

## **Interrogative Intonation as a Methodological Challenge in English–Ukrainian–English Oral Interpretation**

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Intonation plays a decisive role in conveying meaning, the speaker’s stance, and politeness in oral translation. While translation and interpreting studies have traditionally prioritised lexical, grammatical, and semantic equivalence, prosodic transfer — particularly interrogative intonation — remains insufficiently addressed as a methodological issue, especially in cases of divergent pragmatic uses of pitch movement (Brazil, 1997; Gussenhoven, 2004). This paper examines interrogative intonation as a critical yet underestimated factor in English–Ukrainian–English simultaneous and consecutive interpretation.

In Ukrainian, general questions that are not explicitly marked by interrogative lexical markers (чи, хіба, невже) rely primarily on rising terminal intonation as the main interrogative cue. This rising contour is phonologically obligatory and pragmatically neutral. However, when such contours are transferred into English without prosodic recalibration, they may be interpreted differently by English-speaking listeners. Due to cross-linguistic differences in pitch range, nuclear stress placement, and the pragmatic interpretation of rising tones, a Ukrainian-style narrow or late rise can be perceived in English as tentative, confirmatory, ironic, or emotionally marked rather than neutral (Cruttenden, 2014). As a result, interrogative intent may be pragmatically distorted even when lexical and syntactic equivalence is preserved.

The methodological problem is particularly acute in simultaneous interpreting, where cognitive load and time pressure induce automatic prosodic mirroring of the source language. In consecutive interpreting, although interpreters have greater control over delivery, training and assessment practices often prioritise informational accuracy, paying insufficient attention to prosodic appropriateness. Consequently, interrogatives may retain source-language intonation patterns that are communicatively irrelevant in the target language.

Consequently, interrogative intonation should be treated as a methodological unit of analysis in oral translation and interpreting studies, rather than as a peripheral phonetic detail. Drawing on contrastive phonetics and discourse pragmatics, it identifies recurrent areas of misalignment between Ukrainian and English interrogative contours, including: (1) differences in pitch contour, (2) interaction between lexical interrogative markers and intonation, and (3) the pragmatic loading of rising versus falling contours in institutional and academic discourse.

From an interpreting studies perspective, the study rests upon a functionalist and discourse-oriented approach, treating interrogative intonation as an integral component of meaning construction in interpreter-mediated communication. Following process-oriented models of interpreting (Chernovaty, 2019), prosody is conceptualised not merely as a phonetic feature but as a procedural cue guiding listener interpretation under real-time constraints. Observable output features — intonation contours, pitch range, the nuclear stress placement — are thus viewed as indicators of pragmatic equivalence or distortion.

Methodologically, the paper proposes integrating prosodic competence into interpreter training and assessment through controlled intonation re-mapping tasks, targeted listening, and pragmatic analysis. Such an approach reframes intonation not as an issue of accent reduction, but as a component of communicative equivalence. By foregrounding intonation as a translation problem, the study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of how meaning is transferred beyond words in oral translation and interpreting.

#### References

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## 5. Формування іншомовної комунікативної компетентності в умовах цифрової трансформації

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Кожне століття характеризується появою нових явищ, які суттєво впливають майже на усі галузі нашого життя. Так, якщо говорити про ХХ століття, то без сумніву яскравою