosody, marking emotional tension. Twelve of the 37 articles described Phoenix's delivery as "emotional" (Boulton, 2020; McCarthy, 2020, etc.) and "overwhelmed" (Slater, 2020). Phoenix was described as "tearful" (Piña 2020) or "holding back tears" (Carpenter, 2020). Such features of the speech define an aspect of novelty in the research, namely, the identification of the function of prosodic devices in marking both expressive illocutionary force and associated stylistic techniques simultaneously.

What is also new is the approach to prosodic characteristics connoting sincerity in terms of their correlation with the felicity conditions of speech acts. This justifies the possibility of prosody functioning as the sole marker for revealing the illocutionary force of indirect expressives by influencing their felicity conditions, in the absence of other illocutionary indicators.

While the prosodic component of speech can be examined through auditory analysis, conclusions regarding pragmatic meaning often rely on the linguistic intuition of the researcher. In this context, the combination of research tools for studying prosody with pragmatic methods holds promise, particularly within the field of pragmatics.

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### Theoretical Background

Different schools of pragmatics and discourse analysis examine prosodic-pragmatic relationships in line with their research priorities. When considering the genre-specific features of acceptance speech as emotionally charged discourse aimed at approval and audience feedback (Kravchenko & Pasternak, 2018), this article primarily relies on approaches related to the prosodic-pragmatic interface in the context of the illocutionary force of speech acts and their related politeness strategies. To a lesser extent, the theoretical foundations of the article relate to discourse analysis used in the study of institutional pragmatics, which is also characterized by specific prosodic features.

The primary research focus of the article and the methods employed therein are driven by the first vector of research, which deals with the interaction of prosody with speech acts. The prosody of speech acts is studied in terms of the functioning of prosodic characteristics as markers of illocutionary force (Jurafsky, 2004, p. 588; Hirschberg, 2004). In particular, a descending or rising intonation can transform a declarative speech act into a question or imply the directive illocution of a question. In our opinion, a promising aspect is a study of the effect of prosody on speech acts felicity conditions, which is one facet of this research. The authoritative tone of the speakers may signify their ability to actually perform what is conveyed via the commissive or directive acts, while intonationally emphasized sincerity may be the sole indicator of expressive illocutionary force.

Equally important for this article is the perspective of studying prosody as an indicator of politeness strategies, including the use of Grice's framework in which politeness or other aspects of the speaker's stance are considered as prosodically derived implicatures (Culpeper et al., 2003). Researchers in this field are unanimous in that intonation plays one of the crucial roles in conveying affiliative and disaffiliative, potentially face-threaten-

ing acts, which are closely connected with Goffman's concept of face (1982), Brown and Levinson's politeness principle (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and, in a wider scope, with a balance between competition and cooperation. For instance, competitive or non-competitive interruptions are marked by changes in pitch height (Wells & Corrin, 2004). Similarly, the "coordination" of pitch height among speakers as the synchronization of relevant vocal range areas in different speech exchanges demonstrates "cooperative" behavior, implying shared values, support, and understanding (Reed, 2006; Wennerstrom, 2001), related to positive politeness. On the other hand, "a close melodic imitation, when a speaker matches another speaker's pitch exactly ('absolute register matching') is perceived as mimicry, and thus as mocking the other speaker" (Wichmann et al., 2009, p. 8), representing an act threatening to face. Another crucial observation for the analysis of acceptance speeches is that undesirable or disaffiliative moves, correlated with negative politeness, are characterized by a general speech slowness (Plug, 2009), indicating a symbolic link between the desirability of a move and its timing. Researchers also note the affiliative or disaffiliative impact of prosody on the realization of response particles or "continuers" (Schegloff, 1982, p. 81), such as m-hm, uh huh, right, yes, OK. In the absence of melodic and rhythmic integration, these elements, typically seen as supportive particles, can subtly convey the opposite meaning.

Joaquin Phoenix's acceptance speech has been the subject of individual scholarly works where the speech is examined from rhetorical (Hansen, 2021) and pragmatic (Simatupang, Ibrahim, 2021) perspectives. However, the pragmatics of Phoenix's speech have only been studied in the context of identifying types of speech acts and their convivial, collaborative, competitive, and conflictive functions, without considering their interrelation with other pragmatic phenomena and prosodic devices.

In addition to the pragmatic aspect, the article examines certain discursive-pragmatic strategies of institutional discourse, for the analysis of which elements of critical discourse analysis are employed, using semantic categories of discourse categorization and polarization (Dijk, 2000, p. 222).

The aim of this article is to analyze the interaction of prosody with the speech act organization in their relation to politeness strategies and discursive polarization in acceptance speech considered. This analysis takes into consideration the uniqueness of this speech in both its content and emotional aspects, as well as its prototypicality for such a sub-genre of awards speech as activist acceptance speech, with elements of a redemption narrative. The objectives of the article include (a) identifying intonational patterns that shape direct and indirect speech acts; (b) specifying markers of politeness strategies correlated with different types of acts and their associated prosodic characteristics; (c) identifying the similarities and differences between prosodics of expressive acts and the prosodic signals of positive politeness; (d) establishing markers of negative politeness and intonational features of representatives related to the "ecocentric" part of speech.

## Methods and Material

The research material consisted of Joaquin Phoenix's acceptance speech at the 2020 Oscars, characterized by the accumulation of various verbally marked pragmatic phenomena and vivid intonational patterns that connotatively contribute to the formation of pragmatic meanings. The choice for analyzing this speech is conditioned by several factors. Firstly, this speech has generated tremendous public resonance, being assessed as "one of the greatest in Oscar history" (Greene, 2020).

In particular, a separate scientific study has been dedicated to the analysis of the speech across 37 US and UK trade press and mainstream news articles (Parkinson & Herring, 2023). At the same time, through a comprehensive sampling of online resources, we have been able to establish that no fewer than 127 articles in the English-language press are devoted to the speech. However, the assessment of the speech was extremely ambiguous. Thirteen of the 37 articles dedicated to the speech were broadly negative, with the remaining 24 articles adopting either a positive or broadly neutral position (ibid.).

Secondly, the acceptance speech was chosen for analysis due to (a) the unique combination of, on one hand, genres of revelation and care, clearly marked by emotive and expressive elements, and on the other hand, elements of an ideological ecocentric discourse; (b) the presence of a contrast in speech between clear logical and semantic structuring and expressive-emotive prosodic design, which results in the prevalence of indirect

expressiveness implied beneath the formal arrangement of statements. The actor's speech is available online on *Youtube* channel<sup>1</sup>, and the speech transcript is available on the website of *The Guardian*<sup>2</sup>.

In the present study, the interaction between pragmatics and prosody and their corresponding devices have been approached from two perspectives: (a) from the point of view of "universal" pragmatics with an emphasis on the theory of speech acts and the universal principles of politeness and cooperation, and (b) from the perspective of institutional pragmatics, marked by strategies of value polarization of the inner and outer groups.

The complex method of analysis includes methods of auditory prosody analysis and pragmatic methods, which are applied at three stages of the research. The first stage involves identifying speech segments marked by pragmatic and prosodic devices. At this stage, auditory analysis was conducted, involving the identification of the speech's rhythmic and intonational parameters by a group of auditors. Fragments with pronounced fluctuations in emotional intensity were selected, with the identification of 139 segments of prosody. Simultaneously, the speech was analyzed to identify devices indicating the illocutionary force of direct expressives, as well as markers of indirect expressive illocutionary force, addressing the felicity condition of sincerity, which is crucial for this type of speech act. Among such markers, special attention was given to prosodic characteristics and means of indexing positive politeness, which determined the second stage of the analysis. In the second stage, the identified speech acts were analyzed with a focus on correlating these acts with prosodic markers and politeness strategies.

Accordingly, the first two stages were primarily guided by the method of Speech Act Analysis (Searle, 1969; McGowan et al., 2009) to identify direct and indirect expressives. In addition to the "social-etiquette" expressives defined by Searle (1969), the scope of expressives for analysis is expanded to include units falling under the classification criteria of the speaker's "concern with desire" or "the predominance of desire" (Weigand, 2010), as well as acts underlying emotions (Norricks, 1978, p. 282–290).

To establish the illocutionary force of indirect directives, the article employs the concept of felicity conditions as certain contextual rules that must be fulfilled for the act to be carried out properly; these conditions define the circumstances under which the act can be performed successfully (Searle, 1969, p. 57). Among the four conditions of success outlined by Searle (1969, p. 67), the most crucial in the context of this research is the condition of the speaker's sincerity, as the connotations of sincerity serve as the point of intersection, ensuring the correlation of linguistic, prosodic, and positive-politeness markers of expressive illocution.

Due to the correlation of expressive illocutionary force with politeness strategies, the second stage involves identifying markers associated with specific positive politeness strategies and establishing the relationship between these strategies and expressive acts, as well as prosodic signals common to both types of pragmatic devices. For this purpose, a classification of politeness strategies and an inventory of markers for their identification were applied (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Leech, 2016).

The third stage places primary emphasis on identifying and studying discursive strategies in their relation to speech acts, politeness strategies, and prosodic features in institutionally marked speech segments. At this stage, the article identifies types of representatives that constitute egocentric strategies and the negative politeness strategies characteristic of such acts. To study markers of negative politeness, the article also utilizes a classification of mitigators (Caffi, 1999), through which the speaker softens the interactional parameters of his speech (Caffi, 2006, p. 171). The article addresses three types of mitigation means, including "bushes" that impact the propositional scope of the acceptance speech, "hedges" pertaining to the illocutionary scope of utterances, and "shields" that defocus the speaker using deictic markers of time, place, or agent coordinates of the utterance. In the article, shields are related only to agent coordinates. To identify markers of adherence to or flouting of cooperative maxims, leading to discursive implicatures, the research employs elements of Gricean inferential pragmatics (Bach, 2012; Grice, 1975). Deviations from the maxim with the generation of implicatures are analyzed in terms of the prosodic cues that signal them.

When examining the prosodic interaction with discursive pragmatic strategies, the article also incorporates some elements of critical discourse analysis, using semantic categories introduced by van Dijk (2000; 2009), including categorization and polarization of "us vs. them."

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qiiWdTz\\_MNc&ab\\_channel=Oscars](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qiiWdTz_MNc&ab_channel=Oscars)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2020/feb/10/joaquin-phenix-oscars-speech-in-full#:~:text=I'm%20full%20of%20so,I'd%20be%20without%20it>

### Speech Acts and Politeness via Prosody: The First Pragmatic-Prosody Interface

#### Results and Discussion

The analysis of the pragmatics and prosody of the speech under examination has allowed for the identification of correlative relationships between speech act types, markers of positive and negative politeness, and prosodic parameters. The primary pragmatic perspective is speech act analysis, within which other pragmatic and prosodic devices are examined.

The correlation of prosody and pragmatics can be observed from the beginning of the analyzed speech despite the speaker's reserved emotions, and occasionally decreased loudness. The analysis of the speech act organization shows a preference for expressives – both direct and indirect ones, supported by prosodic features. Direct expressives convey the illocutionary force of gratitude, representing the category of “social-etiquette” acts that are normative for acceptance speeches:

Ex 1     *God, } I'm } full of } so much } gratitude } right } now.  
 ...I'm } grateful | that } so many of you } in } this } room | have } given me | a  
 } second } chance. |*

The first of the expressives above has an explicit exaggeration marker *so much*, which marks the felicity condition of “sincerity”, a requirement for the successful illocutionary force of such acts. Expressing gratitude intensified by sincerity markers like *God* and *full of so much gratitude*, the act implements a positive politeness strategy of exaggerating sympathy towards the audience. Prosodically, the intensity of the expressive illocutionary force is signaled by the accentuation of the exaggeration marker in the fourth intonational group, forming a descending stepped scale followed by a falling nucleus. Another direct expressive correlates with two positive politeness strategies, as the speaker not only exaggerates the sympathy toward the audience but also includes them in a collective activity (*have given me a second chance*) and assumes reciprocity by addressing “to common ground” (*so many of you in this room*). This creates an “in-group” through metonymic association of the room's space with the “space” of the film industry.

Despite the initial impression of the speaker's emotional detachment and neutrality in his speech, a prosodic analysis demonstrates that the speech carries an intense expressive and emotional coloring, enhancing the illocutionary force of direct expressives through prosodic means. At the beginning of the speech, the speaker's voice is rather quiet, almost descending to a whisper, making the fifth intonational group in the introductory part almost indistinguishable to the listener. However, lexical markers of gratitude contain prosodic markers indicating that the speaker is overwhelmed with emotions. Thus, the illocutionary force of direct expressives is supported by prosodic characteristics of the speech segment, including: (a) a breathy timbre; (b) an irregular rhythm; (c) intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (mid-level, low fall); (d) a stressed syllable and a nucleus or a descending stepping scale followed by a falling nucleus, conveyed by the exaggeration marker “so much” in the fourth intonation group; (e) very short, short, or medium filled pauses; (f) a narrow pitch range (from mid to low).

In addition to direct expressives, approximately one-third of all identified speech acts consist of indirect expressives, in which the primary expressive illocutionary force is implied within the formal-structural framing of representatives. On one hand, the speaker's utterances formally correspond to the illocutionary force of representatives; he communicates very clearly, structures his speech into logical and meaningful phrases, strictly adheres to the maxim of quantity, manner, and relation. On the other hand, the speaker's intonation indicates his desire to emotionally influence the audience, linked to the expressive illocutionary force.

Ex 2     *<sup>1</sup>We feelen'titled | <sup>2</sup>to artificially in'seminate a cow, | <sup>3</sup>and when she gives' birth, }  
<sup>4</sup>we steal her } baby, | <sup>5</sup>even though } her' cries of } anguish } are unmis } takable.  
 | <sup>8</sup>Then we take her } milk } that's in'tended for her } calf | <sup>10</sup>and we put it in our }  
 coffee | <sup>11</sup>and our ce } real. |*

Thus, the prosodic parameters of this segment include: (a) short intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (low fall, high fall, fall-rise) or a stressed syllable and a nucleus, (b) the prevalence and alternation of falling tones that reveal the speaker's emotions, (c) very short and short pauses.

Prosody supports the expressive illocution in the following cases: when the speech lacks the intensity and strength typically found in public speeches and when the speaker aims to structure his speech clearly. In the first case, an indicator that allows the audience to sense the sincerity and emotions of the speaker is the pause that occurs immediately after the direct expressive act – an etiquette expression of gratitude. This pause is filled with the *er* filler afterwards, indicating the speaker's agitation and giving him the opportunity to regain control over his voice and make it sound more stable.

In the second case, when striving to sound persuasive and authoritative, the speaker uses descending tones and short intonation groups. However, the expressive illocution is signaled by the variation in nuclear tones, periodic use of descending-rising patterns and short and very short pauses. Additionally, the speaker employs high fall to convey a sense of personal care and involvement. He also breaks intonation groups into two components for expressive emphasis on the idea of mutual responsibility for the situation in society, as in Example 3:

**Ex 3** <sup>1</sup>And I \think | <sup>2</sup>we \fear § <sup>3</sup>the \idea of \personal \change | <sup>4</sup>because we \think §  
<sup>5</sup>that we \have to \sacrifice \something, | <sup>6</sup>to \give \something \up |

The expressive illocutionary force embedded in clear, well-structured arguments demonstrates the speaker's commitment to truthfulness and sincerity, which are not only fundamental components of the maxim of quality but also contributed to felicity conditions for expressive speech acts.

The continuation of the speech reveals distinct prosodic markers of expressive illocution:

**Ex 4** <sup>1</sup>And \I do \not \feel | <sup>2</sup>\e\le\va\te\d a \bo\ve | <sup>3</sup>\a\ny of my \fel\low \no\mi\nees | <sup>4</sup>or \any\one §  
<sup>5</sup>\i\n \thi\s \ro\om | <sup>6</sup>\be\,ca\use | <sup>7</sup>\we \sh\ar\e § <sup>8</sup>the \sa\me \lo\ve, § <sup>9</sup>the \lo\ve  
of \fil\m. |

The illocutionary force of the indirect expressive is reinforced by numerous markers of positive politeness, which minimize the speaker's own contributions and demonstrate adherence to the politeness maxim of modesty (<sup>1</sup>\I do \not \feel | <sup>2</sup>\e\le\va\te\d a \bo\ve | <sup>3</sup>\a\ny of my \fel\low \no\mi\nees | <sup>4</sup>or \any\one § <sup>5</sup>\i\n \thi\s \ro\om |). This strategy is marked by nine intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (mid-level, low fall), a stressed syllable and a nucleus or a descending stepping scale followed by a falling nucleus, very short, short, or medium-filled pauses, a narrow pitch range, breathy timbre, and irregular rhythm to convey strong emotions of solemnity and the speaker's desire to convey an important message to the audience along with his feelings and emotions.

Additionally, the speaker uses nominations that denote or connote "sharedness" and the basis of unification into an in-group (*the same love, the love of film*), as well as inclusive pronouns as in-group markers, uniting the speaker with the audience. These means mark such positive politeness strategies as "Use in-group identity markers" and "Presuppose, raise, assert common ground" that are supported by prosodic means, i.e., normal speech tempo, normal loudness, short intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (low fall), very short and short pauses, a narrow tonal range (from mid to low), clear timbre, and regular rhythm.

Markers of primary illocutionary force in indirect expressives include numerous syntactic stylistic devices, such as:

**a** Anaphoric repetition in combination with parallelism:

**Ex 5** <sup>1</sup>\I've been a \sc\oun\drel § \i\n my \li\fe. | <sup>2</sup>\I've been \sel\fish. | <sup>3</sup>\I've been \cru\el at  
<sup>4</sup>\ti\mes, | <sup>5</sup>\ha\r\d to \wo\rk with. | <sup>6</sup>\;...we're \ta\l\king about § <sup>7</sup>the \fi\ght against in  
<sup>8</sup>\ju\stice. | <sup>9</sup>\We're \ta\l\king about § <sup>10</sup>the \fi\ght against the be\lief...;

**b** Climax (gradation) achieved by enumeration, polysyndeton, parallelism, anaphoric repetition, and implicit antithesis:

**Ex 6** <sup>1</sup>And I \think § <sup>2</sup>\tha\t's when we're at \ou\r \be\st, | <sup>3</sup>when we su\pp\ort \ea\ch \ot\her,  
<sup>4</sup>§ \no\t when we \ca\n\cel \ea\ch \ot\her § \ou\t for \pa\st mis\ta\kes, | <sup>5</sup>but when we  
<sup>6</sup>\he\lp \ea\ch \ot\her § to \gr\ow, § <sup>7</sup>when we \e\du\cate \ea\ch \ot\her, § <sup>8</sup>when we \gui\de  
<sup>9</sup>\ea\ch \ot\her § toward re\dem\pti\on |;

c Enumeration in combination with polysyndeton:

**Ex 7** ...whether we're \talking about § 'gender ine,quality § or \racism | or 'queer \rights | or in'digenous \rights § or 'animal \rights |... ; ...but 'human \beings § at our \best | are 'so in\ventive § and cre\ative § and in\genious |;

d anadiplosis:

**Ex 8** 'we \share § the 'same \love, § the 'love of \film;

e Anaphora in combination with enumeration, polysyndeton, and ascending gradation:

**Ex 9** ...'one \nation, § 'one \people, § 'one \race, § 'one \gender, | 'one \species, § has the 'right to \dominate, § con\trol, § and \use, § and ex\ploit a\ nother § with im\punity||.

The expressive syntax means reveal the expressive illocutionary force since they express the elevated state of the speaker, intensify his feelings and emotions based on specific intonation patterns. In anaphoric repetition in combination with parallelism in (a), the prosody is characterized by short intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (low fall, high fall) and a stressed syllable and a nucleus. The ascending gradation in (b), with increasing semantic and emotionally expressive characteristics of speech, is prosodically based on very short and short pauses, a narrow (from mid to low) and wide (from high to low) pitch range, and resonant timber. Enumeration in combination with polysyndeton in (c) is prosodically signaled with a rising intonation (↑) before words and phrases such as “gender inequality”, “racism”, “queer rights”, “indigenous rights”, and “animal rights”, emphasizing the importance of these semantic aspects for the speaker and the audience. Their significance is additionally highlighted by short pauses (|) and emphasis on words with changes in intonation, marked with notations “§” and “|”. The anadiplosis in (d) is prosodically framed by short pauses (|), emphasizing the importance of words and phrases in the context, while maintaining a normal tempo of speech and normal loudness. Changes in intonation and emphasis on words *the 'same \love, § the 'love of \film* underscore the commonality and the importance of shared values. The accumulation of expressive syntax elements such as anaphora, enumeration, polysyndeton, and rising gradation in (e) relies on correlated prosodic characteristics, including short intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (low fall), very short and short pauses, a narrow pitch range (from mid to low), resonant timber, and regular rhythm. Additionally, a significant portion of syntactic stylistic devices are prosodically highlighted by transitioning from normal to accelerated speech tempo and from normal to increased loudness. The similar intonation of various stylistic devices, with matching prosodic characteristics like short intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (low fall, high fall), a stressed syllable, a nucleus resonant timbre, very short and short pauses, and a rising intonation before evaluative concepts, allows for categorizing them as common markers of expressive illocution.

Simultaneously, such devices connote positive politeness as they create an emotional connection between the speaker and the audience, ensuring emotional involvement. So, they implement three strategies of positive politeness: they consolidate the group, involve both speaker and audience in the activity, and assume or assert reciprocity.

In addition to the connotations based on expressive syntax, positive politeness in the given indirect expressives is marked lexically:

- a Verbs are used to denote mutual actions in combination with the phrase “each other”, signifying reciprocity: *when we support each other, help each other, educate each other, guide each other.*
- b Adjectives of positive evaluation, approval, and sympathy contribute to the strategy of exaggerating approval and sympathy towards the audience: *human beings at our best are so inventive and creative and ingenious.*
- c Inclusive pronouns, acting as in-group identity markers, unite the speaker with the audience and, more broadly, with anyone who shares his ecocentric ideas: *to use our voice, many of us, we can create, we're at our best, we support, our guiding principles.* The pronoun “we”, implying reciprocity, is used 33 times in a speech consisting of 453 words. Furthermore, within the context of the entire speech, *all sentient beings and the environment* are also considered part of the “in-group”.



- d Repeating the numeral one suggests a feeling of belonging to the same community: *one nation, one people, one race, one gender, one species*.

In addition to expressive syntax and lexical markers of positive politeness correlating with indirect expressives, fragments (b) and (d) convey optimistic connotations, embodying the positive politeness strategy, “be optimistic”. Intonational highlighting of markers of positive politeness, which serve as the lexical “content” of expressive syntax, reveals common prosodic signals with it. The success of expressive illocution is marked by perlocutionary feedback from the audience in the form of multiple ovations (kinetic signs of engagement) and emotional cheers after particularly prominent fragments, especially from a stylistic and positive politeness perspective. Stylistic and pragmatic devices are supported by similar prosody, which indicates a prosodic correlation of expressive illocution, stylistic syntax, and strategies for group consolidation and engagement in joint activities:

**Ex 10** We're *tal*king about *the* *fight* against the be*lie*f that *one* *na*tion, *one* *peo*ple, *one* *ra*ce, *one* *ge*nder, *one* *spe*cies, *has* the *ri*ght to *domi*nate, *con*trol, *and* *use*, *and* *ex*loit a *no*ther *with* im*pu*nity. ||; And I *thi*nk that when we *use* *love* *and* *com*passion *as* our *gui*ding *prin*ciples, *we* can *cre*ate, *de*velop *and* *imple*ment *sys*tems of *cha*nge *that* are *ben*eficial *to* *all* *sen*tient *be*ings *and* *to* the *en*vironment. || When we *su*pport *ea*ch *ot*her, *not* when we *can*cel *ea*ch *ot*her *out* for *pa*st *mis*takes, *but* when we *hel*p *ea*ch *ot*her *to* *gro*w, *when* we *edu*cate *ea*ch *ot*her, *when* we *gui*de *ea*ch *ot*her *towa*rd *re*demption.

Illocutionary force of both the direct and indirect expressives is clearly encoded by their prosodic features, and positive-politeness strategies as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1** The correlation of expressive illocutionary force with politeness and prosodic devices

Illocutionary force	Positive politeness strategies	Verbal markers	Correlative prosodic characteristics
Direct expressives	Exaggeration of sympathy with audience – first positive politeness strategy	Idioms to express gratitude, explicit exaggeration marker	- normal to slow tempo of speech, - normal to decreased loudness, - short intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (Mid-level, Low Fall) or a stressed syllable and a nucleus, - very short and short pauses, - a narrow (from mid to low) pitch range, - resonant timber, - regular rhythm
Indirect expressives	Establishing the common ground; emotional involvement and empathy; involvement into common activity; assuming reciprocity; exaggerating approval and sympathy towards the audience; construction and consolidation of an internal group; connotation of optimism.	(1) The absence of verbal markers of illocution; (2) Stylistic devices	- normal to accelerated tempo of speech, - normal to increased loudness, - short intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (Low Fall, High Fall) or a stressed syllable and a nucleus, a Descending Stepping Scale followed by a falling nucleus, - very short and short pauses, - a narrow and wide (from high to low) pitch range, - resonant timber

### Discursive Pragmatic Strategies: The Second Pragmatic-Prosody Interface

Among the discourse pragmatic strategies, we identified the strategy of “We-Other Categorization” as the polarization of the ingroup and outgroup, introducing into speech the elements of genre hybridity associated with ecocentric ideological discourse. Scholars define ecocentrism as “the harmonious and ‘selfless’ interaction at interpersonal, socio, intercultural, and transnational levels without being limited to the ‘human-nature’ relations” (Kravchenko & Pasternak, 2020, p. 36), and “the recognition of the importance of someone’s interests at the expense of self-interests” (op. cit., p. 28).

The first group polarization opposes all humanity to the natural world:

**Ex 11** *I think we’ve become very disconnected from the natural world, and many of us... believe that we’re the center of the universe.*

It is essential to note that while the speaker professes egocentric views, as explicitly stated, he still accepts a portion of shared responsibility for people. He uses the inclusive pronoun “we” and the deictic hedge “I think” as a means to express the maxim of tact within the framework of the negative politeness strategy of not imposing his opinion on the audience.

The second group opposition consists of the external group of those seeking to dominate others and the internal group of those fighting against discrimination. The external group is marked by the statement in Example 12:

**Ex 12** *We’re talking about § the fight against the belief § that lone nation, § lone people, § lone race, § lone gender, lone species, § has the right to dominate, § control, § and use, § and exploit another § with impunity. ||*

It highlights “another voice” that does not align with the speaker’s voice, thus demonstrating implicit intertextuality.

In the “ecocentric” part of his speech, the speaker predominantly uses representative speech acts with corresponding prosodic patterns. It is noteworthy that the speech text lacks direct representatives marked with performative markers of representative illocutionary force such as “I know”, “I believe”, and others. Dominant are indirect representative-reasoning acts, stimulating the audience to contemplate without explicitly imposing the speaker’s views, which aligns with the negative politeness strategy of not imposing opinions. The speech also includes separate acts of representatives-justifications and predictions, and no acts of argumentation, interpretation, objection, and declaration are identified. This further confirms that the ecocentric part of the speech is characterized by negative politeness, avoiding imposition on the audience while adhering to the maxim of tact.

The representative-reasoning acts are marked by numerous hedges like “I/we think” and *But for me*, which function as mitigators placed between the speaker and the statement, framing the expression within the context of subjective-epistemic modality. Among the various mitigators classified in Caffi’s taxonomy, such as hedges, bushes, and shields, it is the hedges that act on the illocutionary force of the utterance, softening it. In other words, the use of hedges in representatives, on the one hand, marks their indirect illocution, softening the semantics of certainty and non-alternativeness, and, on the other hand, implements negative politeness, refraining from imposing views. Representatives-reasoning acts contain inclusive pronouns and words with the theme of “togetherness”, which serve a different role than in expressive speech acts. In the representatives, they function as mitigators-shields – inclusive pronouns that blur personal deixis, and bushes oriented towards the propositional softening of the statement. Apart from the word *commonality*, the bushes in representatives include *some of* and *at times*. Thus, the representatives-reasoning realize at least two negative politeness strategies: hedge usage and minimizing the degree of imposition.

Each of the identified types of representatives is characterized by its prosodic design. In the acts of reasoning, common prosodic parameters include: normal to slow tempo of speech, normal to decreased or normal to

increased loudness, short intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (mid-level, low fall, high fall, low rise) or a stressed syllable and a nucleus, very short, short and medium pauses, a narrow (from mid to low) or wide (from high to low) pitch range, resonant timber, and regular rhythm.

**Ex 13** *I've been 'thinking a \lot about | some of the dis'tressing } } issues } } that we're 'facing co\llectively. | And I \think } } at \times } } we \feel } } or we are 'made to \feel | that we \champion } } 'different \causes. | But for ,me, | I 'see 'commo\nality | ; I \think } } we've be\come } } 'very disco\nnected } } from the 'natural \world | ; And I \think, | we \fear | the 'idea of 'personal \change, | because we \think } } we 'have to \sacrifice ,something, | to 'give \something \up. |*

Representatives-confessions, in terms of their intonational properties, are most similar to the prosody of expressives (Ex 14):

**Ex 14** *>And } } 'this \form } } of ex\pression } } >has } } \given me } } the 'most ex'traordinary \life. | 'I don't \know } } where I'd be wi\thout it |*

Thanks to the transition from slow to normal speech tempo and from decreased to normal loudness, the speaker sounds highly emotional, and their speech becomes very expressive. Despite the above-mentioned similarity, in this type of representatives we see short intonation groups and unusual separation of an auxiliary and the main verb into two different intonation groups.

Representative forecasts slightly differ from the prosody of reasoning and confessions (Ex 15):

**Ex 15** *we can cre\ate, | de\velop } } and \implement | 'systems of \change } } that are \bene\ficial } } to 'all \sentient \beings } } >and } } to the en\vironment. ||*

We observe normal to accelerated tempo of speech, normal loudness, the alternation of short and very short pauses, intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (low fall, mid-level), a narrow (from mid to low) pitch range.

Another feature that links the analyzed speech to ideological discourse is the use of a discursive strategy of overgeneralization, replacing the concept of “use” with the concept of “discrimination” concerning domestic animals. Generalization is achieved by equating the concepts of gender inequality, racism, gay rights, indigenous rights on one hand, with the concept of “animal rights” on the other, aimed, in turn, at equating the concept of “human rights” with “animal rights”. As a result, the violation of human and animal rights is conceptualized within the framework of “injustice”. The speaker then provides a touching example (about a cow artificially inseminated, separated from her calf, despite her cries of sorrow, to add milk intended for the calf to someone’s porridge or coffee), related simultaneously to three semantic categories: illustration as a form of argumentation of his point of view; sympathy elicited by the illustration; a victimization strategy aimed at arousing empathy (Van Dijk, 2000, p. 217). This leads to equating the concepts of “use” and “discrimination” and to a schematic simplification of any situation related to the use of animals by humans as “discrimination” and “injustice”.

From a prosodic function perspective in conveying evaluative pragmatic value, auditory analysis revealed an intonational accent on all words denoting “discrimination” or contextually connotating it.

The last sentence of the speech, at the cohesion level, violates the cooperative maxim of relevance, as it is clearly not related to the preceding information. Disregarding the maxim triggers conversational implicature that restores contextual relevance, providing the underlying value basis for the entire text – “Love is a value for which a person can give up some of their rights for the sake of those who depend on them” (Ex 16):

**Ex 16** *When 'he was 'seven,teen, } } my \brother [River] } } \wrote } } this \lyric. | He \said: } } "Run to the \rescue } } with \love } } and \peace } } will \follow. ||".*

The meaning of the concluding phrase underlying the speech's key value is emphasized by its prosody, which is the most distinctive in the text, iconically reproducing the speaker's emotions: breathy, stumbling, broken voice with numerous very short and short pauses, an expressive division of utterance into small intonation groups that reveals the speaker's inner feelings, emphasis on all key words that make them especially meaningful, an irregular rhythm.

## Conclusions

Genre-rhetorical hybridity in speech, combining clarity of logical and semantic structure with emotionally expressive meanings, is evident in the characteristics of its constituent speech acts and underlying prosodic means. Direct expressives conveying the illocutionary force of gratitude correlate with positive politeness strategies and are prosodically signaled by short intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (mid-level, low fall) or a stressed syllable and a nucleus, very short and short pauses, a narrow pitch range, resonant timber, and regular rhythm.

The highest prosodic expressiveness characterizes indirect expressive acts marked by syntactic stylistic devices that convey "emotional involvement" and "sincerity" as key felicity conditions for expressives. Such acts are signaled by short intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (low fall, high fall) and a stressed syllable and a nucleus with resonant timber, a rising intonation before evaluative concepts and key semantic components, a transition from normal to accelerated speech tempo, from normal to increased loudness, and emphasis on key words.

Connotations based on expressive syntax provide emotional involvement, thus contributing to positive politeness, which is conveyed in indirect expressives by lexical markers of reciprocity, exaggerated approval, sympathy towards the audience, and belonging to the same community. Prosodic highlighting of positive politeness markers is similar to prosodic signals of expressive syntax, with the exception of lexical units that underscore commonality. The intonation of these components differs in terms of normal speech tempo, normal loudness, very short and short pauses, a narrow tonal range (from mid to low), clear timbre, and regular rhythm.

Voicing his "ecocentric" ideas, the speaker predominantly uses representatives-reasoning speech acts, encouraging the audience to reflect, which aligns with the negative politeness of non-imposition and is marked by mitigators such as hedges, bushes, and shields. These acts are based on prosodic patterns with a transition from normal to slow speech tempo, normal to decreased or normal to increased loudness, short intonation groups consisting of a nucleus (mid-level, low fall, high fall, low rise) or a stressed syllable and a nucleus, very short, short and medium pauses, a narrow (from mid to low) or wide (from high to low) pitch range, resonant timber, and regular rhythm.

In terms of the relationship between prosodic patterns and discursive strategies of categorization and polarization, contrasting the outgroup of those who seek to dominate others with the ingroup of those fighting discrimination, auditory analysis has identified intonational accents on all words containing the same "discrimination" or connoting it contextually.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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## Santrauka

### Natalia Kravchenko, Olga Valigura, Liubov Kozub, Yuliia Babchuk Pragmatika per prozodiją optimizuojant tarpusavio sąveiką

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas koreliacinis pragmatikos ir prozodijos aspektas, susijęs su suti-kimo kalba. Remdamasis pragmatikos tyrimais, orientuotais į prozodinius-pragmatinius ryšius, ir taikydamas metodologiją, kuri derina garsinę analizę su kokybiniais pragmatinės ir diskursyviosios analizės metodais, straipsnis atskleidžia prozodijos sąveiką su mandagumo strategijomis, Grice'o implikacijomis, kalbos aktų iliustracine galia ir institucinės poliarizacijos strategijos stiprinimu. Tyrime prieita prie keturių pagrindinių išvadų. Teigiamas mandagumas koreliuoja su tokiomis prozodinėmis priemonėmis, kaip normalus kalbos tem-pas, normalus garsumas, Vidutinio ir žemo kritimo intonacijos grupės, labai trumpos, trumpos arba vidutinio ilgio užpildytos pauzės, siauras garsų aukščio diapazonas, skambus arba kvėpuojantis tembras, taisyklingas ir netaisyklingas ritmas, pabrėžtas skiemuo ir branduolys, mažėjanti žingsnių skalė, po kurios seka krintan-tis branduolys, kurie skiriasi skirtingose mandagumo strategijose. Tiesioginių išraiškos priemonių iliustracija perteikiama normaliu arba lėtu kalbos tempu, normaliu arba sumažėjusiu garsumu, trumpomis intonacinėmis grupėmis, sudarytomis iš branduolio arba pabrėžiamojo skiemens ir branduolio, labai trumpomis ir trumpomis pauzėmis, siauru garso aukščio diapazonu, rezonansine mediena ir taisyklingu ritmu. Netiesioginiai ekspresy-vūs veiksmažodžiai nuo tiesioginių skiriasi pagreintu kalbos tempu, normaliu ar padidintu garsumu, vidutinio, mažo kritimo, didelio kritimo intonacinėmis grupėmis, mažėjančia žingsnių skale, po kurios eina krintantis branduolys, ir plačiu garso aukščio diapazonu. Intonacija palaiko implikacijas, kurias sukelia kiekybės maksi-mos nepaisymas, grindžiamas ekspresyviaisiais žymekliais – stilistinėmis pertekliaus priemonėmis. Žodžių su denotacine ar konotacine sema „diskriminacija“ intonacinis akcentavimas prisideda prie diskursyvios atskir-ties poliarizacijos strategijos.

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