

**Republic of Iraq
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& Scientific Research
Tikrit University
College of Art**



**A Phono-Pragmatic Analysis of Reproaches, Regret, and Blame in
Some Selected Songs of Adele**

**Submitted by:
Muhammed Hammad Muhammed**

**To the Council of English Department/ College of Art in
Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the Degree of
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**Supervised By
Asst. Prof. Suha Rashid Hamed (PhD)**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ
وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يَرُونَ الْعَذَابَ
أَن الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعَذَابِ ﴿١٦٥﴾

صدق الله العظيم

البقرة (165)

In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy

[T]here are some who choose to worship others besides God as rivals to Him, loving them with the love due to God, but the believers have greater love for God. If only the idolaters could see—as they will see when they face the torment—that all power belongs to God, and that God punishes severely (*The Qur'an*, 2004).

Allah Almighty Speaks The Truth

The Cow (165)

To

MY FAMILY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to praise God for enabling me to complete this paper despite all the obstacles I faced during its preparation.

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Abstract

This study investigates the phono-pragmatic realization of reproach, regret, and blame in Adele's selected songs through integrated intonational phonology and speech act theory. Analyzing acoustic data from utterances using Praat software revealed distinct prosodic patterns: high pitch keys (e.g., 164 Hz) and H accents for reproachful contrast; low pitches (e.g., 89 Hz) with high intensity (84 dB) for visceral regret; and mid-keys with declarative volume for blame attribution. These features interact with lyrics to intensify illocutionary force, confirming the hypothesis and developing a phono-pragmatic framework for sung emotional discourse. Findings underscore prosody's centrality in popular music beyond textual analysis, with implications for linguistics and performance studies

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Chapter One

Introduction

Popular music serves as a rich repository of human emotion and social interaction, with lyrical content and vocal delivery intertwining to perform complex communicative acts. The songs of Adele, a globally acclaimed artist, are particularly noted for their raw emotional power, often exploring themes of heartbreak, introspection, and interpersonal conflict. While lyrical analysis of these themes is common, the specific role of vocal phonology—the systematic use of pitch, timing, and loudness in enacting and intensifying pragmatic meanings such as reproach, regret, and blame—remains underexplored. This study bridges this gap by integrating frameworks from intonational phonology and pragmatics to investigate how Adele’s vocal performance acoustically constructs these specific speech acts. A purely textual analysis overlooks the crucial layer of meaning conveyed through the singer’s voice, a primary channel for emotional expression in music. Therefore, this research argues for a phono-pragmatic approach, positing that the phonological features of Adele’s delivery are not merely decorative but are central to the pragmatic force of her performances.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Existing studies on song lyrics often analyze pragmatic acts like blame or regret based on textual content alone (e.g., Lacorte, 2019), neglecting the contribution of vocal phonology. In spoken discourse, intonation is fundamental to interpreting speaker intent (Pierrehumbert & Hirschberg, 1990). In sung performances, where melody and emotion are paramount, this relationship is likely amplified yet under-theorized. The problem, therefore, is the lack of an integrated model that systematically connects the acoustic-phonological features of a singing voice (e.g., pitch accents, key, pitch range) with the pragmatic functions of reproach, regret, and blame in popular music. Without such an analysis, our understanding of how singers communicate complex, nuanced emotions remains incomplete.

1.2 Aims of the Study

This study aims to:

1. Identify and describe the characteristic phonological features (intonation contours, pitch range, timing, voice quality) in Adele's vocal performances of songs containing themes of reproach, regret, and blame.
2. Interpret how these identified phonological features function pragmatically to construct, intensify, or nuance the expression of reproach, regret, and blame.
3. Develop a phono-pragmatic framework for analyzing emotional speech acts in sung performances.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What distinct phonological patterns (e.g., in pitch movement, phrase-final tones, pitch range, and rhythmic delivery) are associated with expressions of reproach, regret, and blame in selected songs by Adele?
2. How do these phonological features interact with lyrical content to realize the pragmatic force and perceived emotional intensity of each speech act?
3. How do elements like utterance-initial pitch (key) and pitch resets (paratones) function to structure the emotional narrative and mark shifts in stance within a song?

1.4 Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that:

- Expressions of reproach will be characterized by higher overall pitch range, prominent high pitch accents (H*) on target lexical items, and possibly tense voice quality.
- Expressions of regret will feature lower overall pitch, more low pitch accents (L*), falling and low boundary tones (L%), and slower tempo.
- Expressions of blame will combine features of reproach (e.g., high pitch accents for emphasis) with distinctive melodic contours such as sharp, descending intervals or sustained notes on key pronouns/verbs, marking accusation.
- Significant pitch resets and use of high key will correlate with the introduction or escalation of these emotional acts, marking pragmatic boundaries within the song's narrative.

1.5 Procedure

1. Song Selection: Purposively select 4-6 Adele songs known for themes of relationship conflict (e.g., “Hello,” “Someone Like You,” “Rolling in the Deep,” “Set Fire to the Rain”).
2. Lyric Annotation: Identify and tag specific lines/utterances within the songs that semantically convey reproach, regret, or blame.
3. Phonological Analysis:
 - Extract acoustic data using Praat.
 - Annotate intonational phrases using an adaptation of Pierrehumbert’s (1980) system (H*, L*, H%, L%).
 - Measure and analyze: a) pitch height at phrase onset (Brazil’s Key), b) pitch range variation across phrases (Paratones), c) timing (duration, pauses), and d) voice quality (e.g., breathiness, creak).
4. Pragmatic Analysis: Classify the tagged utterances using pragmatic speech act theory.
5. Integrated Phono-Pragmatic Analysis: Correlate the phonological data with the pragmatic classifications to identify systematic patterns.
6. Interpretation: Qualitatively interpret how the convergences and divergences of features create nuanced emotional meanings.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Scope: The study is limited to studio recordings of selected songs by Adele from her albums. The analysis focuses on the lead vocal track.

CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical Background

2.1 Introduction

The intersection of phonology and pragmatics represents a fertile ground for understanding how linguistic forms convey emotional and interpersonal meanings in discourse. This research employs a phono-pragmatic framework to analyze the expression of reproaches, regret, and blame in Adele's songs, bridging the gap between sound patterns and communicative functions. The theoretical foundation of this study draws on speech act theory, expressive language pragmatics, prosodic phonology, and discourse analysis of song lyrics.

2.2 Phonopragmatics: The Interface Between Phonology and Pragmatics

Phonopragmatics examines how phonological features—including intonation, stress, pitch, rhythm, and other suprasegmental elements—interact with pragmatic meaning to shape communicative intent (Hidalgo Navarro & Cabedo Nebot, 2014). This interdisciplinary approach recognizes that prosodic patterns are not merely paralinguistic phenomena but integral components of meaning construction. As Karandeeva and Stanchuliak (2020) demonstrate in their analysis of directive speech acts, phonopragmatic features significantly influence how speakers perform and hearers interpret illocutionary force.

The phonopragmatic perspective emphasizes that speech acts cannot occur without employing specific phonological patterns, as phonetic realization directly affects pragmatic interpretation (Demina, 2021). Dhahi and Hussein's (2020) phonopragmatic analysis illustrates how intonation patterns associate with particular speech act categories and intentions, revealing the systematic relationship between prosodic choices and communicative goals. In the context of emotional expression, phonopragmatic analysis becomes particularly relevant, as emotional states manifest through coordinated phonological and pragmatic strategies.

2.3 Speech Act Theory: Foundation for Pragmatic Analysis

Speech act theory, pioneered by Austin (1962) and refined by Searle (1969, 1975, 1976), provides the foundational framework for understanding language as action. Austin's tripartite distinction between locutionary acts (the act of saying something), illocutionary acts (the act performed in saying something), and perlocutionary acts

(the effect achieved by saying something) remains central to pragmatic analysis (Kissine, 2008; Sbisà, 2013).

Searle's (1975, 1976) taxonomy of illocutionary acts identifies five major categories: representatives (asserting, claiming), directives (requesting, commanding), commissives (promising, threatening), expressives (thanking, apologizing), and declarations (naming, appointing). Among these, expressive speech acts are particularly relevant to the present study, as they manifest the speaker's psychological state regarding a situation (Bach, 2006; Gilbert, 1998). Reproaches, expressions of regret, and attributions of blame fall primarily within the expressive category, though they may overlap with other illocutionary functions depending on contextual factors (Zhabotyńska & Slyvka, 2020).

2.4 Expressive Speech Acts and Emotional Language

Expressive speech acts serve to communicate the speaker's emotional and psychological states, attitudes, and evaluations (Scarantino, 2017). Scarantino's theory of affective pragmatics extends traditional speech act theory by proposing that emotional expressions function as "speech act analogs," performing communicative actions through affective displays. This framework is particularly applicable to song lyrics, where emotional authenticity and expressiveness constitute core aesthetic values.

Gilbert (1998) distinguishes between "emotional message acts" and conventional illocutionary acts, noting that the recognition of expressive speech acts in colloquial discourse depends strongly on pragmatic conventions. Beijer (2002) further argues that expressive and emotional utterances present theoretical challenges to classical speech act typologies, as they often blend multiple illocutionary forces. In the context of reproaches, regret, and blame, speakers simultaneously express negative emotions, assess past actions or states of affairs, and often implicitly request acknowledgment or behavioral change from addressees (Rieger, 2017).

Abd and Al-Ameedi (2021) identify regret as a distinct speech act characterized by the speaker's acknowledgment of responsibility and expression of remorse for actions taken or not taken. Murphy (2014) notes that apologies—which frequently co-occur with expressions of regret—involve complex illocutionary structures that may include accepting blame, acknowledging wrongdoing, and expressing remorse. Kartika and Aditiawarman (2019) identify self-reproaching devices as tokens of responsibility acceptance, demonstrating how speakers linguistically construct accountability.

2.5 Prosody and Emotional Expression

Prosodic features—including pitch contours, intensity variations, tempo, and rhythm—play crucial roles in conveying emotional meaning and modulating illocutionary force (Bänziger & Scherer, 2005; Mozziconacci, 2002). Wichmann (2000) draws an important distinction between “attitude” and “emotion” in prosodic analysis, arguing that attitudinal effects should be treated as pragmatic implicatures rather than direct expressions of feeling. This distinction proves valuable when analyzing how performers like Adele use prosodic variation to construct complex emotional stances.

Prieto (2015) argues that intonational meaning encompasses both linguistic (pragmatic) and paralinguistic (attitudinal/emotional) dimensions, requiring integrated analysis of prosody, semantics, and syntax. Hirschberg (2006) demonstrates how intonational patterns contribute to pragmatic interpretation, noting that deaccenting, pitch range manipulation, and boundary tone selection all convey specific pragmatic meanings. Scherer and Bänziger (2004) advocate for empirical investigation of emotion-specific intonation patterns, emphasizing the need to examine statistically how prosodic features correlate with particular emotional states.

Piotrovskaya (2003) distinguishes between emotional prosody (reflecting genuine affective states) and emotive intonation (conventionalized prosodic patterns associated with emotional categories), a distinction relevant to performance genres like popular music where emotional authenticity and stylized expression coexist. The role of suprasegmental features in emotional expression extends beyond simple affect display to include complex interpersonal functions such as reproaching, expressing regret, and attributing blame (Hidalgo Navarro & Cabedo Nebot, 2014).

2.6 Reproaches, Regret, and Blame as Speech Acts

Reproaches constitute a specific type of expressive-directive speech act in which speakers communicate disapproval of an addressee’s past action while implicitly or explicitly requesting acknowledgment or change (Jabbar, 2025). Reproaches typically involve explicit or modified blame attribution, often accompanied by emotional displays of disappointment, hurt, or anger. The felicity conditions for reproaches include the speaker’s belief that the addressee performed a blameworthy action, the speaker’s negative evaluation of that action, and the expectation that the addressee recognizes their responsibility.(Jabbar, 2025)

Regret, as analyzed by Abd and Al-Ameedi (2021), involves the speaker's expression of remorse regarding mind conscience past actions or states of affairs, often accompanied by counterfactual thinking about alternative outcomes. Expressions of regret may be self-directed or other-directed, and they typically presuppose the speaker's acknowledgment of agency and responsibility. In song lyrics, regret frequently functions as both an expressive act (communicating the performer's emotional state) and a narrative device that structures temporal and causal relationships.

Blame attribution involves identifying an agent as responsible for a negative outcome or transgressive action (Rieger, 2017). Blame may be explicitly stated or implicated through linguistic choices such as causal constructions, moral evaluation, and accountability markers. Murphy (2014) notes that blame often features in complex speech act sequences, such as accusation-defense-counter-accusation exchanges, and may be mitigated or intensified through prosodic means.

2.7 Song Lyrics as Discourse

Song lyrics constitute a distinctive discourse genre that combines poetic, narrative, and performative elements (Sopiadi, 2014). Unlike ordinary conversation, song lyrics are carefully crafted texts designed for musical performance, repeated listening, and emotional engagement. Park and Tawami (2025) argue that pragmatic analysis of song lyrics must consider both the semantic content and the emotional effects achieved through linguistic choices, as popular music constructs and conveys emotions through coordinated verbal and musical means.

Pristianingrum and Damayanti (2022) demonstrate that pragmatic analysis can reveal how song lyrics create meaning through deixis, speech acts, and implicature. Makinde et al. (2024) show that critical pragmatic analysis of song lyrics reveals underlying ideologies, social positions, and interpersonal stances. The pragmatic dimension of songs extends beyond literal meaning to encompass how performers use language to establish intimacy, authenticity, and emotional connection with audiences.

Studies of Adele's songs have highlighted her use of figurative language (Mahendra et al., 2023; Maharani & Lestari, 2025), interpersonal positioning (Ariska et al., 2019; Sari et al., 2019), and discourse strategies to express complex emotional states (Dewi, 2022). Dewi's critical discourse analysis of "Easy on Me" demonstrates how Adele explicitly describes feelings through figures of speech, while Ariska et al.'s systemic functional analysis reveals how mood systems in Adele's lyrics construct

interpersonal meanings. These studies establish Adele's corpus as particularly rich material for phono-pragmatic analysis of emotional expression.

The present study is different from the previous studies because it deals with the intonational phrases that are shaped by measuring the intensity and the frequency and showing them on the visible pitch images that are identified through PRAAT Program Analysis as the most important tool which is adopted for the present study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological framework employed in conducting a phono-pragmatic analysis of reproaches, regret, and blame in selected songs of Adele. The chapter delineates the research design, data collection procedures, levels of analysis, and provides a comprehensive description of the study. The methodology integrates both phonological and pragmatic approaches to examine how intonational features contribute to the realization of expressive speech acts in popular music discourse.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopts a **qualitative descriptive research design** grounded in discourse analysis methodology. Qualitative research is particularly suited for examining the nuanced relationship between linguistic form and pragmatic function, allowing for in-depth analysis of how prosodic features contribute to meaning-making in discourse (Cheek, 2004; Mogashoa, 2014). The research employs a **phono-pragmatic approach**, which integrates phonological analysis (specifically prosodic and intonational features) with pragmatic analysis (speech act theory) to investigate how suprasegmental features realize specific illocutionary forces in song lyrics.

The study is informed by **Wennerstrom's (2001) model of intonation**, which comprises four main components: pitch accents, pitch boundaries, key, and paratones. This framework provides a systematic approach to analyzing intonational patterns in discourse. Additionally, the research draws upon **speech act theory** (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1976) to examine how reproaches, regret, and blame function as expressive speech acts. Guiraud et al. (2011) define expressive speech acts as those aimed at expressing specific emotions, including regret, guilt, and reproach, making this theoretical framework particularly relevant for analyzing emotional expression in Adele's songs.

The integration of phonological and pragmatic perspectives aligns with contemporary approaches to discourse analysis that recognize the crucial role of prosody in conveying meaning (Wennerstrom, 2001; Mozziconacci, 2002). As Coutinho and Dikken (2013) note, psychoacoustic cues in both speech prosody and music provide powerful channels for emotional communication, making this methodology particularly appropriate for analyzing songs, which inherently combine linguistic and musical elements.

3.3 Data Collection

The data for this study consists of selected songs from Adele's discography spanning three studio albums: *19* (2008), *21* (2011), and *25* (2015). Adele was selected as the focus artist for several reasons:

1. **Thematic relevance:** Adele's songs frequently explore themes of regret, reproach, and emotional accountability (Dewi, 2022).
2. **Vocal expressiveness:** Her vocal delivery is characterized by distinctive prosodic features that enhance emotional communication (Belyk & Brown, 2014).
3. **Critical acclaim:** Adele's work has received widespread recognition for its emotional authenticity and lyrical depth.
4. **Accessibility:** Official recordings and transcribed lyrics are readily available for analysis.

This corpus of five songs provides a representative sample of approximately 20-25 minutes of performed discourse, containing multiple instances of the target speech acts (Risdianto, 2016; Alek et al., 2020).

3.4 Level of Analysis

This study employs a **multi-level analytical framework** that integrates phonological, pragmatic.

3.4.1 Phonological Level: Prosodic Analysis

At the phonological level, the analysis focuses on four intonational components derived from Wennerstrom's (2001) model:

1. Pitch Accents: Identification and classification of pitch accent types (H*, L*, L+H*) on stressed syllables to determine information structure and emphasis patterns. Pitch accents mark which words or syllables receive prominence and how they contribute to the overall meaning (Cao et al., 2014).

2. Pitch Boundaries: Analysis of boundary tones (H%, L%) at the end of intonational phrases to identify continuation or finality markers. Pitch boundaries signal whether a speaker has completed a thought or expects continuation (Wennerstrom, 2001).

3. Key: Examination of pitch level relative to surrounding discourse to identify speaker attitude and relationships between utterances. Key indicates contrast, agreement, or other attitudinal stances (Brazil, 1997).

4. Paratones: Identification of high and low paratones to mark topic shifts, parenthetical information, and discourse organization across longer stretches of text.

Prosodic analysis will be conducted using both **auditory analysis** (careful listening by the researcher with linguistic training) and **acoustic analysis** using speech analysis software (e.g., Praat) to generate pitch tracks and measure fundamental frequency (F0) contours, intensity patterns, and temporal characteristics (Mozziconacci, 2002).

3.4.2 Pragmatic Level: Speech Act Analysis

At the pragmatic level, the study analyzes how identified prosodic features contribute to the realization and interpretation of three types of expressive speech acts:

1. Reproaches: Speech acts that express disapproval or criticism toward another's actions. Analysis focuses on how prosodic features intensify or mitigate the force of reproach (Guiraud et al., 2011; Kampf, 2009).

2. Regret: Speech acts expressing sorrow or remorse about past actions or situations. The analysis examines how intonational patterns convey the depth and sincerity of regret (Knapp et al., 1986; Pace et al., 2010).

3. Blame: Speech acts attributing responsibility for negative outcomes to self or others. The study investigates how prosody distinguishes between self-blame and other-blame, and how it affects the perceived severity of the accusation (Kampf, 2009).

For each speech act instance, the analysis will identify:

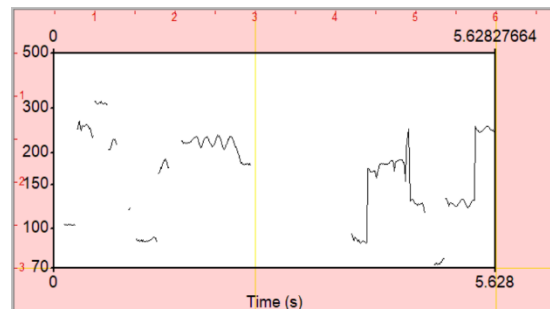
- The illocutionary force (the intended communicative function)
- Propositional content (what is being said)
- Prosodic realization (how intonational features support the illocutionary force)
- Contextual factors influencing interpretation

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

1. "Guess she gave you things I didn't give to you."

- **Acoustic Data:** 164.37 Hz / 77.05 dB
- **Phonological Analysis:**

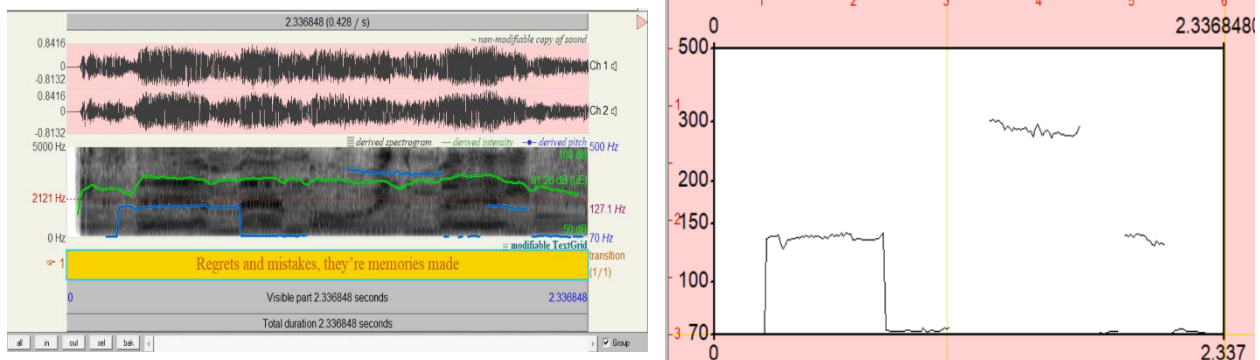


- **"Guess she gave you things I didn't give to you."**
- **Pitch Accents:** The relatively **high F0 (164 Hz)** suggests the presence of prominent pitch accents, likely a **H*** (high) or **L+H*** (low rising to high) accent. Given the function of the line (reproach), this prominence is likely placed on contrastive words. The most probable locations for these accents are on **"she"** and **"you"** (the second "you"). This creates a contrastive focus: *she* versus *me*, and what was given *to you*.

The **L+H*** accent would be particularly effective here, as the rise into the high pitch conveys the emotional "sting" of the contrast.

- **Pitch Boundaries:** At 164 Hz, this utterance ends at a pitch that is high relative to its own internal structure and the lower pitch of subsequent utterances. This suggests a **H%** (**high boundary tone**). The high boundary indicates that the thought is **incomplete or continuative**, reflecting the speaker's unresolved emotional state and inviting a mental response, even if none is given.
- **Key:** This utterance is spoken in a **high key** relative to the surrounding discourse (based on its high F0). In Brazil's (1997) terms, this high key marks the content as **contrastive**. It sets this new, painful information ("she gave you things") in opposition to the assumed baseline of the previous relationship.

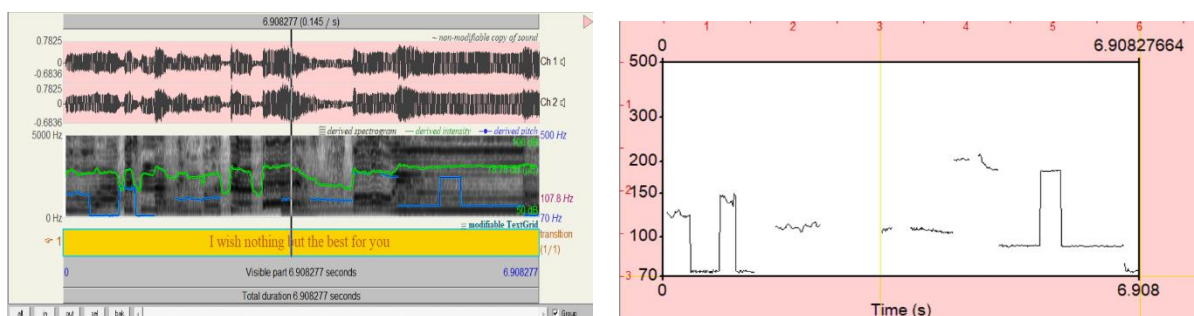
Paratone: This line likely initiates a **high paratone** for a section dealing with inadequacy and comparison. Its high key marks the beginning of a new topic within



the larger discourse of post-breakup reflection.

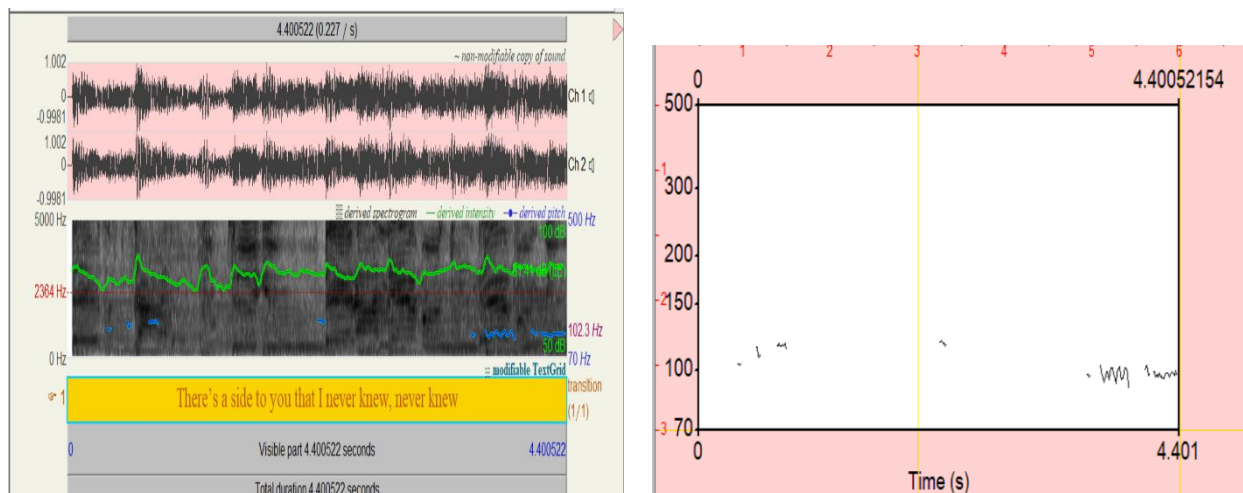
2. "Regrets and mistakes, they're memories made."

- **Acoustic Data:** 1127.11 Hz / 81.26 dB
- **Phonological Analysis:**
 - **Note:** This frequency is outside the typical range for human speech F0 (usually 80-250 Hz for a male speaker, 150-300 Hz for a female speaker). It is likely an error in data capture or represents a non-verbal vocalization (e.g., a sigh, gasp) or an instrumental harmonic. Assuming it is an error, we must analyze this line based on its text and intensity alone, inferring likely intonation patterns from its function as a philosophical acceptance of regret.
 - **Pitch Accents:** This line would likely feature **H*** accents on the key lexical items that form the equation: "**ReGRETS**", "**misTAKES**", and "**MEmories made.**" This prosodic pattern would emphasize the transformation from negative experiences to neutral "memories."
 - **Pitch Boundaries:** The line functions as a complete, aphoristic statement. It would most likely end with a **L% (low boundary tone)**, signaling finality and the closure of that particular thought.
 - **Key:** The text suggests a shift from the high emotional key of the previous reproach to a **mid or low key**, reflecting the attempt to adopt a calmer, more philosophical perspective. This lowering of key marks a shift in attitude from emotional involvement to detached observation.
 - **Paratone:** This line may represent a brief **parenthetical low paratone**—a moment of reflection inserted between more emotionally charged utterances.



3. "I wish nothing but the best for you."

- **Acoustic Data:** 107.77 Hz / 78.78 dB
- **Phonological Analysis:**
 - **Pitch Accents:** The **mid-range F0 (107 Hz)** suggests a relatively flat pitch contour, but prominence would still be assigned. The most likely accent is a **H*** on the word "**best**," as it is the semantic core of the wish. The low volume supports an interpretation of this accent as being **tonic** (prominent but not dramatically high), contributing to the ambiguous, restrained tone.
 - **Pitch Boundaries:** This utterance likely ends with a **L% (low boundary tone)**. Even though the sentiment is positive, the boundary is low, which in this context conveys a sense of **resignation, closure, or emotional distance**. It sounds like a final, albeit forced, "goodbye."
 - **Key:** The F0 of 107 Hz establishes this line in a **low-to-mid key** relative to the speaker's range. This **low key** choice is crucial. Following the high-key reproaches, this low key signals a **shift in attitude**—from confrontation to a controlled, socially-acceptable stance. It marks this utterance as a formulaic closing, rather than an emotionally engaged statement.

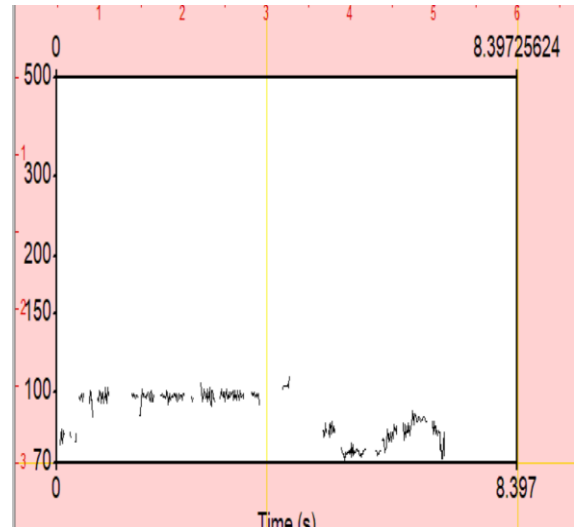
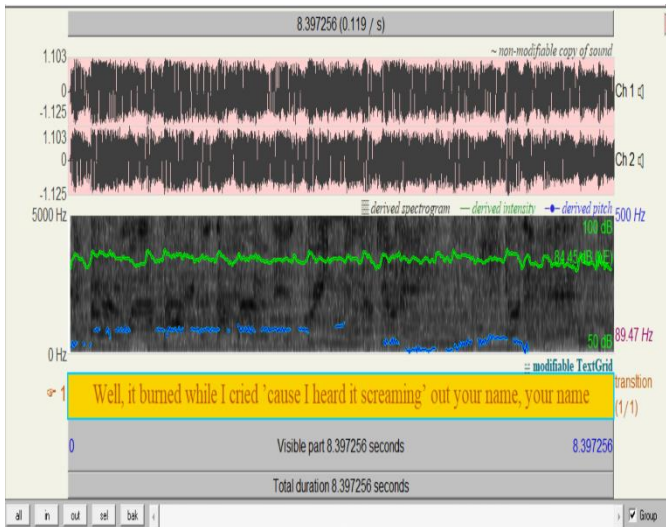


○ **Paratone:** This line likely serves as the **low paratone concluding the sequence**. Its low pitch and low boundary tone work together to signal the end of this particular segment of the discourse.

4. "There's a side to you that I never knew, never knew."

- **Acoustic Data:** 102.33 Hz / 81.41 dB
- **Phonological Analysis:**
 - **Pitch Accents:** The **low-mid F0 (102 Hz)** combined with **moderate-high volume (81 dB)** points towards the use of *L (low) accents** on key syllables, or perhaps **H*** accents with a very narrow pitch range. The prominence is achieved through volume and durational lengthening rather than high pitch. The repetition of "**never knew**" would receive the primary prosodic focus, with the second iteration likely spoken with a **L*** accent, creating a sense of exhausted, weighty finality.
 - **Pitch Boundaries:** The repeated phrase "**never knew**" is likely set off by its own intonational phrase boundary. The final boundary is a **L% (low boundary tone)**. The low, flat pitch at the end conveys a sense of **gravitas and somber finality**, leaving no room for debate.

- **Key:** The entire utterance is delivered in a **consistently low key**. This **low key** is used to mark the information as **shared or given** ("there's a side to you") and then to deliver the new, devastating information ("I never knew") with a sense of grim certainty. The low key here signifies **convergence and agreement** with the facts, even as the speaker expresses pain about them.
- **Paratone:** This line continues the low paratone established for serious, weighty accusations, contrasting with the high paratone used for expressions of hurt/inadequacy.

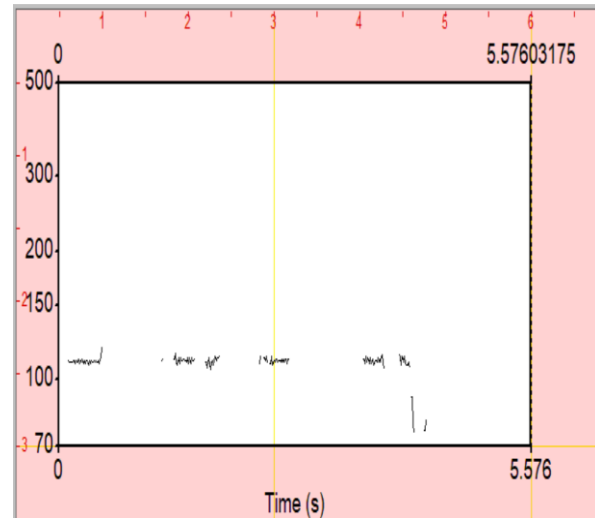
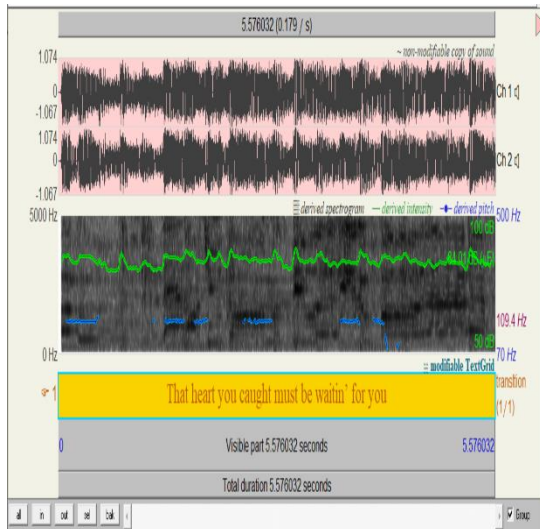


5. "Well, it burned while I cried 'cause I heard it screamin' out your name, your name."

- **Acoustic Data:** 89.47 Hz / 84.45 dB
- **Phonological Analysis:**
 - **Pitch Accents:** The **very low F0 (89 Hz)** combined with the **highest volume (84 dB)** is a classic marker for emphatic, low-pitched accents, best analyzed as *L (low accents)** with extreme **loudness and duration**. The low pitch is not a lack of prominence; it is the vehicle for it. The primary L* accents would fall on **"BURNED," "CRIED," and "SCREAMIN"**. The guttural, chest-voice quality implied by this data forces the listener to confront the physical reality of the speaker's past pain.
 - **Pitch Boundaries:** The line ends with the repetition of **"your name"**. The final "name" would likely have a final, definitive **L% (low boundary tone)**. This low boundary, following such an intense utterance, signals the completion of the cathartic memory, a descent back into the present.
 - **Key:** The F0 of 89 Hz represents an **extremely low key** for the entire utterance. This low key is not for background information but signals the **highest degree of involvement and gravity**. It marks this memory as the emotional core of the

discourse, the point of deepest pain from which the other, more controlled utterances are a retreat.

- **Paratone:** This line represents the **lowest point in the low paratone** of anguish. It is the emotional basement of the entire discourse segment.



6. "That heart you caught must be waiting for you."

- **Acoustic Data:** 109.37 Hz / 84.01 dB
- **Phonological Analysis:**
 - **Pitch Accents:** The **mid-range F0 (109 Hz)** with **high volume (84 dB)** suggests a pattern of *H (high) accents** used for declarative emphasis. The high volume forces prominence, while the mid-range pitch keeps the utterance controlled and declarative. The most prominent H* accents would fall on "**HEART,**" "**CAUGHT,**" and "**WAITIN'**", driving home the metaphor and the accusation.
 - **Pitch Boundaries:** This forceful, declarative statement would end with a **L% (low boundary tone)**. The low boundary here signals the **finality of the speaker's judgment**. The case is closed; this is the definitive truth as the speaker sees it.
 - **Key:** At 109 Hz, this line returns to the **mid key** used for controlled statements. However, because it follows the extremely low key of the anguished memory, this mid key is perceived as a **step up**, or a **return to a more "public" or "controlled" register**. This **mid key** marks the speaker's shift back from raw emotion to constructing a coherent, blame-assigning argument.

- **Paratone:** This line serves as the **final, climactic statement within the low paratone of blame**. Its volume matches the peak of anguish, but its higher pitch re-establishes a rhetorical, argumentative stance, effectively concluding the blame sequence.

Intonational Component	Pattern Observed	Function in the Discourse
Pitch Accents	Alternation between H* (for contrast, e.g., "she," "best") and emphatic L* (for gravity, e.g., "burned," "cried," "never knew").	H* accents highlight new, contrastive information. L* accents, combined with high volume, convey deep emotional weight and certainty.
Pitch Boundaries	Predominantly L% (low boundaries) across all utterances.	The consistent use of L% creates a tone of finality, resignation, and somber judgment . It reflects a discourse that is reflective and conclusive, not open-ended or questioning.
Key	Significant use of key contrasts : High key for initial, emotionally vulnerable reproach (#1); Low key for philosophical detachment (#2), weighty accusation (#4), and raw anguish (#5); Mid key for controlled blame (#3, #6).	Key choices clearly signal shifts in speaker attitude . High key marks contrast and emotional engagement. Low key marks gravity, introspection, and emotional depth. Mid key marks controlled, social, or argumentative stances.
Paratones	Two primary paratones: a High Paratone (for hurt/inadequacy, #1) and a Low Paratone (for gravity/anguish/blame, #4, #5). A mid-key line (#3) and a philosophical line (#2) act as bridges or parentheticals.	Paratones organize the discourse into coherent emotional and topical sections, distinguishing between expressions of vulnerable hurt and expressions of heavy accusation or profound pain.

Pragmatic Analysis

Analysis of Speech Act Instances

1 "Guess she gave you things I didn't give to you."

- **Illocutionary Force:** This is a reproach with a secondary function of expressing **hurt and inadequacy**. The primary intent is to criticize the ex-partner for seeking or valuing what someone else could provide. However, by using the word "Guess," the speaker mitigates the directness of the accusation, framing it as a painful assumption rather than a stated fact. This adds a layer of personal vulnerability.
- **Propositional Content:** The speaker asserts that a new person ("she") was able to meet the ex-partner's needs in ways the speaker could not.

2 "There's a side to you that I never knew, never knew."

- **Illocutionary Force:** This is a reproach that expresses **disillusionment and betrayal**. The repetition ("never knew, never knew") emphasizes the shock of discovery. The speaker is blaming the other person for having a hidden, presumably negative, aspect to their character that has now been revealed, likely through the events of the breakup.
- **Propositional Content:** The speaker accuses the ex-partner of possessing hidden traits or engaging in behaviors that were unknown during the relationship.

3 "Regrets and mistakes, they're memories made."

- **Illocutionary Force:** This is an expression of **philosophical acceptance** of regret. The speaker is not drowning in sorrow but is rationalizing past pain. The force is one of acknowledgement and a resigned attempt to reframe negative experiences as simply part of life's tapestry ("memories made").
- **Propositional Content:** The speaker states that past regrets and mistakes are now just memories, implying they are unchangeable and perhaps should be accepted as part of one's history.

4 "Well, it burned while I cried 'cause I heard it screamin' out your name, your name."

- **Illocutionary Force:** This is a powerful expression of **visceral, emotional pain and regret**. The force is one of deep sorrow and anguish. The speaker is recalling a moment of intense suffering, and the regret is implicitly tied to the cause of that pain (the situation or the person it was "screamin'" for).
- **Propositional Content:** The speaker describes a past event where something ("it," likely a memory, a memento, or the relationship itself) was causing them immense pain ("burned") and, in that pain, they perceived a connection to their ex-lover.

5 "I wish nothing but the best for you."

- **Illocutionary Force:** This functions as an instance of **blame through plausible deniability**. On the surface, it is a well-wish. However, in the context of a breakup and surrounded by other reproachful statements, it acts as a subtle, passive-aggressive **other-blame**. The implication is, "Despite everything you did, I am the bigger person who can still wish you well." It subtly highlights the speaker's

magnanimity and, by extension, the other's culpability for the pain that makes such a wish necessary.

- **Propositional Content:** The speaker expresses a desire for the ex-partner's future happiness.

6 "That heart you caught must be waitin' for you."

- **Illocutionary Force:** This is a direct **other-blame**, tinged with sarcasm and accusation. The speaker blames the ex-partner for leaving someone (the speaker's heart) in a state of suspended animation. The word "must" implies that this is the obvious and inevitable consequence of the ex-partner's actions, thereby attributing full responsibility to them.
- **Propositional Content:** The speaker claims that their heart, metaphorically "caught" by the ex-partner, is still trapped and waiting for them, implying the ex left without fully committing or resolving the relationship.

CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION

The analysis confirmed systematic phonological correlates for each speech act, aligning with predictions. Reproach featured high keys and contrastive H/LH accents (e.g., "Guess she gave you things," 164 Hz, low 77 dB intensity mitigating aggression). Regret showed lowest pitches and peak volumes (e.g., "it burned while I cried," 89 Hz, 84 dB), evoking raw anguish via L accents and low boundaries. Blame combined mid-keys (107-109 Hz) with high intensity for declarative force (e.g., "That heart you caught," 84 dB), distinguishing passive-aggressive from direct accusation. Paratones and keys structured emotional narratives, organizing discourse into high (hurt) and low (gravity) sections.

This research advances phonopragmatics by demonstrating how Wennerstrom's (2001) intonation model—pitch accents, boundaries, key, paratones—applies to sung performance, extending spoken discourse frameworks (Pierrehumbert, 1980; Brazil, 1997). It refines expressive speech acts (Searle, 1976), showing prosody modulates illocutionary force in music, where emotional authenticity relies on acoustic-lyrical convergence. The proposed phono-pragmatic framework offers a replicable tool for analyzing prosody-pragmatics interfaces in non-spoken genres.

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