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**WHEN WORDS WINK: ORAL REALIZATION OF  
COMPLIMENTING AND FLIRTING**

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Complimenting and flirting are crucial components of interpersonal communication, functioning as strategies of social bonding, face management, and emotional expression. While compliments have been widely studied as speech acts, the transition of a compliment into flirtatious discourse remains underexplored. This article investigates the oral realization of compliments and flirting in film discourse dialogues. Using a corpus of 150 examples of complimentary and flirting utterances, the study applies speech act theory, politeness theory, and discourse analysis to identify linguistic and prosodic strategies of complimenting and flirtation. The results show that prosody, discourse markers, and indirectness play a key role in distinguishing neutral compliments from flirtatious remarks. The findings highlight the importance of pragmatic and paralinguistic cues in interpreting the communicative intent of speakers. Supporting the purpose of the conversation, speakers produce unambiguous cues that make their intentions comprehensible to listeners. In this study we focus on prosodic cues in interpersonal communication that play a significant role for both speakers and listeners to express and recognize communicative intentions. The present study aims to identify distinctive prosodic features in the oral realization of complimenting and flirtatious utterances typical of British and American communicative cultures. The application of cognitive and socio-cultural frameworks of present-day phonetic studies enabled us to outline the specificity of prosodic realization of complimenting and flirting utterances; explore the relationship between emotional states and linguistic means in expressing compliments and flirtation; experimentally define the correlation between the speaker's cognitive-and-communicative experience and the choice of prosodic means in expressing complimentary remarks and flirtation. The auditory and acoustic analyses helped identify that in order to express various functions of compliments and flirtation, a speaker uses a semantic formula in the utterance that can vary in its construction depending on purposes and strategies.

**Keywords:** oral realization; prosody; compliment; flirting; flirtation; prosodic means; prosodic strategies; speech acts; pragmatic and paralinguistic cues; prosodic features.

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

**Problem statement.** Communicative intentions are understood as interlocutor-oriented goals embedded in interpersonal interactions, designed to be interpreted by the addressee and to exert influence on their subsequent behavior. Existing research also underscores the crucial role of extralinguistic prosodic cues in conveying communicative intent. Utterances produced with a limited number of communicative intentions exhibit distinct prosodic configurations that are identifiable by listeners. In other words, prosodic features may be sufficiently salient to enable hearers to infer broad communicative meanings and intentions solely from the prosodic signal. According to Durand and Laks (2001), “prosody encodes information about communicative intention by instantiating characteristic prosodic feature patterns associated with specific speech acts, which are reliably recognized by listeners even in the absence of contextual cues, semantic content, or emotional interpretation.”

Complementary findings suggest that pitch variation is the dominant prosodic cue in verbal expression of emotion (Blanc & Dominey, 2003; Panasenکو et al., 2023). In addition, speakers tend to employ culturally acquired and perceptually salient prosodic strategies aimed at achieving cognitive inferencing processes in listeners, thereby facilitating the interpretation of

communicative intent.

From a linguistic perspective, prosody encodes semantic relations (Wagner & Watson, 2010) and directly contributes to the organization and interpretation of an utterance's information structure. In contrast, paralinguistic approaches conceptualize prosody as a carrier of supplementary communicative cues that extend beyond propositional content. Paralinguistic prosody enables the examination of speakers' emotional states (Banse & Scherer, 1996), interpersonal stance, and social intentions such as politeness, confidence, and sincerity (Wagner & Watson, 2010); thereby establishing a link between the prosodic signal and the listener's processing of non-linguistic meanings.

Empirical research demonstrates that listeners can successfully infer a speaker's affective attitude and emotional state based solely on prosodic variation, and this holds true for both verbal and nonverbal vocalizations (Morlec et al., 2001; Wood, 2002; Wray, 2002). These findings collectively highlight the dual function of prosody as both a linguistic and paralinguistic mechanism in human communication.

The significance of this study stems from the central role that compliments and flirtation play in interpersonal communication across cultures as well as their growing relevance in contemporary society. Within modern English-speaking contexts, whether in professional interaction, digital communication, or business environments, compliments have the potential to shape perceptions of an individual, contribute to their professional success, and influence relationships with colleagues, partners, and clients. Consequently, a comprehensive examination of the structural features and communicative functions of compliments in the English language is both timely and essential.

It has been studied that compliments fulfill multiple communicative function and serve to convey approval or admiration of an individual's achievements, appearance, or preferences; to reinforce socially valued behavior (Manes, 1983); to initiate, strengthen, or maintain social rapport. In addition, compliments may operate as substitutes for other routine speech acts such as greeting, expressions of gratitude, apologies, and congratulations (Wolfson, 1989). They are also employed to mitigate face-threatening acts including apologies, requests, and critiques and to facilitate the initiation and continuation of conversation (Manes et al., 1983).

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** While both compliments and flirtatious utterances function as positive interpersonal strategies, they diverge considerably in terms of communicative intent, pragmatic load, and prosodic as well as multimodal cues supporting their interpretation. In our study along with the scientists (Holmes, 1988; Manes & Wolfson, 1983) we consider a compliment as a positive evaluative speech act through which a speaker attributes credit to a recipient regarding a trait, behavior, choice, or accomplishment aligned with socially valued norms. Thus, the primary communicative intention is affiliative enhancing social solidarity, maintaining rapport, and reinforcing the addressee's self-esteem without presupposing romantic or sexual reciprocation.

Compliments are commonly realized with a sincere and contextually appropriate tone, often focusing on attributes under the interlocutor's agency such as achievements or personal style (Placencia & Holmes, 2015; Berezenko et al., 2025; Pinich, 2023). By contrast, flirtation constitutes a multimodal communicative behavior associated with courtship strategies and the expression of potential romantic or sexual interest (Hall, 2013; Moore, 2010). Flirting extends beyond single verbal acts and involves coordinated verbal, prosodic, and kinesic cues designed to test mutual attraction or initiate a romantic relationship (Grammer et al., 2000; Kecskes, 1999). Prosodic markers such as playful tone, pitch elevation, wider pitch, or strategic pauses may signal intimacy or teasing, while nonverbal components often include prolonged gaze, reduced interpersonal distance, and gentle self- or other-touch behavior (Henningsen, 2004). Although compliments may occur as elements of flirtation, they differ in motivational orientation and interactional consequences. Compliments support social harmony with no expectation of affective commitment, whereas flirtation is inherently instrumental, aiming to elicit or escalate romantic engagement (Horan & Booth-Butterfield, 2013).

A lexicological account of the term '*compliment*' evinces that the very range of meanings the word possesses extends from admiration, praise, and regards towards an act requiring special

generosity, while the term *'flirtation'* stands for a love affair that is not serious, playful behavior intended to arouse sexual interest and expands its meaning to a short period of interest in something (*American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language; Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online*). Let us summarize the typical characteristics of a compliment and flirtation presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Compliment vs. flirtation

Feature	Compliment	Flirtation
Primary intention	affiliation; social bonding	romantic/sexual attraction; courtship
Pragmatic nature	direct, social conventional	playful, suggestive, often ambiguous
Prosodic cues	warm, sincere, polite	elevated pitch, teasing intonation, expressive voice quality
Body language	neutral, respectful distance	proximity, gaze intensification, affiliative touch
Expected outcome	positive affect, rapport	affective reciprocation, relational progression

Speech-based complimenting units may be classified according to their pragmatic loading and evaluative domain (Manes et al., 1983; Wolfson, 1989; Berezenko et. al., 2025): a) affective compliments which foreground the interlocutor's positive emotional influence or social presence (*You have a lovely manner. You express yourself very intelligently.* *Pride and Prejudice*); b) trait-oriented compliments that recognize desirable aspects of one's character (*You are funny. You are so sweet.* *Bridget Jones' Diary*); c) ability- and performance-oriented compliments that emphasize intellectual, creative, or problem-solving skills (*You have wonderful taste in music. That idea of yours is brilliant.* *Bridgerton*); d) achievement-based compliments (*Your creativity really shines. You present ideas persuasively.* *Emily in Paris*); e) relational compliments which highlight the interlocutor's value within interpersonal interactions (*You gave sound advice. You made an elegant point.* *The Crown*).

**The purpose of the article.** Summarizing the above, it is possible to identify a scientific gap in the current state of knowledge relevant to the application of linguistic strategies in the practice of complimenting and flirting. Thus, the aim of this paper is to identify the basic elements of prosodic means used in complimenting and flirting using adequate methodological instrumentation.

Structurally, compliments and flirtations predominantly exhibit formulaic expressions employing semantic and syntactic features that enact the speech act of praise. Thus, the most common patterns include: simple declarative clauses with copular constructions; exclamatory what-clauses; clauses containing superlative forms and perfect aspect; interrogatives that function rhetorically.

Lexically, compliments and flirtations are characterized by high-frequency positive evaluators such as *great, wonderful, brilliant, nice, magnificent, cool, and kind*. However, the communicative intention of complimenting extends beyond mere solidarity-building: encouragement, gratitude, comfort, or supportive alignment. To encode these pragmatic nuances, speakers manipulate the semantic formula of the compliment, selecting linguistic strategies appropriate to specific interpersonal goals. Thus, praise often incorporates metaphorical intensification; while admiration may be expressed explicitly through affective verbs or evaluative adjectives that are reinforced by emphatic prosodic loading.

Prosodically, emotional-pragmatic and cognitive-pragmatic directions of compliments and flirtations within the process of encoding and decoding the message influence people's perception and form strong convictions. The auditory and acoustic analyses show how prosodic cues such as intonation contours and stress patterns help a recipient distinguish between complimenting and flirting.

The basic research questions that need to be answered in order to fulfil the objective of the paper are:

RQ1: What are the main elements of prosodic means used in communicating compliments and flirtation?

RQ2: What are the main distinguishing prosodic elements used to differentiate between compliments and flirtation?

Based on the answers to these research questions, it is then possible to identify the core elements of communication strategies and formulate recommendations for further practice in building and managing the value of verbal and nonverbal language so that they have a positive impact not only on communication itself but also on subjective perception in professional communication, interpersonal relationships, friendly communication and other communicative situations.

## 2 METHODS

Within the present research, a corpus of spontaneous English complimenting and flirtatious utterances has been systematically examined. The primary objective of the experimental phonetic investigation is to verify the assumptions formulated in the preceding section, namely that prosodic subsystems vary as a function of the structural and pragmatic characteristics of interpersonal evaluative speech acts. Our aim is to determine invariant features of prosodic organization in such utterances produced by British and American speakers, as well as to identify functional prosodic markers that enhance the pragmatic force of positive interpersonal signals.

The empirical material consists of 150 complimentary and flirtatious utterances (420 syntagms, 62 minutes in total duration) collected from movies and series such as *Notting Hill*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Bridget Jones's Diary*, *The Crown*, *Bridgerton Season 1*, *Emily in Paris*.

The selected audiovisual materials were extracted from verified media sources and subsequently converted into **.wav** format using a standard audio-processing toolkit. Segmentation into syntagms was carried out through *Audacity 1.3. Beta Unicode*. Acoustic visualization and instrumental measurement were conducted with *Paat 6.2*. (Boersma & Weenink, 2023) and *Speech Analyzer 3.0.1*.

The auditory analysis sought to establish an intonational framework characterizing the prosodic expression of interpersonal evaluation and attraction, and to uncover the functional specificity of prosodic cues in fulfilling positive-politeness and affective-pragmatic objectives. In addition, the study investigates the interaction of prosody with other linguistic and paralinguistic means contributing to the speaker's relational stance and persuasive intent. The study of oral realization of complimenting and flirting in modern English proceeded in several methodologically aligned stages. At the initial stage, each audio sample was screened for suitability with respect to authenticity, pragmatic relevance, and identifiable structural and semantic components. Subsequent auditory evaluation focused on the prosodic loading of the corpus, with particular attention to the functioning of the following parameters within major textual and intonational segments: pre-head type, scale type, terminal contour selection, pitch range, initial and final pitch levels, pitch interval behavior at block junctures, pause typology, rhythmic structuring, speech rate, dynamic intensity patterns, stress distribution and tonal trajectory modeling, timbre characteristics (Kalyta, 2001, p. 97–98).

Instrumental acoustic analysis served to verify auditory assessments to determine along with empirical precision the functional relevance of prosodic configurations in signalling interpersonal intentions related to praise, positive evaluation, and attraction. Systematization of functional and structural-semantic properties enabled us to classify the corpus of studies according to: 1) a pragmatic focus (genuine compliment vs. flirtatious compliment); 2) structural segmentation of expressive units (“Opening”, “Evaluative Core”, “Interpersonal Uptake”); 3) duration type (short, medium, extended discourse) (Musiienko, 2017).

Thus, the findings indicate that prosodic variability is primarily driven by interpersonal functionality: complimenting and flirting consistently activate prosodic strategies aimed at influencing the interlocutor's emotional state, encouraging reciprocal engagement, and reinforcing affiliative interpersonal dynamics. Both absolute and relative acoustic measurements were integrated to eliminate potential speaker-specific confounds (habitual tempo, vocal energy etc.), ensuring the comparability and reliability of the data. Consequently, variation in melodic contours, pitch span expansion, localized intensity modulation, and timbral adjustments in critical segments contribute to the successful realization of positive-pragmatic intentions in interpersonal communication.

The fundamental frequency was calculated by the formula  $i = \frac{f_{\max}}{f_{\min}}$ , where  $i$  is the interval of

two tones,  $f_{\max}$  is the highest frequency, and  $f_{\min}$  – the lowest frequency (Ceplitis, 1974, p. 108–110).

The acoustic analysis of the prosodic organization of complimenting and flirtatious utterances, interpreted through their linguistic and pragmatic load, was conducted using specialized speech-analysis software and included both intonographic and oscillographic procedures. For the purpose of precise acoustic measurement, the material was segmented into phrases, syntagms, and rhythmic groups. The reliability of the obtained results was ensured through quantitative processing of experimental data, which involved the calculation of both absolute and relative values for each prosodic parameter, followed by statistical averaging. All parameters were measured separately for each syntagmatic unit, and the results were systematically documented in analytical protocols. Illustrative data samples from the corpus are presented in Table 2 and Table 3, featuring the prosodic segmentation of several representative utterances.

Table 2. Protocol for recording acoustic measurements of complimenting utterances (Source: “Bridgerton\_Season 1”)

Syntagm	$f_{\max}$ (Hz)	$f_{\min}$ (Hz)	Interval of two tones	Frequency range
<i>You're thoughtful.</i>	223.5	95.6	2,3	narrowed
<i>You are ambiguous.</i>	254.2	81.1	3.1	narrowed
<i>You are the coolest person I've ever met.</i>	579,5	202,3	2,3	narrowed
<i>I think it's brilliant.</i>	120,5	71,4	1,6	narrowed

Table 3. Protocol for recording acoustic measurements of flirtatious utterances (Source: “Bridgerton\_Season 1”)

Syntagm	$f_{\max}$ (Hz)	$f_{\min}$ (Hz)	Interval of two tones	Frequency range
<i>What I'm trying to say.</i>	125.9	79.2	1,5	wide
<i>How do I look?</i>	276.5	174	1.5	wide
<i>I might say I'm amazed.</i>	184	82.5	2.2	wide
<i>You have the most beautiful feet.</i>	167,7	74,6	2,2	wide

### 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is essential to emphasize that principal function of paralinguistic communication lies in its ability to evoke specific emotional and affective responses in the interlocutor, which, in turn, facilitate the achievement of communicative intentions and pragmatic goals. These effects are realized through a range of paralinguistic mechanisms, encompassing both prosodic means (tempo, timbre, pitch, pauses, and loudness) and extralinguistic markers (coughing, sighing, laughter, and crying), which together enhance the expressive and interpretative potential of speech.

Within the broader framework of paralinguistics, several key components can be identified: nonverbal vocal sounds produced within the oral cavity; sound complexes that acquire conventionalized or contextually specific meanings within the act of communication; the voice and its qualitative characteristics; and prosodic features functioning as paraverbal instruments for organizing and transmitting semantic and pragmatic information. Thus, paraverbal prosody encompasses such elements as emotionally marked stress on syllables, variation in rhythm and tempo, and modulations in pitch that serve as cues to the speaker's emotive stance and communicative intent.

Paralinguistic features are inherently present in all spoken discourses, including the act of paying compliments as well as flirtation, where they perform both expressive and interpersonal functions. According to Fernando Poyatos's typology of paralinguistic behavior (1993, p. 129), four core categories can be distinguished as particularly relevant to the realization of compliments and flirtation and their suggestive power: sound parameters intonational contour, pitch range, rhythm, loudness); differentiators (laughter and sigh); qualifiers, and alternants which play an important role

in both encoding and decoding the communicative function of the compliment and flirtatious utterance.

Prosodic means (melody, sound intensity, speech rhythm, and pauses) perform dual communicative and emotive functions. The speaker's manipulation of paralinguistic cues (pauses, melody, and voice quality) signals a shift between different semiotic systems, where verbal and nonverbal codes work synergistically to convey meaning. The combined use of linguistic and paralinguistic elements not only amplifies the expressive force of the utterance but also provides pragmatic cues for identifying the authenticity or insincerity of the compliment. Furthermore, differentiators, such as sighs or laughter, function as significant markers of interpersonal dynamics and emotional stance. These vocal effects often accompany compliments, contributing to their social interpretation. For instance, laughter may index genuine appreciation, deception, or verbal play, depending on their prosodic realization, including distinctive pronunciation patterns or creative modulation of pitch and rhythm. Thus, during the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts of complimenting, speakers use paralinguistic and prosodic resources as mechanisms of pragmatic influence and social positioning. The effectiveness of these speech acts in shaping interpersonal relations is significantly enhanced by the deliberate use of prosodic and paralinguistic features in the production of compliments and flirtation in contemporary English discourse.

The perceptual experiment along with the acoustic analysis of the audio texts of compliments and flirtation allowed us to obtain objective data on their specific prosodic organization. The auditory analysis showed that recipient's perception of complimenting and flirtatious utterances is significantly influenced by melodic and temporal changes, pausation, modulation of voice, and timbre. The acoustic analysis in its turn helped identify the most significant prosodic parameters for the complimenting and flirting.

Taking into account the results of the experimental phonetic analysis, we can state that the prosodic loading of compliments in *Bridgerton* (Season 1) typically serve positive politeness and social approval. Most of the compliments under analysis are characterized by the following prosodic models:

- “You <sup>1</sup>look exquisite to<sub>1</sub>night.” – low falling tone, moderately slow tempo, even loudness, neutral-to-warm timbre.
- “You are more <sup>1</sup>clever than most <sub>1</sub>women <sup>1</sup>here.” – low falling tone, moderately slow tempo, increased loudness, warm timbre.
- “That <sup>1</sup>idea of <sub>1</sub>yours is brilliant.” – quick tempo, the regular descending sliding scale to express intellectual praise.
- “That <sup>1</sup>dress is <sub>1</sub>perfect <sup>1</sup>on you.” – middle low falling tone, higher pitch, slow tempo, moderate loudness, warm timbre to show appearance praise.

As flirtation aims to express romantic interest, test boundaries, and invite intimacy, emotional cues dominate. Thus, most of the flirtatious utterances under analysis are characterized by such prosodic models:

- “Your <sup>1</sup>smile is <sup>1</sup>very <sub>1</sub>dange<sub>1</sub>rous.” – falling-rising tone, higher pitch level, wider range, slowed tempo, decreased loudness, softer phonation.
- “When you <sup>1</sup>look at <sup>1</sup>me like <sub>1</sub>that, <sup>1</sup>I <sub>1</sub>melt.” – rising-falling tone, wider pitch, breathy voice, slowed tempo, close proximity.
- “Every <sup>1</sup>time you <sub>1</sub>laugh, <sup>1</sup>I <sub>1</sub>forget my <sub>1</sub>words.” – rising-falling tone, playful voice, risen pitch.
- “<sup>1</sup>Being <sup>1</sup>near <sub>1</sub>you <sup>1</sup>feels like a <sub>1</sub>secret <sub>1</sub>feast.” – low falling tone, slowed tempo, prolongation of vowels.

Prosody of compliments protects reputation and dignity and is mostly characterized by narrow



pitch range to express neutrality; low falling tone to emphasize certainty; clear voice quality to fix distance; even loudness to sound socially formal; short pauses to add clarity. Prosody of flirtation, in its turn, is characterized by wide pitch range to demonstrate emotional heat; low rising, rising-falling, or falling-rising tone to show invitation and openness; soft and breathy voice to sound close; slow tempo and prolongation to hint on seduction; subtle increased loudness to add romantic tension and control of emotions; a number of perceptive and emphatic pauses to draw attention to a particular word making it more impactful and catching.

It is worth mentioning that on the prosodic level such polite utterances as compliments are intensified by a nuclear tone (low falling nuclear tone or the regular descending stepping scale with a low or decreased rate of its movement) and by the utterance stress. Whereas flirtatious utterances are characterized by low rising, falling-rising or rising-falling nuclear tones, slowed tempo, perceptive or empathic pauses, and widened pitch interval at the juncture. Thus, the use of a rising tone rather than a falling tone softens the utterance making it more perceptive and catching (Gimson & Cruttenden, 2001, p. 271).

Taking into account the results obtained during auditory and acoustic analyses we suggest considering the detailed comparison of prosodic loading between compliments and flirtation and summarize their functional differences. As compliments are usually polite and neutral they are characterized by moderate frequency and narrower pitch level, whereas flirtation is pronounced with a wider pitch and slowed down tempo to highlight emotional engagement, attraction, and playful intent. It is worth mentioning that low falling nuclear tone along with the regular descending stepping scale are typical of compliments; and rising-falling or falling-rising tones, high rising nucleus or pitch leaps on key words characterize flirtatious utterances under analysis.

All the complimenting and flirtatious utterances under analysis have a distinguishing feature of using intensifying words and adverbs (e.g., *absolutely, most, really, extremely, so, such, very, completely, fully, intelligently, impressively, brilliantly, remarkably, wonderfully, kindly, persuasively, perfectly* etc.) as well as qualitative adjectives with evaluative character (*excellent, lovely, impressive, wonderful, brilliant, impressive, remarkable, great, magnificent, perfect, amazing, fantastic, impeccable, unbelievable, affordable, incredible, beautiful, fabulous, etc.*) that are characterized by a specific prosodic loading being accentuated with special rising tone, increased loudness, wide range and high pitch, usually repeating the intonation pattern in order to draw a recipient's attention and make the compliment catching and memorable.

Most syntagms are actualized with the help of regular descending stepping scale or descending broken scale, thus, words of small semantic value such as *articles, particles, conjunctions, auxiliary and link verbs, personal and reflexive pronouns* are pronounced with higher prominence creating the semantic center of the utterance. In addition, the length of pauses plays its significant role, as we can see the tendency of a long pause before flirting. Terminal tones are usually final and categoric when a compliment is actualized, whereas falling-rising tones can be heard on the initial short intonation groups introduced for deliberate effects of flirtatious utterances.

The results of the acoustic analysis confirm that the main information of compliments and flirtation is conveyed through the interaction of all the elements of speech that are intensified by means of prosodic text actualization.

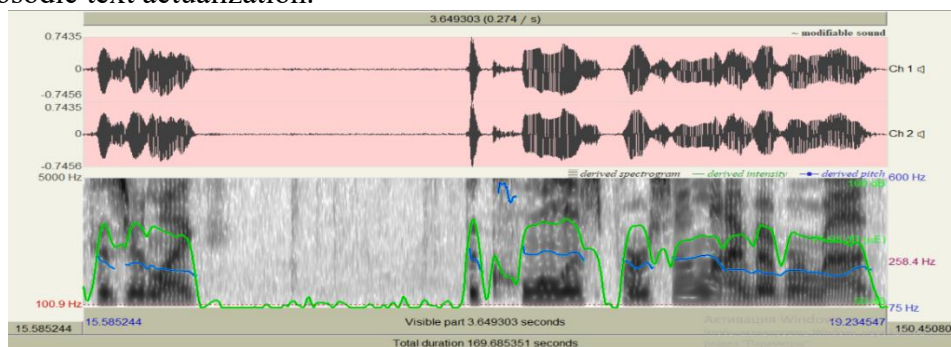


Figure 1. Spectrogram and oscillogram of the low-pitched complimenting utterance, accelerated tempo and a sliding scale "Cause you're like the coolest person I've ever met." (Source: "Bridgerton. Season 1" \_Praat)

We can see that the pitch is getting gradually lower while starting paying a compliment ( $f_{\max}$  579,5 Hz;  $f_{\min}$  200,7;  $i$  2,8), the duration of a long pause makes 1,204543 sec. Slightly increased loudness is used to create clarity and persuasiveness. In addition, a gradually accelerating tempo following a prolonged pause, accompanied by a sliding scale, serves to signal respect and approval.

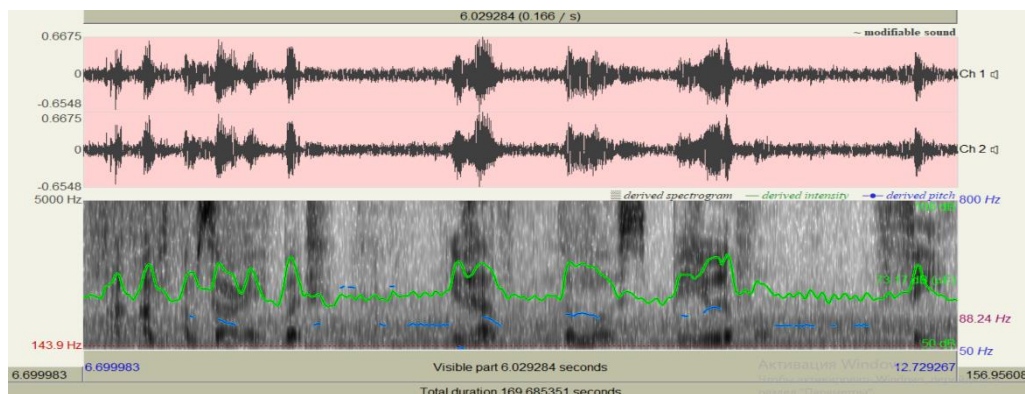


Figure 2. Spectrogram and oscillogram of the high-pitched flirtatious utterance, slowed down tempo and a level scale

"I'm >sorry, but | you | have the | most | beautiful \feet.|" (Source: "Bridgerton. Season 1" \_Praat)

We can see that the pitch is getting gradually lower while starting flirtation ( $f_{\max}$  476,3 Hz;  $f_{\min}$  74,6;  $i$  6,3), the duration of a prolonged pause makes 1,014790 sec. Slowed down tempo, level scale, lowered loudness, stretched stressed syllables and prolonged vowels (*most*, *beautiful*, *feet*) are accompanied by deep breathing and softness in voice to enhance intimacy.

#### 4 CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The aim of the paper was to study the prosodic realization of compliments and flirtation in contemporary British and American English in order to identify their common and distinctive prosodic means. The analysis revealed that while both communicative acts rely on prosodic means to convey interpersonal alignment and emotional nuance, their prosodic loading diverges according to pragmatic intention. Compliments are generally characterized by a moderate tempo, mid- or low-range pitch, smooth melodic contours, and soft intensity, all of which contribute to a perception of sincerity, politeness, and social solidarity. In contrast, flirtatious utterances show wider pitch range, greater melodic variability, slowed down tempo, and increased intensity, signaling emotional involvement, playfulness, and romantic interest. These prosodic contrasts enable interlocutors to distinguish between a socially affiliative compliment and a suggestive or intimate flirtation, even when the lexical material overlaps.

During the experimental analysis we have also noticed that cross-cultural comparison demonstrated that British speakers tend more to employ narrower pitch ranges and lower intensity, reflecting norms of emotional reservation, whereas American speakers use broader melodic patterns and higher loudness, aligning with cultural expectations of expressiveness and immediacy. Thus, prosody functions as a primary semiotic mechanism encoding communicative intent, sincerity, and affective stance.

Our further research should combine acoustic and auditory analysis in order to explore how prosodic means interact with extralinguistic cues such as gender, age, cross-cultural peculiarities, and situation boundaries in shaping the interpretation of compliments and flirtation.



**Diacritic marks** (Kalyta, Taranenko 2010)

The tonic stress marks		Meaning
m	–	stressed syllable
• m	–	partially stressed syllable
\ m	–	Low Falling Tone
^ m	–	High Falling Tone
˘ m	–	Low Rising Tone
˙ m	–	Falling-Rising (Undivided) (F-R)
˘ m ˙ m ˘ m	–	Falling-Rising (Divided) (F-R)
↑ m	–	Special Rise
	–	short pause
∞	–	pause of perception
	–	long pause
	–	extra long pause
m ...   m ...   m	–	the stressed syllable of the Sliding Scale
\ m ... \ m ... \ m	–	the Regular Descending Stepping Scale
˘ m ... ˘ m ... ˘ m	–	the Regular Descending Sliding Scale
m ...   m ... ↑ m ...   m	–	the Broken Descending Stepping Scale

**Abbreviations**

Hz – Hertz

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**Юлія Мусієнко. Коли слова підморгують: усна реалізація компліменту та флірту.** Компліменти та флірт є важливими компонентами міжособистісної комунікації, функціонуючи як стратегії соціального зв'язку, управління обличчям та емоційного вираження. Хоча компліменти як мовленнєві акти широко вивчалися, перехід компліменту у фліртуєчий дискурс залишається недостатньо дослідженим. Ця стаття досліджує усну реалізацію компліменту та флірту в діалогах кінодискурсу. На матеріалі 150 прикладів компліментарних і фліртуєчих реплік застосовано теорію мовленнєвих актів, теорію ввічливості та дискурсивний аналіз для виявлення лінгвістичних і просодичних стратегій компліменту та флірту. Результати показують, що просодія, дискурсивні маркери та опосередкованість відіграють ключову роль у розрізненні нейтральних компліментів та флірту. Результати дослідження підкреслюють важливість прагматичних і паралінгвістичних сигналів і інтерпретації комунікативних намірів мовців. Підтримуючи мету розмови, мовці продукують яскраво виражені маркери, які роблять їхні наміри зрозумілими для слухачів. У цьому дослідженні ми зосереджуємося на просодичних засобах у міжособистісній комунікації, які відіграють важливу роль як для мовців, так і для слухачів у вираженні та розпізнаванні комунікативних намірів. Метою цього дослідження є виявлення відмінних просодичних особливостей в усній реалізації компліментів та флірту, характерних для британської та американської комунікативних культур. Застосування когнітивного та соціокультурного підходів сучасних фонетичних досліджень дозволило окреслити специфіку просодичної реалізації компліментарних та фліртуєчих висловлювань; дослідити взаємозв'язок між емоційними станами та мовними засобами у вираженні компліменту та флірту; експериментально визначити кореляцію між когнітивно-комунікативним досвідом мовця та його соціокультурним фоном і вибором просодичних засобів у вираженні компліментарних висловлювань та флірту. Аудитивний та акустичний аналіз допоміг виявити, що для вираження різних функцій компліменту та флірту мовець використовує у висловленні семантичну формулу, яка може варіюватися у своїй побудові залежно від цілей та стратегій.

**Ключові слова:** усна реалізація; просодія; комплімент; флірт; загравання; просодичні засоби; просодичні стратегії; мовленнєві акти; прагматичні та паралінгвістичні сигнали; просодичні особливості.

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