

## **Abstract**

This thesis investigates the impact of affective valence on intonation variability within the context of spontaneous speech acts in the Czech language. It is based on an examination of speech patterns by three discussants in a political debate. For this purpose, we have chosen three analytical parameters: intonational span, number of melodemes in one breath group, and cumulative slope index (CSI), the last of which is a new parameter for the description of the overall variability of intonational contours. In addition, another parameter described changes of the median of  $f_0$ .

The theoretical framework of this thesis draws on concepts stemming from phonetics and psychology. The research sample consists of a twenty-minute recording of a political TV debate between two politicians, chaired by a moderator. The specifics of this sample are discussed in the theoretical part of this thesis. In our own investigation, we first examined the material manually with regard to the affective valence of each breath group, followed by a phonetic analysis and a statistical analysis.

The execution and results of this study enable the following conclusions: our analysis has shown that there may be a correlation between affective valence and intonational variability, especially with respect to the intonational span and the overall variability presented by the CSI. We were unable to trace the impact of the affective valence on the number of melodemes per breath group. However, the lack of sufficient data has been a significant obstacle over the course of our examination. Furthermore, there may be additional strategies of using intonation changes when expressing affective states, which have not been considered at depth here. Therefore, we recommend that future studies on similar topics should implement larger data sets and some methodical changes.

## **Keywords**

Intonation, melody, intonational span, affective states, affective valence