

Selling English: Advertising as a Phonopragmatic Medium for Teaching Intonation Use

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ABSTRACT

Advertising is among the most dynamic engines of language innovation, a “living” laboratory of catch-phrases and slang that give insight into modern social attitudes and developments. This study argues that advertising is an under-appreciated resource for effective teaching of suprasegmental characteristics. It aims to embrace advertising, a central component of the media and cultural landscape, as the basis for a phonopragmatic tool that expands students' understanding of the persuasive power of pitch variability. The linguistic part of the study combines auditory and acoustic types of complex phonetic analysis of 30 advertisement videos. The results testify to the strategic use of intonational and prosodic means in advertising discourse that reflect differing approaches to audiences. Variations in pitch help convey explicit messages directed at rational thinking, or foster more intimate conversational approaches aiming to influence the emotional dimension. The findings of the linguistic analysis contribute to the scientific description of advertising discourse as a multimodal category and assist in the teaching of intonation in more appealing forms to the students who may be inhibited by interference from their native language (L1). Acquiring prosodic strategies of a second language (L2) through the familiar medium of advertising may represent an additional incentive for teachers and learners, as part of communicative phonetics that emphasizes the pragmatic impact of various intonation combinations in coherent discourse. This approach diversifies traditional phonetic drills of separate pitch patterns and reinforces the focus on students' L2 comprehension and public speaking skills ensuring powerful communicative performance.

Keywords: advertising; prosodic strategy; communicative phonetics; pitch; second language teaching

INTRODUCTION

Extensive linguistic research of prosody provides ample evidence of the significant impact of intonation in various spheres of verbal communication (House, 1990; Hirscheberg, 2003; Tannen, 2005a; Reed, 2011; Demina, & Ivanova 2019; Godde et al., 2020; Ekpe, 2022; Sola & Torregrosa-Azor, 2023; Helganger & Falkum, 2023; Kim, 2023; Wei & Liang, 2023). However, the reasonableness of teaching L2 intonation has been questioned in some studies devoted to the research on phonetic aspects that are worth considering in a classroom (Kaur, 2018; Jung, 2010; Doughty & Long, 2005). In particular, Jenkins's groundbreaking work encourages English teachers to focus only on those phonological and prosodic attributes that are fundamentally responsible for English intelligibility worldwide; since an incorrect use of them significantly hinders the communication process in English as a global language (Jenkins, 2000; 2015). This has become known as the lingua franca core (LFC), the segmental priorities of which include teaching English vowel length opposition, accent rhoticity, distinct pronunciation and consonant cluster simplification in connected speech. In terms of suprasegments, LFC includes skills responsible for meaningful segmentation of speech flow, correct prominence in sense-groups and

an accurate placement of contrastive stress. Intonation patterns having more to do with speakers' attitudes, pragmatic intentions and a deeper meaning of an utterance, rather than with its structural organisation, are often viewed as redundant and may even be recognized as unteachable, being regarded as an unnecessary cause of stress and frustration for both teacher and student. Indeed, the idea about the peripheral status of phonetic skills for communicative purposes is expressed in many studies which view pronunciation and intonation as inferior to other language skills, more critical for effective communication (Levis, 2004; Derwing & Munro, 2009; Avery & Ehrlich, 2012; Baker, 2013).

Another popular approach to teaching L2 suprasegmentals concentrates on universally shared intonation meanings of completeness versus incompleteness, largely associated with Brazil's communicative functions of proclaiming (falling) and referring (rising) melodic tones (Brazil, 1993; House, 1990; Gussenhoven, 1990; Baker, 2011; Domínguez, 2014; Buring, 2015). This interpretation of intonational meaning helps to navigate between the 'given' and 'new' information, or to trace a theme and rheme alternation in English oral discourse. However, it does not help to avoid a pragmatic and attitudinal confusion that the presence of foreign tunes in English as a lingua franca may generate.

Following these approaches is rather tempting, as teaching intonation is often viewed as challenging and time-consuming, and is traditionally associated with tedious drills and repetitions before students are able to transfer their new L2 intonational skills into spontaneous speaking (Ngo & Setter, 2011; Kuru, 2022). However, many phoneticians are, nevertheless, convinced that acquiring L2 intonation competence is vital (Holden & Hogan, 1993; Graham et al., 2001; Komar, 2005; De Marco & Paone, 2015; Vereninova & Demina, 2019; Yu, 2022; Zhang & Li, 2023; Gandhioke & Singh, 2023). Paralinguistic intonational errors, akin to cultural mistakes, may potentially cause a greater negative resonance than a grammatical or lexical misuse in speech. This article agrees with those who posit that failure to acquire L2 intonation skills leads to a noticeable lack of intelligibility and fluency of speech, as well as to deficiency in understanding others. This article also recognises that teaching intonation can be intimidating and repetitious, and proposes the use of the advertising medium as an approachable and effective vehicle for L2 teachers and students.

ACHIEVING L2 INTONATION COMPETENCE IN THE CLASSROOM

A series of empirical studies on the perception of native melodic contours in L2 communicative practice provides strong evidence that prosodic cues are not naturally understood and do not convey universally shared meanings on emotional and attitudinal dimensions (Chen, Gussenhoven, & Rietveld, 2004; Harris, 2004). The findings of many perceptual experiments provide a solid proof that prosodic communicative competence cannot be ignored in L2 teaching process.

For instance, Holden & Hogan (1993) in their study exploring the perception of intonational trends, highlight the tendency of native English speakers to negatively interpret intonation variations of Russian learners of English. Melodic patterns judged as neutral within the Russian communicative culture are often perceived as signs of anger or irritation when transferred to English as a lingua franca. Especially negative reaction was triggered, apparently, by tone-group

3¹ which is used in exclamations and general questions in neutral Russian speech and involves a widened pitch range.

Another study provides findings of a contrastive analysis of emotional speech produced by Slovenian and native English speakers (Komar, 2005). The results showed that Slovenians' intonation in English was described as 'flat' due to the significant difference in the suprasegmental inventories of the two languages. Mainly, the researcher points out the linear character and a narrower pitch of Slovenian falling tones which do not sound as salient and emphatic as English falls. Therefore, native English speakers would be inclined to judge such monotonous intonation as a sign of disinterest, minimal participation, and even rudeness.

Similar findings were reported by De Marco (2017; 2019) about teaching Italian intonation in multilingual groups. The informants involved in the research, demonstrated a lingual-specific sensitivity to the foreign intonation patterns. According to the results, Russians and Persians, due to a strong interference of their L1 vocal trends, fail to adequately control the elocution parameter in Italian, especially in emotional speech. The communication profiles of the Russian and Persian learners of Italian demonstrated a strong reliance on their cultural norms that projected a totally different interpretation of L2 paralinguistic phenomena and even caused much discomfort for the Persian group. The scholar concludes that Russian and Persian learners' L2 practice initially shows an especially strong conditioning from their native suprasegmental properties, which becomes lighter, however, after intensive phonetic training (De Marco, 2019).

A slightly different angle of L2 intonation perception and interpretation was investigated by Graham et al. (2001). The conducted experiment questioned the ability of English learners to identify emotion cues in native English speech. According to the results, a higher level of language competence did not automatically indicate a more accurate recognition of emotions in the given stimuli.

More recent findings also prove that the transfer of L1 intonational trends does matter in interpreting verbalized meaning in L2 speech (Chen, & Wang, 2018; Buzan et al., 2022; Pešková, 2022; Colantoni & Ineke, 2023; Perticone, 2023). The researchers agree that the ability to decode L2 intonation variations is considerably lower in the absence of an intensive exposure to the cultural context of the target language. But it still can be significantly developed after a special phonetic course aimed at training perceptive and productive pronunciation skills. Therefore, L2 teaching by no means can neglect intonation acquisition, which should represent a bilateral process of mastering melodic patterns and learning to interpret them adequately in actual L2 discourse practice in the given cultural context.

ADVERTISING AS PART OF COMMUNICATIVE PHONETICS

L2 intonation practice, perhaps more than other aspects of communication, depends on the linguistic and cultural distance between students' L1 and L2. Cultural integration is essential for this facet of language activity, as it involves accurate production and adequate interpretation of the pragmatic intention and attitude incorporated into the suprasegmental frame of an utterance. As students strive to become more fluent, versatile, and confident L2 users, their teacher's task remains to develop their receptive and productive skills in a most effective and diversified way, i.e. implementing various forms of communicative activity, relevant in the light of the socio-cultural context. This task in a non-native environment, however, represents quite a challenge, as

¹ The conception of seven basic tone-groups in the standard Russian intonation was elaborated by E. A. Bryzgunova (1963) and has been largely adopted in L2 teaching Russian worldwide.

students are disadvantaged in terms of a sufficient degree of L2 exposure, and their linguistic immersion is less powerful and intense. The author believes, that this situation can be significantly improved by introducing students to ‘phonetic culture’ of the target language and intensive training of L2 pronunciation and intonation skills in popular types of discourse activity (informing, reporting, presenting, interviewing, discussing, conversing etc.). This focus on communicative phonetics seeks to encourage students to select and use segmental and suprasegmental means of adequate communicative behaviour in L2 environment and develop their phonopragmatic awareness of effective communication in different social spheres of L2 practice. Here the pragmatic potential of suprasegmental units should come to the fore, as learners train the conventional L2 practices of giving prominence, highlighting, overshadowing, expressing their intentions and attitudes that are vital for their future integration into L2-speaking society. Here the teaching value of advertising discourse should not be underestimated. As an audio-visual resource available on television and online, advertising remains one of the easiest ways to get access to authentic L2 materials in a non-native environment, open to everybody in modern industrialised societies. Since advertising is intended to be in tune with and reflect the social and cultural values of target audiences in a society, in order to sell products, students gain both an understanding of the application of language in a modern setting and a sense of the context in which such language is used effectively.

Advertising has a significant presence in popular culture and can be considered one of the major forms of communication. Anthropologists underline that global television has placed visual-based advertising at the core of global culture, as commercial breaks remain one of the principal texts and formats of television and appear on just about every network across the globe (Mattelart & Mattelart, 1992). Indeed, the reliance on advertising in television systems has led to a stress on immediacy and entertainment in popular culture. Besides, with the recognised potential of television to “make a classroom of an entire nation” (cited in Barker & Jane, 2016: 402), advertising language becomes a very powerful manipulative tool that deserves to be analysed from different scientific angles.

For teaching purposes, television advertisement offers insightful video and audio content with emphatic and memorable vocalic presentations that exemplify virtually ready-for-use phonetic tasks. A simple advertising message represents one communicative act that easily gives students a sense of completeness and can be much appreciated in teaching practice for its transparent composition and laconic form. Salient melodic contours and expressive rhythmic patterns in advertising almost inevitably grab attention of the audience and, hence, represent a valuable resource for intonation teaching purposes. Unlike the traditional tedious phonetic routine, advertising texts, akin to theatrical performance or video dubbing (Burston, 2005), have more prospects to engage students in comprehending, interpreting, producing and interacting activities in the target language, and, at the same time, to keep their attention focused on the L2 phonetic inventory, responsible for realising the communicative intention, as well as conveying the emotional and attitudinal background (anger, joy, sadness, disgust, fear, surprise) of the message. Thus, using advertising texts in communicative phonetics teaching practice, may inspire students to simulate all the aspects of target language use and significantly help them to overcome the state of anxiety, discomfort and frustration that often accompanies pronunciation drills.

However, the reliance on authentic audio-visual content by no means should be blind. In the author’s view, selecting excerpts applicable in communicative phonetics teaching practice should be based on an in-depth linguistic analysis. The prosodic and intonation properties of a particular extract should be researched from at least two perspectives – perceptual and acoustic.

The findings of such an investigation should help L2 teachers to evaluate possible benefits of such an application in the classroom and identify the phonetic priorities worth considering in advance.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The empirical part of this research aims to study the melodic variation of speech in British television advertisement with a special regard to its pragmatic value. As a multimodal and intertextual category, TV ads combine different semiotic activities and usually fundamentally rely on the visual component. As fairly stated by Jaworska (2020), text has often a minimal occurrence in adverts that tend to draw on a variety of other semiotic resources. Therefore, based on the perceptual judgment, the experimental corpus included those examples where the verbal component is represented most prominently and has a significant impact in transmitting the message. The research objectives of this complex phonetic investigation included analyzing the general pitch variation in British English TV advertising, describing the intonation effects employed to persuade the audience, and identifying contrastive prosodic strategies that may find their practical application in the course of L2 communicative phonetics.

The material subjected to investigation makes 20 minutes and includes 30 British television product-based advertising clips presented by female (20) and male (10) voices. In an attempt to balance the experimental corpus, all the female voice presentations are borrowed from the video ads of personal products. Since male voices are employed quite rarely in this sphere of advertising, their samples were taken from advertisements of mobile phone services and food products. The samples were selected because they tend to be more language-based in messaging, rather than visually-led, and to show that the intonational study of advertising material can be broad to fit any number of teaching situations.

The main stages of this research included (1) selecting excerpts for a detailed phonetic investigation; (2) compiling transcripts of the recordings; (3) conducting auditory analysis of the melodic variation in the speech extracts, i.e. identifying intonation groups and contour elements in them; (4) the author's annotation of the transcripts; (5) acoustic verification of the intonational phenomena, registered on the basis of perceptual judgment, using the computer software Praat, with the main focus on Fundamental Frequency (F0) values of pitch register and range (F0min, F0max, F0mean), measured using the Praat script. As the auditory analysis alone and annotation of transcripts can still fail to render the contrastive use of prosody in speech, in the author's view, the implementation of acoustic analysis is vital, since it makes it possible to reveal the general F0 variability, as well as identify the pitch range and register within which these variations of pitch contour take place. The use of computer technologies to reinforce the findings and provide the validity of the experimental results has been praised in many prosody studies (Reed, 2011; Valigura, Kozub & Sieriakova, 2020; Demina, 2021; Polushkina & Tareva, 2021; Steffman & Cole, 2022). The refined system of annotation used in the examples has been widely adopted in linguistic research and teaching practice at the Department of English Phonetics in Moscow State Linguistic University (Vasiliev et al., 2009; Vereninova, 2012; Medvedeva, Skopintseva & Stepkina, 2019; Vereninova & Demina, 2019). The intonation symbols used in this study denote:

↘	Falling tone (Low, Mid, High)
↗	Emphatic Falling tone with an initial Rise (Low, Mid, High)
↘	Incomplete Falling tone (Low, Mid, High)
↗	Rising tone (Low, Mid, High)
→	Level tone (Low, Mid, High)
↗	Level-rising tone
^	Rising-falling tone
∨	Falling-rising tone
'	High stress as an element of a Descending head
↑	Special Rise as a pitch step-up in a Descending head
↘	Slide as an element of a Sliding head
•	Level stress as an element of a Level head or a stressed syllable pronounced on the same pitch level as the previous syllable
,	Low stress for post-nuclear accented syllables or as an element of an Ascending head
	Long pauses
}	Short pause
∨ ∨	Very short pauses
}}	Hesitation pause

The linguistic explanation of the obtained results proceeds in accordance with the phonopragmatic approach to interpreting intonational means and prosodic characteristics of speech. Phonopragmatics is largely based on the conceptual and analytical framework of critical discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 1993; Fairclough, 1995), and focuses primarily on the meaningful pragmatic behaviour of intonation means and prosodic characteristics of speech in the given socio-cultural context. The phonopragmatic angle of discourse analysis introduces intonation as an integral and powerful part of communicative process and shows that it works alongside other language means to achieve the desirable persuasive (manipulative) effect (Demina, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TONE DISTRIBUTION IN ENGLISH ADVERTISING DISCOURSE

The results of the complex phonetic analysis testify to the fact that terminal (or nuclear) tones² in the selected excerpts are used strategically, i.e. their distribution can be characterised as emphatic and conditioned by the pragmatic and emotional orientations of the advertising clip.

² This article interprets a nuclear tone in the tradition of the British contour approach to intonation, i.e. as the most important element of an intonation group, characterised by a change of pitch (O'Connor & Arnold, 1973; Wells, 2006; Cruttenden, 2014).

TABLE 1. Distribution of nuclear tones in the advertising excerpts (%)

	Nuclear tone											
	Fall			Rise			Level			Rise - Fall	Fall-Rise	Level Rise
	High	Mid	Low	High	Mid	Low	High	Mid	Low			
Male	41	4	37	5	-	3	-	3	1	1	1	4
Female	32	4	34	5	-	5	1	5	1	4	4	5

Thus, the prevailing nuclear tone in advertising in the male and female presentations is falling (table 1). In traditions of the British phonological school, complete falling tones signal finality, confidence and assertion (Cruttenden, 2007). From a pragmatic angle, the discourse function of falling tones is associated with stating new, or key information in the speech flow (Brazil, 1997). Given that, in the discourse of advertising that ultimately seeks to target a mass audience (Horn, & Ward, 2010; Archer, Aijmer, & Wichmann, 2012; Barker, & Jane, 2016), the role of falling tones becomes crucial, as the voiced message is supposed to reinforce the visual component by eliminating ambiguity and uncertainty about the product. In this respect, presenters incorporate expressive falling tones in their voice to promote the product in an assertive and decided manner, and, thus, help potential customers make a choice in their favour. Falling tones, highlighting the best attributes of the advertised product, sound especially emphatic being separated by short pauses (e.g. 1, 2). As a result, the presenter's voice sends a succinct, trustworthy and indubitable message to the audience.

- (1) 'Ultra 'light \texture\ and \flawless\ \coverage.
 (2) \Live\ from \London.\ 'Rimmel intro\duces \Cara Delevingne\ for \new\
 \Scandaleyes\ Re'loaded Mas\cara.\ 'Dangerously \bold \lashes \ re'loaded with
 \scandalous \volume.

The conducted investigation also sheds some light on the gender specificity of tone use in the discourse of advertising. Thus, female presenters seem to resort more to low falling tones (34%), whereas male voices give priority to high falls (41%). Theoretical work from earlier eras of gender and sociolinguistic studies (Eakins, & Eakins, 1978; Lakoff, 1974; 1975; Holmes, 1995; Hopper, & LeBaron, 1998; Tajfel, 1978; Tannen, 1991) provides an essential entry point for understanding some modern vocal trends. Thus, female voices are higher than male ones, as, physiologically, women's vocal cords are shorter and thinner. This, however, can evoke associations with weakness, uncertainty and unimportance, while men's communication style is viewed as more weighty, clear and succinct. Such sound effects intertwined with traditional social stereotypes, might be intentionally avoided in advertising by female presenters learning to speak in a lower voice. On the other hand, Re, O'Connor & Feinberg (2011) come to a rather interesting conclusion that men today prefer to use high-pitched voices to avoid a surly and detached social image. Using falling tones of higher pitch level could, certainly, help male speakers to produce a friendlier and more empathetic impression in advertising.

Rising tones are customarily described in student's books on phonetics as used mostly in non-final sense-groups, closely connected with the following ones (Vasiliev et al., 2009). This traditional function of rising tones seems to still prevail in the discourse of advertising (e.g. 3, 4).

- (3) When 'I was ↗little↘ I 'used to ↘sit on my 'mom's ↗bed↘ 'watching 'promo
↗lipstick↘ and I →thought } 'I wana ↘look like ↗that one ↘day.
- (4) 'I think my 'skin 'looks more ↗radiant↘, ↗softer↘, ↗smoother↘, ^healthier.↘ →So↘
'works for ↘me.

Such findings are quite interesting in the light of the latest research in the field of interactional linguistics which shows that at present British English speakers resort to incomplete falling tones in non-final sense-groups, whereas rising tones in their connecting function are hardly ever used in natural English conversation (Demina, 2021; Demina & Ivanova, 2019). In advertising, however, a high frequency of rising tones in non-final sense-groups must be a distinctive marker of this discourse type, since they contribute to an intriguing manner of presentation and stimulate the recipients' interest in the product. Moreover, an alternation of rising and falling tones produces an especially emphatic sound effect that is quite difficult to ignore (e.g. 5).

- (5) ↗First↘ - 'sham↘poo↘. And a 'volumising 'Polymer Tech↘nology↘ 'creates ↘space↘
bet↘ween ↘strands↘ ↘for ↘lift↘ and 'fully ↘shape through your ↘length.

The frequency of rising-falling tones in advertising can be estimated as quite high (females – 4%, males – 1%), since its use in standard English speech normally is quite rare – 0,3% (Demina, 2014). Such a frequent use of rising-falling contours in the discourse of advertising has to be related to the attitudes it may convey, i.e. it may sound pleasantly surprised, challenging, boastful, complacent (Arnold & O'Connor, 1973). From a phonopragmatic perspective, in advertising, this tune activates a challenge for potential customers, inviting them to join a privileged group who have already tried the product (e.g. 4, 6).

- (6) When you ↘find your ↗colour↘ and it ↗suits you,↘ it 'always be'comes 'part of your
perso↘nality|. You be'come in↘vincible.

Complex falling-rising tones also introduce additional emphasis in advertising, even though their frequency may be described as moderate (table 1). Bringing key aspects to the fore, they convey a whole range of additional meanings and attitudes, i.e. they may sound polite, uncertain, or express concern, or imply contrast and superiority (e.g. 7, 8).

(7) We 'all 'know that 'Christmas is ʌnever ʌreally ʌlike ʌthis}. ʌCome ,on! ʌ A
ʌponyʌ and a ʌpolar ,bear. | It's 'time we 'did 'Christmasʌ ʌour ,way.

(8) Ex'traordinary 'hair 'oil from ʌL'Oreal El,vive, ʌ 'ultra versaʌtile, ʌ non- ʌgreasy.

Among the discourse functions of this tone, scholars highlight its referring character (Brazil, 1997; Vasiliev et al., 2009), i.e. fall-rise may indicate old information (e.g. 9) or suggest some background context (e.g. 10).

(9) 'New 'Veet 'Sensitive Pre,cisionʌ, the 'first 'device from ʌVeetʌ, 'specially
ʌtailoredʌ to ʌgently ,shaveʌ your 'delicate ʌbody ,parts.

(10) 'For ,you ,are the ,double ʌdipper.} So ʌdipʌ and ʌdip a`gainʌ with ʌlittleʌ
'sixty-'piece ori'ental 'party se,lectionʌ for only 'three ʌninety ,nine.'

Another English tone used primarily in non-final sense-groups is level. Along with following pauses, level tones create an atmosphere of hesitation or uncertainty (e.g. 11).

(11) 'Me and my ʌmumʌ 'we →are ʌ ʌreally ʌclose ʌ we ʌalways ʌhave been.

In the author's view, in advertising this effect may be achieved intentionally. Level tones, more typical of everyday speech, when people talk spontaneously and grope for words (Vereninova & Demina, 2019), in advertising aim to imitate an intimate conversation with a close friend. A desirable effect in this case would be to establish a relationship of trust with potential consumers by involving the audience in an inclusive interaction with the presenter (e.g. 12).

(12) When I'm 'making →art ʌ some'times I 'feel →like }} I've just comʌpletely
disa,ppared}. I 'think }} →eyesʌ 'always 'look ʌbetterʌ 'when they are ʌlooking at
'someone whom they 'really ʌcare about.

The linguistic interpretation of the melodic variation in the analysed excerpts clearly indicates the presence of two contrasting intonation strategies in the discourse of advertising, i.e. an assertive, slightly aggressive manner of listing advantages of a product is opposed to a less obvious, tentative cooperation with the audience. These two established melodic trends were also verified in the course of an instrumental analysis aimed at measuring acoustic values of the pitch variability in them.

THE ACOUSTIC PROPERTIES OF INTONATION STRATEGIES IN ADVERTISING

The findings of this investigation seem to enlarge the opposition of 'rational versus emotional', or 'direct versus indirect' dimensions in adverting discourse, associated with the concepts of 'hard sell' and 'soft sell' which have a long history. These two contrasting appeal types have been

employed in numerous academic studies and made particularly prominent in the light of cross-cultural search for a most suitable approach for a global consumer (Beard, 2004). However, as Okazaki, Mueller & Taylor (2010) emphasise, in spite of the ubiquity of the “hard sell” and “soft sell” concepts, the academic literature still has developed no adequate instrument to measure these appeal types. In the author’s view, the audio-visual aesthetic of flow in advertising has a too complex and dynamic nature to be comprehended within one framework. It simply has too many facets for one scale of measurement. The present study suggests the method of acoustic analysis for an objective evaluation of vocal variations in the two pragmatic appeals.

As early as 1987, Mueller defined a hard-sell appeal as quick sales-oriented and explicit, focusing on comparative content and strong message arguments (Muller, 1987). Prosodically this very verbal approach is even more intensified by a high pitch level and a widened pitch range of speech (table 2). A frequent use of emphatic falling tones also contributes significantly to the high variation of the pitch contour in such advertisements (Fig. 1a, b).

TABLE 2. Acoustic properties in hard-sell (HS) and soft-sell (SS) strategies

Voice	Strategy	F0max (Hz)	F0 min (Hz)	F0 mean (Hz)	Pitch range (st)
Male	HS	195	77	136	15
	SS	170	77	124	13
Female	HS	319	94	207	21
	SS	220	92	156	14



FIGURE 1a. Pitch variation in a hard-sell strategy (female presenter):
 ‘New El’vive ‘Dream Lengths’, enriched with a cocktail of ,vegetal protein and ,castor
 ,oil. A luxurious ,caring formula to ,help ,reinforce ,fragile ,length.’

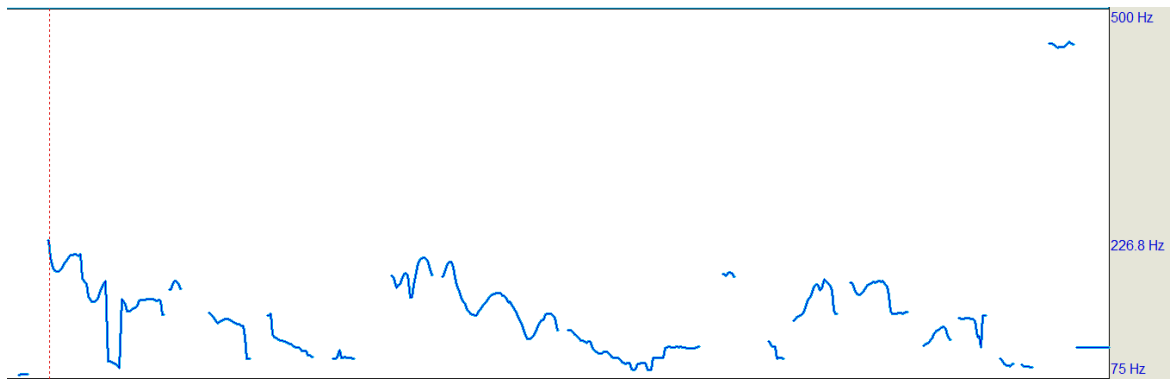


FIGURE 1b. Pitch variation in a hard-sell strategy (male presenter):

‘Check ‘out our ‘range of ‘smartphones ‘ from ‘7‘9, ‘9‘9’ when you ‘switch to ‘Vodafone’
 ‘pay as you ‘go.’

A high variability of melodic contour in the hard-sell intonation strategy makes the message sound more emphatic, straightforward and aggressive. Absolutely all components of the advertisement ultimately are brought into focus and aim to create a strong motivation to buy the product instantly. The intonation elements are rhythmically arranged and draw attention to the qualities of the advertised product, as well as the benefits a consumer is certain to obtain from using it. All this information might overwhelm the audience, though, as many studies of advertising report that hard-sell strategies cause more irritation than soft-sell ones.

A soft-sell appeal is often described as atmospheric, or even impressionistic, giving priority to human emotional sentiments and a beautiful scene (Muller, 1987). This mood is supported on the suprasegmental level by a moderate variation of pitch that aims to imitate a tentative and confidential conversational manner. This illusion, apparently, helps to establish a closer relationship with consumers based on trust and positive associations with the product. The effect is reinforced by a frequent implementation of level tones that are intentionally used instead of categoric falling contours (e.g. 13).

- (13) My ‘eyes’ ‘kind of ‘change ‘colour. ‘ I ‘think ‘when I’m ‘more →tanned ‘
 they ‘look ‘more ‘green, ‘ and ‘when I’m ‘more →pale’ they ‘look ‘more →blue.

As a result, this intonation strategy demonstrates a significantly lower F0 values and a much narrower pitch range (fig. 2a, b).



FIGURE 2a. Pitch variation in a soft-sell strategy (female presenter):
 ‘The ‘sun → was }} completely ‘vivid and the \sky ,lights ,up, | ‘more \pink. √ The ^world √
 ‘seems to ‘go \silent.’

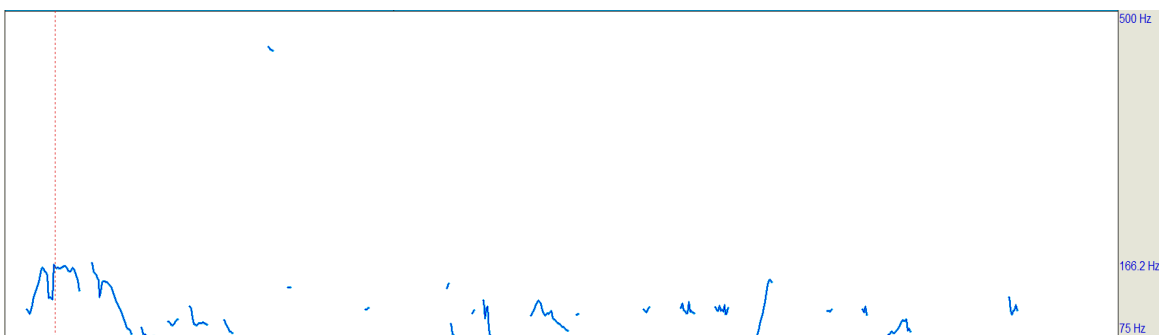


FIGURE 2b. Pitch variation in a soft-sell strategy (male presenter):
 ‘‘Maybe we should \all√ be a ‘bit ‘more \dog. || ‘Be ‘more \dog.} ‘Start ,now√ at ‘be more
 ‘dog *dot \com,√ ‘O\2.’

This intonation strategy makes the advertising appeal more subtle, i.e. it contributes to creating a special mood or image that is meant to elicit a positive emotional response associated with the advertised brand. Thus consumers are guided by their feelings when choosing the product, rather than by a rational decision.

L2 TEACHING APPLICATIONS OF ADVERTISING FOR INTONATION USE

The findings of this study illustrate that advertising discourse may represent an excellent authentic resource for teaching English tones and tunes, as well as revealing their pragmatic and implicatory functions in spoken discourse. The creative potential of advertising as L2 teaching material is also described in Simon & Stoian’s work (2020) introducing a series of classroom interactive activities based on this genre. The researchers argue, that advertising discourse gives a perfect opportunity to listen to texts read by native speakers, and develop learners’ ability to understand English spoken at different speeds and often with music or noise on the background (Simon & Stoian, 2020). In teaching L2 phonetics, this genre may help tutors to avoid the confines of the traditional approach of relating the basic tone-groups with the main communicative functions (O’Connor & Arnold, 1973). The results of the conducted analysis make it evident that intonation goes far beyond using conventional patterns in isolated utterances – something most works on teaching L2 phonetics are still focusing on (Larassati et al., 2022; Yu, 2022; Perticone, 2023; Sola & Torregrosa-Azor, 2023).

Contemporary linguistic research of spoken discourse proves that there is no melody associated exclusively with one type of utterance, because, as Kuru (2022) asserts, there are no rules of intonation use, only tendencies. The impressive advances in language theory that expanded from words and sentences to entire speech practice cannot but affect approaches to L2 teaching of intonation phenomena which are currently viewed to serve the communicative function of the whole discourse (Xing & Feng, 2023; Zhang & Li, 2023). From this perspective, the study could benefit those teachers who are, for different reasons, reluctant to introduce phonetic exercises into their practice. Teaching L2 intonational skills is still reported to occupy a subordinate place in many classrooms (Larassati et al., 2022; Kuru, 2022; Wei & Liang, 2023). Among the main challenges that L2 teachers usually face are the complexity and intangibility of the subject (Jenkins 2000), the interference of the learners' mother tongue that is extremely difficult to mitigate (Grandhioke & Singh, 2023), teachers' prioritizing speaking and reading activities as more useful L2 skills, insufficient textbooks, feelings of discomfort and incompetence (Ngo & Setter, 2011). In this regard, Kuru's (2022) emphasis on the importance of L2 teachers' linguistic training and objective knowledge of intonation phenomena, seems especially relevant. Acquaintance with contemporary scientific studies should improve the generally negative attitude about teaching intonation, raise the awareness of its prominent role in English, and make the trouble of describing melodic contours and stress patterns significantly easier.

Additionally, the great advances of applied linguistics should not be overlooked in the pedagogical field that could benefit from using modern-day computer software and incorporating sound analyzing tools into regular L2 teaching activity. As this study illustrates, the computer program Praat could assist teachers in verification of often subjective perceptual judgments and significantly facilitate laborious theoretical explanations. The visualization of the pitch contour may become part of the analytical method of teaching phonetics and make it easier for students to process intonation cognitively and, thus, bring it to the level of consciousness. Thus, Larassati et al. (2022) report a students' positive feedback on the use of Praat as a learning aid for English pronunciation course, as this software helped them to evaluate their own intonation. Moreover, after the students were introduced to Praat, their errors, according to the researchers, decreased significantly (Larassati et al., 2022).

Recent pedagogical studies account that most students are well aware of the importance of intonation, however, they do not feel confident while tackling this dimension of oral discourse because it is not as accessible as grammar or lexis (Duong et al., 2022; Gandhioke & Singh, 2023; Hamad & Muhammad, 2018). From this perspective, intonation practice based on advertising may help students to overcome the seeming ambiguity about the subject and convince them of the power of intonation and prosodic features and how they may be used strategically to persuade others. Viewed as a communicative exercise and not as a discouraging tedious drill, advertising examples should manage a full participation of everyone in the classroom. This way students' motivation springs from within as they understand that the process meets their future needs and the acquired language skills will serve them in their professional life.

In this regard, L2 classroom application of advertising content can be quite diverse. Recognition and reproduction exercises, based on advertising discourse, should draw students' attention to the way pitch is used in conveying the meaning of the discourse. The first may help students discriminate different intonation patterns (e.g. falling vs rising) and prosodic strategies (e.g. hard-sell vs soft-sell), as well as develop the ability to illicit the deeper pragmatic message, based not only on the lexical and grammatical means but on the phonetic features used in speech. The reproduction exercises based on advertising discourse may represent an engaging

and fun activity for students, revealing their ambitions and aspirations at a very deep level. The effectiveness of similar surface activities, such as games, simulations, dramatizations, has been described in Bora (2021), Uzun & Celik Uzun (2022), Korkut & Çelik (2018). Imitation of intonation contours used in advertisement is bound to contribute to the development of students' public speaking skills and raise their level of prosodic competence. Conscious implementation of emphatic intonation patterns into oratory skills will prove useful in future public speech activities, e.g. project presentations, negotiating, job interviews, and make their language performance more engaging and powerful.

CONCLUSION

This paper attempts to raise awareness of pedagogical application of advertising discourse that may diversify, facilitate and reinforce L2 intonation teaching process. The article views advertising discourse as an affected speech category, in which distribution of melodic attributes is conditioned by their pragmatic value and is subordinate to the main aim of product promotion.

As one of the audio-visual television components, advertising plays a key role in determining what is deemed culturally relevant and, thus, reflects social values, priorities and conventional language practices. In this respect, advertising as L2 teaching material offers excellent examples of a strategic use of the target language that is effectively manifested on the level of intonation and prosody. The author believes advertising clips represent a valuable resource for teaching L2 communicative phonetics, as intonation in them is as pragmatically-oriented as any other component. Alongside the visual channel, the vocal performance seeks to make the message attractive and memorable for potential consumers.

The conducted instrumental research contributes to the linguistic studies of advertising discourse, previously primarily focused on its lexical and stylistic creativity (Jaworska, 2020). The interpretation of the obtained results is done within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis, precisely the study employs the phonopragmatic approach to interpreting speech activity that relies on the pragmatics and semantics of intonation components to reveal their significant impact on the illocution force of the utterance. The auditory analysis testifies to the emphatic use of falling tones and rising-falling tones as the most effective means of audience persuasion. The acoustic method made it possible to elicit two intonation strategies that may find their application in L2 teaching practice. Employing vibrant intonation patterns of the hard-sell strategy, students learn to make a rational appeal and use the target language explicitly. The soft-sell intonation strategy incorporates a level of indirectness and requires a more subtle function of linguistic means. Students learn to focus on building a special mood in the target language and trigger an emotional response in their audience.

As part of communicative phonetics courses these strategies significantly enlarge the traditional confines of teaching intonation., i.e. intonation competence is customarily described as an ability to use one model for one communicative function (e.g. statement, question, request, advice, exclamation, etc.). This, however, in the author's view, leads to a rather artificial and limited use of pitch contours and inevitably results in simplification and impoverishment of the intonation domain. Advertising exposes L2 learners to larger context and coherent discourse, encouraging them to acquire intonation competence intuitively and consciously. The immersion in this multifaceted communicative event, rather than just one utterance, significantly diversifies L2 teaching settings and materials. Students develop a more subtle appeal to the interlocutor, learn

to appreciate the euphony of speech, trigger a lively interest in their audience and then transfer these skills to their future public speaking practice.

This immersion in L2 phonetic culture is especially appreciated in monolingual groups where a contrastive analysis of L2 and L1 conventional practices can provoke valuable linguistic insights. The pedagogical angle of the research endorses the teaching application of language studies and theory. Scientific discoveries in linguistics should not go unnoticed in L2 teaching process. In this respect, a non-native teacher's expertise may be found more valuable than a native one's, as the former can supply a meticulous intonation annotation for authentic L2 recordings, based on a preliminary comparative investigation of vocal characteristics. A non-native teacher may as well predict interfering intonational features worth considering in order to avoid a negative transfer of L1 melodic contours. Such a practical application of empirical linguistic findings in a classroom has proved itself as a most effective method in teaching L2 communicative phonetics.

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