In this paper the necessity to distinguish between two functionally different types of word prominence in an utterance is grounded. The first type is neutral sentence /syntagmatic/ stress which performs constitutive and delimitative functions, and the second type is sentence accent which is related to semantic side of the utterance. Experiments on perception showed that relationship between the sentence accent and neutral sentence stress is not that of complementary distribution and can be realized in one syntagma/sentence/ simultaneously. Among functions of the neutral sentence stress a function of expression of word semantic value is not included, it serves as a means of syntagma phonetic organization and speech rhythmization.

INTRODUCTION

In works on Russian intonation a point of view put forward in works by L.V.Scherba becomes more and more widespread. In conformity with it two functionally different types of word prominence in the utterance are distinguished, namely, neutral sentence stress and sentence sense accent.

The neutral sentence stress is obligatory in a syntagma/or single-syntagms sentence/ and is assigned to its final word thus performing constitutive and delimitative functions. This stress is independent of specific semantic relations in the utterance and serves as a means of intonation segmentation and speech rhythmization.

The second type, the sentence accent, differs from the first one in that it is realized in a sentence under only these conditions, when it is determined by a context, communicative intention of a speaker etc. A place of the sentence accent is not fixed, it can be placed on any word in a sentence. There exist various different terms for this type of word prominence - semantic, logical, contrastive, rheumatic etc. Thus it implies that the sentence accent depends on the semantic side of the utterance.

In works by T.M.Nikolaeva the necessity of strict distinguishing between neutral sentence stress /SS/ and sentence accent /SA/ is grounded, since functionally they are heterogeneous phenomena: "The SA is a textual communicative phenomenon and the SS - an intrinsic intonation phenomenon" (1992, p. 9).

This conception is not, however, generally accepted. In works on functional syntax and semantics by soviet and foreign scholars as well as in works on intonation, there is no distinguishing between functionally different types of word prominence in the utterance. It is considered that any word prominence depends on different semantic relations. That's why in these works the term "sentence stress" designates both neutral sentence stress and sentence sense accents.

We consider sentence accent pattern to be the result of the simultaneous realization of functionally different devices of word prominence, namely, the neutral sentence stress /SS/ and the sentence accent /SA/. At the prosodic level the sentence accent pattern is realized in different degrees of prosodic prominence of words which make up the utterance.

To give prove to the proposed point of view the following questions were considered:

1. How do the SS and SA in the utterance correlate? Are they realized simultaneously or does the SA neutralize SS?
2. Is a word, which has the SS in the absence of the SA in the utterance, the point of information focus? In this case, is the degree of prosodic prominence of a word related to its semantic value?

We tried to find answers to these questions by applying to speech competence of native speakers and analysing mechanisms of perception of prosodic prominence of words in an utterance and mechanisms of interpretation of semantic value of words in a text as well.

I

The question of relationship between neutral sentence stress and sentence accent in a Russian utterance is treated differently by scientists that accept functional difference of these types of prominence. Some scholars consider that there exists a possibility of their simultaneous realization in a sentence. For example, in the paper by L.V.Zlatoustova (1963) it is said that sentence accents "are always realized with the sentence stress and in some cases they overlap the sentence stress but don't neutralize it" (p.106). T.M.Nikolaeva also believes that "the presence of a greatly prominent word at the beginning /of a sentence - T.K./ does not mean..."
Beginning of a sentence - T.R./ does not know that the final part of it lacks
prominence as its prominence in regard to...
out some words, maintaining the number of sentences and not violating coherence of the text so that the main /from the standpoint of a subject/ information of the text is left intact; 2/ to underline in the text words and word combinations which should be included into summary in order to reproduce its content in detail some time later; 3/ to give the summary of the text in one's own words. According to the results of answers of the subjects each word of the text can be characterized by a set of three features arbitrarily called "redundancy" /A/, "importance" /B/, "richness of content" /C/.

Estimate of the semantic value of words was carried out in two stages. At the first stage a coefficient of word semantic value /S/ was calculated by the following formula:

\[ S = A + B + C \]

where A - a relative number of the subjects considered the word to be "redundant", B - of the subjects considered the word to be "important", C - of the subjects considered the word to be "rich of content". The calculated S-values can vary from -1 to +2.

At the second stage according to numerical S-values and a combination of A, B and C features the semantic value /S/ was assigned to words in the following way: if \( S \leq 0 \), \( A = 0 \) if \( S > 0 \) and \( B = 0 \), \( C = 0 \); \( B = 2 \) if \( 0 < S < 1 \) and \( A = 0 \) but \( B, C \neq 0 \); \( C = 3 \) if \( S > 1 \) but \( B, C \neq 0 \).

Technique of determining the degree of word prominence in texts

The degree of word prominence in texts was analysed in its subjective aspect, i.e. from the point of view of its perception by native speakers. Records of texts read by 8 speakers were presented to the subjects /II students of philologic department/. In the process of audition of the texts they were asked to divide sentences into syntagmas and to highlight the most prominent word in each sentence.

Based on the results of the audition test the degrees of prominence calculated from the data of all speakers and auditors in conformity with the technique reported in the first part of the paper were determined. It should be noted that for the convenience of comparison of the semantic value indices with word prominence estimates we introduced the index \( P = 0 \) in case \( K = 0 \).

Results

The study of correlation between different indices of semantic value of words and degrees of subjective prominence of these words demonstrated that words with maximum semantic value /\( S = 3 \)/ can be characterized by the following degrees of prominence: \( P = 1 \), on the average, 35.2% of cases, \( P = 2 \) - 11.6% of cases, \( P = 3 \) - 33% of cases and can't have a degree of prominence \( P = 0 \). At the same time words characterized by the maximum degree of prominence /\( P = 3 \)/ can have any semantic values with approximately equal probability: \( K = 0 \), on the average, 15.6% of cases, \( K = 1 \) - 30.7% of cases, \( K = 2 \) - 22% of cases and \( K = 3 \) - 31.7% of cases.

The data show that in the texts the relationship between the degree of prominence and semantic value of words is one-sided: words of maximum semantic value have a tendency to be prosodically marked. However, the reverse is not true: maximum prominence of a word does not necessarily indicate maximum semantic value.

The main reason for this asymmetry lies in the fact that in texts the degree of word prominence is mainly determined by the mechanism of neutral sentence stress which is realized on the final word of a syntagma irrespective of its semantic value. On this account one ought to expect that the degree of prosodic prominence of a word depends on its position in regard to syntagmas boundaries.

Our results show that for words of minimum semantic value, if they are placed at a syntagma boundary, the frequency of prominence values \( P = 3 \) increases up to 45%. For words of maximum semantic values the frequency of values \( P = 3 \) constitutes 95% if these words are at a boundary and 35% if they are placed in the middle of a sentence.

The results prove that the most essential factor which affects the degree of prosodic prominence of a word is its position in relation to syntagmas boundaries. In this case word prominence is determined by the effect of the neutral sentence stress. Thus, words of maximum semantic value in a text are not always prosodically highlighted but only in cases when they are under "favourable" sentence conditions. Hence, the expression of semantic value of words in a text is not the function of the SS.

SUMMARY

The obtained results give an answer to the questions that were considered in the first and second parts of our study. It was shown that the relationship between the SA and SS is not that of complementary distribution and that they can be realized simultaneously within one sentence. If the SA is a means of expression of word semantic value, then the neutral sentence stress serves as a means of syntagma phonetic organization, intonational segmentation and rhythmization of speech.

The sentence accent pattern which is realized in different degrees of word prosodic prominence is determined by two functionally different mechanisms - the neutral sentence stress which highlights the final word of a syntagma and the sentence /sense/ accent, the place of which is not fixed.

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