

PHONETIC ATTRIBUTES OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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Abstract. The paper focuses on phonetic characteristics of public speaking in British English representing political discourse. Public speaking, especially by professional public speakers – leading State figures intends not only at providing essential information but also at convincing the audience of certain standpoints and affecting it emotionally. Accordingly public speeches require adequate phonetic means to achieve the effect; they pertain both to segmental and supra-segmental levels of speech, including intonation. The aim of the present analysis is to register ways by which a State figure attains the impression of prominence within the framework of publicistic style of intonation, mostly the use of nuclear tones, pausation and realizing function words as stressed segments.

The material of the analysis includes a speech by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom David Cameron on life chances in the UK (t = 41' 23"), delivered on 11 January 2016. What contributes considerably to the expressive potential of the style is a regular usage of one of the falling tones in non-final tone units, a relatively high percentage of high falling tones, the use of a special rise, variation of the pause length, prominent function words, segmentation of an utterance into tone units of different length according to the interpretation of the piece of information, and the speaker's voice timbre.

Key words: public speaking, political discourse, publicistic style of intonation, nuclear tone, tone unit, prominence

INTRODUCTION

Any oral form of communication involves two inseparable constituents – the contents of what is said and its form, including the phonetic form. The range of such communication is extensive. '[...] the speakers vary their output according to where they are, with whom – or to whom – they are talking' (Kreidler, 1990: 4–5). Registers that reveal particular speech situations apart from the vocabulary and syntax used differ also in their phonetic nature. Be it a brief conversation between friends or a public speech meant for wide audiences, the perception of the message to a great extent depends on the phonetic form used by the speaker(s). This is especially true of public speaking the success of which is directly related to skills of presenting a well-balanced text in a lively and emotional manner.

1 POLITICAL DISCOURSE

The principal thesis of the study is the viewpoint that

[...] language users engaging in discourse accomplish *social acts* and participate in *social interaction*. Language users actively engage in text and talk not only as speakers, writers, listeners or readers, but also as *members* of social categories, groups, professions, organizations, communities, societies or cultures. (Van Dijk, 2000: 2–3)

‘Linguistic interaction is social interaction, and therefore the study of language use is fundamental [...]’ (Cameron, Frazer, Harvey, Rampton and Richardson, 1999: 143).

The present paper aims to single out a set of phonetic features characteristic of public speaking in British English representing political discourse. According to Barbara Johnstone, discourse is often designed for strategic purposes if people know they will have to persuade others to new beliefs or courses of action (Johnstone, 2002: 210). A broad generalization states that political discourse is ‘a complex of human activity; it has strategies for persuasive or manipulative use of language to achieve specific political aims’ (Chilton and Schäffer, 2000: 207). Paul Chilton and Christina Schäffer claim that a large proportion of various verbal messages can be thought of as political in nature (*ibid.*: 206). John Wilson points out that issues of power and control are worked out at different levels and in different strategic ways. The suggestion is to delimit political discourse to formal/informal political contexts with politicians, political institutions, political media, and political supporters operating in political environments to achieve political goals (Wilson, 2003: 398).

Power is associated with social status. Teun A. Van Dijk argues that

More powerful groups and their members control or have access to an increasingly wide and varied range of discourse roles [...]. They are not only active speakers in most situations, but they may take the initiative in verbal encounters or public discourses, set the “tone” or style of text or talk, determine its topics, and decide who will be participant or recipient of their discourses. (Van Dijk, 1989: 21–22)

The author maintains that the speaker as authoritative source of information or knowledge is defined by certain linguistic means (Van Dijk, 2000: 217). In communicating professional public speakers, especially leading State figures, aim not only at providing essential information but also at convincing the listeners of particular standpoints, affecting them emotionally. Both the semantics of the vocabulary and the syntactic organization of the text alongside with its phonetic characteristics are indispensable to perform strategic functions of the speech.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

It follows that public speeches require not only adequate segmental but also suprasegmental phenomena, particularly intonation, to achieve the desired effect (Wells, 2007: 1). Concerning the analysis of speech, Malcolm Coulthard emphasizes the significance of ‘variations in the major channel-specific phenomena of supra-segmentals: *paralinguistic* features of voice quality and *prosodic* features such as pitch, pitch movement, loudness and length’ (Coulthard, 1998: 96). Intonation is crucially concerned with marking situationally informative items (ibid.: 104). ‘Volume (shouting and whispering), pitch and intonation of speakers may influence modes of attention and understanding of what they say following the principles of the ideological square’ (Van Dijk, 1997: 36).

Public speaking within the system of intonational styles represents the publicistic or oratorical style. The publicistic style of intonation depends on the following factors: language form (reading/speaking), forms of communication (monologue/dialogue), degree of preparedness (prepared/spontaneous), character of participants’ relationship (formal/informal) (Соколова, Гинтовт, Тихонова, Тихонова, 1991: 156).

The material of the present study is the Prime Minister of the UK David Cameron’s speech on life chances, delivered on 11 January 2016 (t = 41’ 23”) (Cameron, 2016). One opinion holds that this is the best speech of David Cameron’s leadership, explaining how the government intends to transform the lives of the poorest in Britain. Children who happen to be born into poorer and sometimes more chaotic homes are not condemned to poverty and have opportunities to advance themselves. The basic intonational style factors of David Cameron’s speech are as follows: reading, monologue, prepared, formal.

The present auditory analysis seeks to answer the question: What are the phonetic means engaged in achieving the effect of prominence – an essential tool in the political rhetoric? Prominence attaches significance to words in any speech. Analysing David Brazil’s approach to intonation in his book *The Communicative Value of Intonation* (Brazil, 1997), Mike McCarthy writes: ‘Brazil’s account of prominence subsumes and neutralizes apparent [...] irregularities by providing an explanation of prominence independent of the issue of nucleus placement’ (McCarthy, 2002: 199). Prominence is not associated only with nuclear tones. Prominent and non-prominent lexical units represent the speaker’s intonation choices amongst certain alternatives according to context and his/her particular intention.

The text was transcribed segmenting the flow of speech into tone units and marking phrase stress and nuclear tones with the following signs: ['] – stress on level pitch, [,] – a low level stress, [·] – a half-accented syllable, [↑] – a special rise, [\] – a low fall, [`] – a high or medium fall, [∨] – a wide-range high fall, [,] – a low or medium rise, [ˇ], [`] – a fall-rise. A short or medium pause is marked with [|], a long pause – with [||]. Items of particular interest are highlighted in bold.

3 DISCUSSION

3.1 PHONETIC FEATURES OF DISTINCTIVE ELEMENTS OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE

3.1.1 RHETORICAL QUESTIONS

Although the vast majority of the sentences are communicative in nature and therefore statements, the speech contains also rhetorical questions that are efficient devices for involving the audience in the proposed topic. Both yes-no and wh-forms are pronounced with falling tones (low and high/mid) suggesting the need to contemplate the point mentioned:

- 1) 'Are we 'getting it , **right** , here? || 'Are we 'looking ` **after** each ,other | as we , should? ||
- 2) '**What** about ' later ` **on** , | when it ' comes to ' good `play, | com , muni `cation, | be ` haviour, | ` discipline? ||

3.1.2 INTRODUCTORY PHRASES

Another popular and effective way of the rhetoric in public speaking and of political discourse in particular is a frequent employment of pronouns, especially personal pronouns. That creates the atmosphere of high credibility, helping the audience follow the public figure's intended message. There are studies that acknowledge pronouns are directly associated with involvement which is a prominent feature in spoken language: personal pronouns relate with backgrounding, demonstratives – with foregrounding (Weinert, 2007). David Cameron's speech includes a great number of the first person pronouns, both singular and plural, that often form part of introductory phrases meant to direct the listeners' attention to the core of some particular piece of information, for instance:

I believe, I think, I don't think, I thought, I want, I support, I would call, I can make, I remember, I will become, I'm talking about, I've seen, I am confident, I am not against, it's clear to me, let me be clear;

we need, we know, we want, we manage, we should do, we can make, we have to recognize, we will do, we are going to back, we've made progress, our country, our society, our first duty, our defence.

The most frequently used phrases are *I believe* and *I think*. The pronoun is either unstressed: **I be ' lieve** (3) or stressed: '**I be , lieve** (4, 6, 7); besides, it may carry a kinetic tone as in \searrow **I be , lieve** (5):

- 3) **I be ' lieve** the cre 'ation of those \searrow vital , safety , nets | was ` one of the out 'standing a 'chievements of ' post-war , Britain. ||
- 4) So '**I be , lieve** | we now ' need to ' think about | ' how to ` make it , normal | – ' even aspi `rational | to at ' tend pa \searrow renting , classes. ||

- 5) Be ' cause it will ' help ↘ build a , stronger, | more , integrated | and ' more co,hesive ,society, | it is , one | ↘ **I be,lieve** | will ' make us ↑ all ' very , proud. ||
- 6) Now ' **I be,lieve** | in ' self-re,liance | · and | ' personal res ,pon-si,bility | – **I , think** | that's ↑ absolutely cor` rect. ||
- 7) '**I · think**' these will be `landmark re, forms | of the ' next '5 , years. ||

The verb may be treated in different ways: it may be just stressed: **I be' lieve** (3), it may be pronounced with the falling tone: '**I be,lieve** (4), or pronounced with the rising tone: '**I be,lieve, I , think** (6); the verb may also be realized as a half-accented segment to provide a neat rhythmical pattern: '**I · think** (7)

The further examples illustrate some other introductory phrases, the wording of which could to a certain extent be interpreted as manipulative. The phonetic form with falling nuclear tones (8, 9) efficiently supports the speaker's wish to sound truthful and convince the audience of the particular viewpoint:

- 8) **As we , know**, | they 'don't 'come | with a ↘ manual | and that's ,obvious. ||
- 9) **But the `truth is** | there are ' too · many ↘ young people in , Britain | who are `culturally | ,disen ,franchised. ||
- 10) **Of , course**, | it ' isn't so , much the ↑ dreadful ma ↘ terial ,poverty | that was · so `widespread | in ' decades · gone , by | – though, '**let's be , clear, | of , course** | 'some' still e `xists. ||

To signal the continuation of the thought (10), especially if the introductory phrase is relatively long (11), a low or mid rise is used:

- 11) **A 'pologies in ad' vance for the ` length | of ,what I'm ,going to , say** | but I ' wanted to 'bring to , gether | in 'one , place | `all the , things | that we are , doing. ||

A fall-rise performs the same function:

- 12) ` **Frankly**, | it was ' built a ' round a ↘ patronising , view | that ' people in , poverty | · needed ' simply to be | ' pitied and ` managed, | in · stead ' actually ' helped to 'break ` free. ||

3.2 SEGMENTATION OF THE SPEECH

Any public speaker's aim is to bring his/ her message safely home; therefore, an important factor in presenting one's speech is its logical segmentation with pauses of different length. There are cases when the boundaries of phonetic units correspond to the grammatical organization of the text, for instance:

- 13) We will ' never de'feat ,poverty | un ' less we ' manage the e' conomy res ` ponsibly | be 'cause in the , end | it's ' always the

, poorest | who 'suffer ↘ most | when ' governments ' lose con ' trol
of the ' public ` finances. ||

- 14) So when we ' know about the ' power of the in' formal , mentors, |
the ' mixing of com , munities, | the ' broadened ho, rizons, | the
'art and , culture | that , ado↘ lescents are ex, posed , to, | it's ' time
to ' build a ` more ' level ` playing , field | with , oppor ' tunity for
' everyone, | re' gardless of their ` background. ||

This approach is especially productive in long sentences where this device secures the clarity of expression. However, in a great number of instances, sentence 15, for instance, the speaker considers it necessary to pause in order to distinguish lexical units that carry some notable meaning in the particular stretch of speech. Grammatical structures considered, those may correspond to separate constituents of the sentence structure (such as the subject (15, 16), the object (17), the adverbial modifiers (17)) that are singled out and pronounced in tone units of their own, usually with a falling tone. The selected examples illustrate the use of a high fall and that of a wide-range high fall:

- 15) ' **This ` government** | is ' all a, bout | se↘ curity. ||
- 16) Of , course | **the e ↘ conomy** | is 'absolutely ` vital. ||
- 17) Put ↘ simply: | ' children ↘ thrive on | ' **high expec↘ tations:** |
it is ` how ↘ they , grow | ↘ **in , school and be, yond.** ||

3.3 NUCLEAR TONES

3.3.1 NUCLEAR TONES IN THE FINAL TONE UNITS

Since the absolute majority of the sentences are statements the dominating nuclear tones in the final tone units are low (55 %) and high/mid (42.1 %) falling tones. There are only a few instances with a low/mid rising tone (2.5 %) where the nucleus clearly points to incompleteness of the thought, ensuring the transition to the following piece of information (examples 18, 19):

- 18) We've sig'nificantly in'creased the ' help we 'offer on , childcare, |
intro' duced ' shared pa' renta , leave | so ' families can be , there |
for ' one a , nother | at the ' most ' stressful , time | – the ' birth of
a , child. ||
- 19) The ' closeness of , contact | – ' strengthening that ' lifelong
e ` motional , bond | between ' mother and , baby. ||

One sentence ends in a fall-rise (0.4 %) that functions in the same way as the rising tone in this position:

- 20) To' day in , Britain | a' round a ' million , children | are ' growing
, up | with' out the ' love of a ~ **dad.** ||

3.3.2 NUCLEAR TONES IN THE NON-FINAL TONE UNITS

In the non-final tone units there is a greater variety of nuclear tones. An obvious signal of the continuation of the idea in a particular stretch of speech is the rising tone which has been registered in 45.1 per cent of all non-final tone units. However, on many occasions the speaker uses the falling tone as an indicator of the significance of some piece of information or of just a single word. The proportion of low falls is 15.6 per cent, high/mid falls are used in 30 per cent of cases. To illustrate the use of both principal tones sentences with enumeration were chosen. The common pattern of the distribution of the tones in enumeration is successive rising tones + a final falling tone:

- 21) , **Museums**, | , **theatres** | and , **galleries**, | , **exhibitions**, | , **artists**, |
 , **musicians**, | they ' are a ' jewel in our ' country's ` crown. ||
- 22) ' What could they ' need \ more | than a ' place of | , **sanctuary**, |
 , **warmth**, | , **challenge**, | **es**, **cape**, | , **libe** , **ration** and dis ,covery? ||

Enumeration with falling tones creates the effect of greater seriousness and brings about the idea of the importance of every single component, especially when the speaker uses wide-range high falling tones, as in example (24):

- 23) ... it is ' also \ state , failure | of ' social , **services**, | of the , **health**
 , service, | of ' child , **care** | – of the \ lot. ||
- 24) ' One where we de , velop a \ richer , picture | of · how ' social
 ' problems **com**\ **bine**, | of ,how they ,**rein**\ **force** each , other, |
 how they \ **manifest** , themselves | through \ out , someone's , life |
 and ' how the , oppor ` tunity , gap | gets ' generated as a re , sult. ||

There are also some instances of two falling tones within the same tone unit, like in the following sentence. The main word in the phrase is realized with a high fall:

- 25) But ' we ' know that, de ' spite the ` **good** , **news in our e** , **conomy**, |
 there ' are · still , people | ' left be ` hind. ||

Falling nuclear tones, especially high falls, in non-final tone units by themselves create a notable effect of prominence, drawing the listeners' attention to particular words or the whole utterance. David Cameron's speech acquires emphasis and high emotionality when he splits sentences into relatively brief tone units and pronounces several of them with wide-range high falling tones:

- 26) Se \curity | is \ also | what ' drives the \ social re , form | that I
 ' want \ this , government | to \ undertake | in my ' second ` term. ||
- 27) And be ' cause the \ evidence , shows that | , families | where · only
 \ one , parent | is in , work | are ' more at \ risk of , poverty | we
 are ' going to , back | \ all , those | who \ want to , work. ||

Sentences with a fall-rise constitute 8 per cent of the nuclear tones in non-final tone units:

- 28) So I can an' nounce to, day | that we in'tend to **'bring , forward** | a ' help to **'save'** , scheme | to en'courage · those on **' low , incomes** | to 'build' up a 'rainy ` day ,fund, | and · full ' details of this , scheme | will be an , nounced | at the ` Budget. ||

On a few occasions before a very brief pause the speaker uses the level tone (1.3 %):

- 29) As we , do ' that, | **I 'want us to · be** | ' much ` bolder. ||
- 30) We should en ' courage the , growth | of ' high- · quality, courses | that ' help with ` all ,aspects | **of be 'coming** | a ' great , mum | or a ' great , dad. ||

The proportion of the nuclear tones used in the Prime Minister's speech is presented in Tables 1 and 2. Noteworthy is the fact that in the non-final tone units the ratio between rising and falling tones is practically equal.

Table 1 Nuclear tones in final tone units

Low falls	High/mid falls	Low/mid rises	Fall-rises
55 %	42.1 %	2.5 %	0.4 %

Table 2 Nuclear tones in non-final tone units

Low falls	High/mid falls	Low/mid rises	Fall-rises, fall+rises	Level tones
15.6 %	30%	45.1%	8 %	1.3 %

3.4 SPECIAL RISE

An effective technique how to focus on separate words in the middle of a tone unit is the use of a special rise that presupposes a higher pitch in comparison with the preceding stressed syllable. Often those are numbers and expressive descriptives that are realized in this way:

- 31) ' Over the ↘ next ,5 , years | we will ' work with ↑ **4'00, '000** ↘ more , families. ||
- 32) And ' I can ' make a ↑ **major** an' nouncement on ' this to , day | we are ' going to pro'vide · over a ↑ **billion** , pounds | for ' NC, S | ' over the ' next ' 4 , years | ' meaning that by ' 20 ' 2 ' 1, | ' NC ' S will ' cover ↑ **60%** of ↑ **all** ` 16 year , olds. ||

3.5 PROMINENCE ON FUNCTION WORDS

A common way of securing the characteristic rhythmical pattern of English is stressing notional parts of speech leaving function words unstressed. Cases when the latter are stressed signal some special intention on the part of the speaker in achieving the effect of emphasis. Prominent function words tend to slow down the tempo which in public speaking is an important indicator of what needs to be accentuated in particular. Variations of the rate of speech help the perception of its content. Prominent function words also acquire a certain modal meaning.

3.5.1 ARTICLES

There is quite a variety of accented function words in David Cameron's speech, including the articles. Example 33 with a stressed indefinite article in the final tone unit demonstrates how this segment highlights the following noun. Likewise in the cases with an accented definite article (34, 35) attention is drawn to the noun to which the article is attached:

- 33) I've 'seen this , happen, | in some 'London , state 'schools, | 'one I `went , to | 'couple of , years a, go | where 'every 'single `child | `coming 'up to 'GC 'S,E | '**had** 'a ,mentor. ||
- 34) Now for 'too , long | this has been '**the** pre 'serve of the 'most e'lite `schools. ||
- 35) 'Thanks to '**the** 'advent of 'functional 'M'R'I , scanners, | 'neuro, scientists | and bi,ologists | 'say they have 'learnt ↘ more | about 'how the 'brain `works | [...]

3.5.2 PREPOSITIONS

Another group of prominent function words that serve for focussing attention to the following segment of the utterance is prepositions. The Prime Minister's interpretation of the text has the following accented prepositions: *in*, *by*, *for*, *to*, *from*, *with*, *between*. In example 36 the preposition *in* is the first word of the introductory tone unit; its highlighting not only emphasizes the notion of time mentioned, but also indicates the separation of the statement from the previous stretch of speech. In sentence 37 the stressed preposition *with* in the first tone unit leads to slowing down the tempo for the conclusion of one section of the speech. Accent on the prepositions *by*, *for*, *to*, *from* and *between* in the final tone units (38, 39, 40, 41, 42) attaches importance to the following words that in their turn are distinguished by a special rise (38) and a high fall (39, 40). The preposition *between* carries an expressive wide-range high falling tone as part of fall+rise. The prominent form of *from* basically conforms with regular stress patterns of prepositions in this position.

- 36) '**In** the ,spring | we will 'publish our 'Life 'Chances `Strategy | [...]

- 37) And ' **with** the ,steps | I've ' outlined to, day, | with our ' Life
' Chances , Strategy, | ' I am ,confident | that we ↘ **can** de,liver. ||
- 38) ' All of , this | will ' help to pre' vent the re ↘ lationship ,strain |
that can be ' caused ' **by** fi ↑ nancial ,difficulties. ||
- 39) But I'm ' talking about ' something ' more ↘ subtle, | and ' no less
,influ , ential, | ' **for** ` life ,chances. ||
- 40) ` Alcoholism | and ' drug ad , diction | can ' happen ' **to** ` anyone. ||
- 41) And ↘ yes, | while ' bad ' habits can be ' passed ' on to, children, |
we ' know , too | that they ' **can** be ↘ taught by ,parents, | ' not just
' caught ,**from** them. ||
- 42) But ' when it ' comes to ↘ life , chances | it ' isn't ' just the
re ` lationship | **be**↘ **tween** ,parents that , matters. ||

The speaker makes prominent also the modal verb **can** and the personal pronoun **I**.

3.5.3 CONJUNCTIONS, MODAL VERBS, *TO BE*, *TO HAVE*

The conjunctions *or*, *and* and *if*, introducing the respective tone units lay accent on the following constituents of the syntactic construction:

- 43) But for ↘ so ` many, | it ' either ' doesn't ' happen at ` all, | ' **or** it is
' just a ' wasted , week – | [...]
- 44) ... we ↘ **can** ,make | a sig' nificant , impact | on , poverty | ' **and** on
, disad, vantage | in our ,country. ||
- 45) And ' **if** you be ' lieve in ' publicly-' funded , arts | and , culture
| – as I ↘ passionately , do, | ' then you ' **must** ' also be , lieve | in
e'quality of ,access, | at ↘ tracting , all, | and ` welcoming , all. ||

In examples (44, 45), apart from the stressed conjunctions there are accented modal verbs: we ↘ **can** ,make; you ' **must** ' also be , lieve.

Just the two – *can* and *must* – have been registered as phonetically prominent in other utterances too. *Can* realized with an emphatic wide-range high fall as a single tone (44) and as part of a fall+rise sounds particularly convincing in regard to the wording of the phrase:

- 46) But ' when we ' know ↘ more | as we ` do ,now, | how ' stress
and de ` pression | can ' make you ↑ more ' likely to de ' velop a
, problem, | we ↘ **can** ,under , stand | ↘ why | this is so ,difficult. ||

There are instances when the speaker finds it necessary to emphasize the verbs *to be* and *to have*. Sentence 47 starts with two extremely emphatic falls, the first

of which is realized on *to be* form, introducing a statement that reveals tragic facts. In the final tone unit of sentence 48 *to have* is singled out as part of the second element of the contrast implied; it adds considerably to the weight of the described circumstances.

- 47) There ↘ **is** the ↘ terrible ,fact | that ` suicide | has be · come
the ↑ leading ' cause of ` death | for ' men · under ,50. ||
- 48) These ' people ' haven't been e, quipped | to ' make the ↑ most
of the , oppo, r tunities | pre ` sented to them | – and a ↘ chasm
e , xists | be ' tween ↘ **them**, | and ' **those** who ' **have** been ' able to
' take ad , vantage. ||

3.5.4 PRONOUNS

Most of the pronouns emphasized in the speech are *personal* and *demonstrative* pronouns. As has already been pointed out, it is the first person pronouns, both singular and plural, that are often made prominent in introductory phrases. There are also instances where an emphasized pronoun (either by a regular stress or a nuclear tone) is apparently intended to create the atmosphere of confidence both in the speaker and the information he is providing:

- 49) And ' **I** sup' port the ' welfare , state. ||
- 50) And it's our ' national and eco↘ nomic se, curity | that is ' front and
' centre of ↘ **my** , mind | as ' **I** ' try to , rene , gotiate | a ' better ' deal
for , Britain | in ↘ Europe. ||
- 51) So it's ' clear to , **me** | the re ' turns from pur ' suing these ↑ 2 ' old
ap ' proaches to , poverty | they ' aren't · just di ↘ minishing, | in
' **some** , cases | they're ' disappearing | in the ' modern , world. ||
- 52) And ' **we** ' need to , under , stand | pre' cisely ↘ why. ||

Sentence 51 apart from featuring the prominent personal pronoun form *me*, also contains the indefinite pronoun *some* which bears stress in a very brief tone unit (in '**some**' cases). In sentences 53 and 54 stressed third person pronouns clearly indicate groups of people that are at the centre of David Cameron's speech. Pronounced with kinetic tones (~ **her**, ` **they're**), they efficiently add to the whole expressiveness of the utterances:

- 53) ' **If** you ' tell ~ **her** | be · cause her ' benefits have ' risen by a ↑ couple
of ' pounds a , week , | ' **she** and her ' children have been ↑ magi-
cally ' lifted ' out of ` poverty. ||
- 54) ` **They're** the , ones | who ' made the ' difference for ` **me**. ||

The accented demonstrative pronoun *this* in example 55 highlights the metaphor it introduces and leads to slowing down the tempo which in this case also anticipates the rounding up in the previous section of the text:

- 55) `Destinies | can be ' altered for , good | or , ill | in ' **this** ' window of
, oppor,tunity. ||

3.6 RHYTHMICAL PATTERNS

It is noted that '[s]peakers use the rhythmic delivery [...] for a variety of structural and rhetorical purposes' (Couper-Kuhlen, 2003: 26). Prominent function words in public speaking, in addition to signalling emphasis, also help create the rhythmical structure of speech. Moreover, realizing some lexical words as half-accented next to fully stressed words makes the flow of speech particularly rhythmical. Dwight Bolinger holds that in long utterances there is a possibility to suppress some accent

because the typical long speech is apt to be an argument or a narrative of some kind in which a number of secondary ideas are grouped around only a few central points, and deaccenting certain words is the way we show that they are taken for granted. So we get a tendency not only to space out the accents but to do it more or less rhythmically. (Bolinger, 1986: 63)

The Prime Minister's speech contains numerous cases of half-accented words, mostly nouns, adjectives, verbs, numerals. Example 56 illustrates also the half-accented adverb *more* and the pronoun *what*; the latter pronounced with a weaker stress highlights the following word '*disad* 'vantage realized with two strong stresses, which in this way acquires extra emphasis. Sentence 58 exemplifies a case when a numeral that is usually singled out within a tone unit undergoes deaccenting. The last example shows that even the negative contracted form *isn't* for rhythm can have a weak stress:

- 56) And ' I · **want** to ex ' plain ~ how, | by ap ' plying a · **more** so,
phisticated | and ~ deeper , under ,standing | of · **what**
'disad 'vantage ~ means in , Britain to,day | we can ' transform ·
life ,chances. ||
- 57) But ' those who are , struggling | ' often have ~ no se,curity | and '
no · **real** ~ chance of se,curity. ||
- 58) So ' economic and ~ social re, form | are ' not · **two** ~ separate
a,gendas | they are ' intimately con ' nected to · **one** a,nother. ||
- 59) They are a , welfare, | ,edu , cation and ,counselling ,system | ' all
· **wrapped** ' up into , one. ||
- 60) And ' that · isn't ' good for ` anyone. ||

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the Prime Minister of the UK David Cameron's speech as an example of public speaking and political rhetoric in particular shows how the various above mentioned phonetic means effectively help create the effect of prominence, which is an indispensable tool for a successful public speaker in conveying a target message and achieving the desired result. Often within one and the same utterance, different phonetic devices combine to an even greater effect, among them the segmentation of the flow of speech in relatively short tone units, the use of falling tones in non-final tone units, the use of wide-range high falling tones and a special rise, accentuating function words and providing neat rhythmical patterns for better perception of the focal points of the speech. This is clearly demonstrated in the following sentence with the use of low and high/mid falling tones, including wide-range high falls in non-final tone units, a prominent personal pronoun, a prominent verb *to be*, a high fall in the final tone unit:

So ' **I be** ,lieve | if we are ' going to **ex** \ tend life ,chances in our
 , country, | it's ' time to be' gin ' talking ` properly | about , parenting |
 and , **babies** | and ,rein ` **forcing** | what a ' huge ' choice ` having a ' child
 ` **is** | in the ` **first** place, | as ' well as ` what a \ **big** ,responsi,bility
 ` parents ,**face** | in , getting these ,early , years ` **right**. ||

The information conveyed by the speech and its phonetic attributes are undoubtedly interrelated. Professional public speakers, with some individual variation, including the voice timbre and the energy of the presentation, have developed skills for the strategic use of intonation choices that efficiently serve their particular purpose.

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