The article deals with the occurrence and meanings of the gradually ascending stepping scale followed by various intonation endings in the emphatic speech of British English based on modern feature films. The aim of the conducted research is to identify the most common intonation patterns containing the gradually ascending stepping scale in modern English and to determine their emotional meanings. As a result, it is proved that the gradually ascending stepping scale can be used in the combination with the following intonation endings: high-wide fall and high-narrow fall, high-narrow rise, as well as rise-fall and fall-rise. As was discovered in the course of the research, in conversational speech of modern British English the gradually ascending stepping scale is most frequently used in the combination with the high-wide fall by means of which a speaker emphasizes the final stressed word of a sense-group, as a rule, conveying interest, surprise or objection.

**Keywords:** intonation pattern, intonation ending, gradually ascending stepping scale, emphatic speech.

**Introduction**

Intonation helps us understand the communicative meaning of an utterance in our interlocutor’s speech, especially if the situation and the context do not allow us to do that. Due to intonation, we can feel the emotional state of a speaker, his mood, as well as his attitude to the interlocutor’s utterance. Consequently, for successful communication it is necessary to have a notion of the intonation patterns used in emphatic (emotional) speech and the meanings they can convey.

In this article we are going to consider one of the intonation scales often used in emphatic speech of modern British English: the gradually ascending stepping scale which allows a speaker to emphasize the last stressed word of a sentence.

**Methods**

We have carried out a research of the emphatic intonation of modern British English. Our research is based on the following British feature films: “Cranford” [3], “Mansfield Park” [4], “North and South” [5], “Northanger Abbey” [6], “Persuasion” [8], “Sense and Sensibility” [9], “Wuthering Heights” [10]. The total duration of the examined films amounts to fifteen hours. We have analyzed the intonation of the conversational speech according to the above-mentioned films. In the course of the research we have discovered the intonation patterns containing the gradually ascending stepping scale and defined their meanings.

The conducted research of the intonation patterns used in the conversational speech of British English at the beginning of the twenty-first century allows us to compare the results of our research with the data obtained by J.D. O’Connor [7, P. 47-90] in the latter half of the last century.

**Discussion**

The first stressed syllable of the gradually ascending stepping scale is pronounced on a low pitch level; each of the following stressed syllables is pitched a little higher than the preceding one. The unstressed syllables of this scale are...
pronounced with a slight rise between the accented syllables [1, P. 159], [2, P. 262]. The gradually ascending stepping scale stops a little lower than the pitch where the ending of a sense-group starts from. J.D. O’Connor [7, P. 73-75] marks the first accented syllable of this scale with the slanting arrow [↗]; the rest of the stressed syllables are denoted by the sign [↑].

Most often the scale being examined occurs in conversational speech of British English in combination with the high-wide falling tone, forming the intonation pattern “the gradually ascending stepping scale + the high-wide fall”. J.D. O’Connor [Ibid.] describes the following situations when this intonation pattern can be used, and he defines its meanings:

1. Statements pronounced with the intonation pattern “the gradually ascending stepping scale + the high-wide fall” are characterized by clearness and completeness, like all the intonation patterns which contain falling endings; in that case the impression of involvement in the situation is produced. Besides, this intonation pattern with its ascending scale adds the attitude of a protest, as if the speaker were suffering from the feeling of injustice.

   Examples:
   - John said you disliked the play. || – I liked it im‘mensely. ||
   - Haven’t you brought the car? || – You didn’t ask me to. ||
   - You ought to have told me. || – I didn’t think it was im‘portant. ||

2. Special questions pronounced with this intonation pattern make almost the same impression as statements. A person is asking about something that is quite unexpected for him and, perhaps, not very pleasant. A protest is most evident again.

   Examples:
   - I wish Ann didn’t dislike me so. || – Well, don’t be so rude to her in the future. ||
   - I wonder who’d repair it. || – Take it back to the shop where you bought it. ||

3. General questions having such intonation are rather subjects for discussion and making a decision than demands for an immediate answer. Moreover, a speaker, with the same note of protest, drops a hint that the matter is extremely urgent, and if it can be settled, then the problem will be solved.

   Examples:
   - I can’t think who to turn to. || – Would it be any ‘good ‘trying ‘John? ||
   - I doubt whether David will help. || – Is it ‘fair to ex’pect him to? ||

4. Orders pronounced with such intonation are not so much imperatives as recommendations about the plan of actions. At the same time a speaker shows surprise and partly – disapproval that such an obvious plan of actions did not occur to his interlocutor before.

   Examples:
   - I wish Ann didn’t dislike me so. || – Well, don’t be so rude to her in the future. ||
   - I wonder who’d repair it. || – Take it back to the shop where you bought it. ||

5. The protest which is associated with this intonation pattern in statements can be equally found in exclamations. A person seems to feel that he has been caught unawares, perhaps unfairly, and he requires an explanation.

   Examples:
   - I wish Ann didn’t dislike me so. || – Well, don’t be so rude to her in the future. ||
   - I wonder who’d repair it. || – Take it back to the shop where you bought it. ||

Results

The conducted research allows us to state that the gradually ascending stepping scale can be used in combination with the following intonation endings: the high-wide fall and the high-narrow fall, the high-narrow rise, as well as the rise-fall and the fall-rise. Depending on situations, these intonation patterns can express various emotions and attitudes. Now we are going to examine the meanings of each of the discovered intonation patterns containing the gradually ascending stepping scale:

1. The gradually ascending stepping scale combined with the high-wide fall occurs in declarative, interrogative and exclamatory sentences and conveys the following meanings:
   - a suggestion: “Per‘haps we should go through to the tea room.” || [6, part 1];
   - a supposition: “I’m sure her ‘business will not ‘take you ‘long. ‘Will it?” || [9, episode 2];
   - admiration: “Quite the young ‘lady, | isn’t she, ‘Mr. Allen?” || [6, part 1]; “Well, | he’s as good a ‘kind of ‘fellow as ‘ever ‘lived!” || [9, episode 1];
   - an excuse: “I thought that I might ‘come and ‘bring a ‘basket.” || [5, episode 1];
   - anxiety: “I felt o’bliged to ‘write to Dr. Harrison at Bury.” || [3, episode 1];
   - confidence: “She would be grateful for your ‘good o’pinion, | I’m ‘sure.” || [9, episode 1];
   - determination: “I’ve ‘made up my ‘mind to ‘stay ‘longer.” || [4, part 2];
   - disappointment: “I thought he was a ‘man of ‘sense.” || [9, episode 3];
   - discontent: “Then I’ll have the ‘whole ‘house to ‘deal ‘with.” || [5, episode 2];
   - insistence, persuasion: “We have to ‘make a ‘choice, | John.” || [5, episode 1];
   - irony: “But per‘haps you have a ‘friend in the corner af ‘ready!” || [9, episode 2];
   - objection: “But ‘Mr. Hale is ‘no ‘longer a ‘clergyman, | I thought.” || [5, episode 1];
13. perplexity: “Well, I don’t quite see the ‘problem.’” || [5, episode 4]; “‘What is the meaning of ‘this’?” || [9, episode 2];
14. regret: “Un fortunately, | ‘that ‘won’t be ‘possible.”” || [6, part 2];
15. surprise: “‘Does Mr. ‘Thornton ‘live ‘here?” || [5, episode 1];

2. The gradually ascending stepping scale followed by the high-narrow rise is used in declarative, exclamatory and imperative sentences, and it can express:
1. advice: “And then ‘draw the ‘bow a ‘little to ‘one ‘side.”” || [3, episode 1];
2. disagreement: “‘You ‘wear a ‘very ‘truculent ex’pression.”” || [3, episode 1];
3. excitement: “→‘Oh, ‘Elinor, | we may ‘see him ‘this ‘very ‘evening!”” || [9, episode 2]
4. objection: “But I ‘can ‘not ‘say the ‘same of Henri’étt.a.”” || [8];
5. politeness: “‘Here, ‘hang it ‘u’pon the ‘hook.”” || [3, episode 1];
6. reflection: “‘But with ‘Mr. and ‘Mrs. ‘Allen for pro’uction, | I ‘see ‘no ‘danger ‘in it.”” || [6, part 1];
7. sympathy: “She ‘seems a ‘decent,’ modest ‘sort of ‘girl, ‘Fanny.”” || [9, episode 3].

It should also be noted that the intonation pattern being examined often occurs in echoing questions, for example: “Sorry, | ‘is he ‘coming on ‘Friday?”

3. The gradually ascending stepping scale in combination with the rise-fall can be heard in declarative, interrogative and exclamatory sentences. When using this intonation pattern, a speaker means to convey:
1. disappointment: “‘Dear me!” || [3, episode 1];
2. pleasant surprise: “‘Was it at your re’quest?” || [4, part 3];
3. satisfaction: “The ‘cottage is small, | and the ‘rent is ‘very ‘moderate.”” || [9, episode 1];
4. The gradually ascending stepping scale followed by the high-narrow falling tone is used in declarative sentences, and it can express the following:
1. boasting, self-satisfaction: “I ‘just ‘bought the ‘lease on ‘those ‘cottages ‘only ‘this ‘morning.”” || [10, episode 1];
2. determination: “And since ‘nobody would ‘want ‘Anne in ‘Bath, | I ‘wrote ‘back straight a ‘way ‘to ‘say she should ‘come ‘as ‘soon as she’d ‘finished ‘everything ‘here.”” || [8];
3. pride: “I ‘am ‘proud to ‘show you at ‘last, | somebody ‘who ‘dotes on you ‘more than my ‘self.”” || [10, episode 2].
5. Quite seldom the gradually ascending stepping scale can be found in combination with the fall-rise. In the course of our research this intonation pattern has only been discovered at persuasion: “The ‘railway ‘company has ‘done its ‘utmost.”” || [3, episode 1].

Conclusion
Thus, we can make up a conclusion that the gradually ascending stepping scale is used in different communicative types of sentences, and it helps a speaker convey a great number of various emotions and emotive shades, such as admiration, objection, perplexity, anxiety, regret and others. However, most often in conversational speech of modern British English the examined intonation pattern occurs in combination with the high-wide falling tone, by means of which a speaker emphasizes the last stressed word of a sense-group, as a rule, expressing interest, surprise or objection.

Consequently, the intonation pattern “the gradually ascending stepping scale + the high-wide fall”, described by J.D. O’Connor [7, P. 47-90] as one of the most common patterns during the latter half of the twentieth century, still remains among the most widespread intonation patterns nowadays. The conducted research has allowed us to disclose even a greater number of the meanings which the examined intonation pattern can express in emphatic speech of modern British English.

Конфликт интересов
Не указан.

Conflict of Interest
None declared.

Список литературы / References
