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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INTONATION PATTERNS AND
THEIR INFLUENCE ON SEMANTIC CONNOTATIONS
IN THE ENGLISH, RUSSIAN AND KAZAKH LANGUAGES

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Abstract

This article is devoted to the comparative analysis of intonation patterns in English, Russian and Kazakh languages. The importance of intonation as a means of expressing emotional state, communicative intention and organisation of speech act is emphasized. The characteristics of intonation contours, their classification and role in each of the languages under consideration are analysed. Special attention is paid to the problems arising in intercultural communication due to differences in intonation patterns. The results of the study make it possible to highlight universal and specific features of intonation systems due to linguistic and cultural factors, which can be useful for language learners and specialists in the field of intercultural communication.

Keywords: intonation, intonation patterns, prosody, intercultural communication, pragmatics.

ИНТОНАЦИЯ ЗАҢДЫЛЫҚТАРЫН ЖӘНЕ ОЛАРДЫҢ АҒЫЛШЫН, ОРЫС
ЖӘНЕ ҚАЗАҚ ТІЛДЕРІНДЕГІ СЕМАНТИКАЛЫҚ КОННОТАЦИЯЛАРҒА
ӘСЕРІН САЛЫСТЫРМАЛЫ ТАЛДАУ

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Аңдатпа

Бұл мақала ағылшын, орыс және қазақ тілдеріндегі интонация заңдылықтарын салыстырмалы талдауға арналған. Интонацияның эмоционалды жағдайды, коммуникативті ниетті және сөйлеу әрекетін ұйымдастыруды білдіру құралы ретіндегі маңыздылығына баса назар аударылады. Интонациялық контурлардың сипаттамалары, олардың жіктелуі және қарастырылып отырған тілдердің әрқайсысындағы рөлі талданады. Интонация үлгілерінің айырмашылығына байланысты мәдениетаралық қарым-қатынаста туындайтын мәселелерге ерекше назар аударылады. Зерттеу нәтижелері лингвистикалық және мәдени факторларға байланысты интонациялық жүйелердің әмбебап және өзіндік ерекшеліктерін бөліп көрсетуге мүмкіндік береді, бұл тіл үйренушілер мен мәдениетаралық коммуникация саласындағы мамандар үшін пайдалы болуы мүмкін.

Кілт сөздер: интонация, интонация заңдылықтары, просодия, мәдениетаралық коммуникация

**СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ ИНТОНАЦИОННЫХ ПАТТЕРНОВ И
ИХ ВЛИЯНИЕ НА СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЕ КОННОТАЦИИ
В АНГЛИЙСКОМ, РУССКОМ И КАЗАХСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ**

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Аннотация

Данная статья посвящена сравнительному анализу интонационных паттернов в английском, русском и казахском языках. Отмечается важность интонации как средства выражения эмоционального состояния, коммуникативного намерения и организации речевого акта. Анализируются характеристики интонационных контуров, их классификация и роль в каждом из рассматриваемых языков. Особое внимание уделяется проблемам, возникающим в межкультурной коммуникации из-за различий в интонационных моделях. Результаты исследования позволяют выделить универсальные и специфические особенности интонационных систем, обусловленные лингвистическими и культурными факторами, которые могут быть полезны для изучающих язык и специалистов в области межкультурной коммуникации.

Ключевые слова: интонация, интонационные паттерны, просодия, межкультурная коммуникация.

Introduction

This article is devoted to the comparative analysis of intonation patterns in English, Russian and Kazakh languages. The importance of intonation as a means of expressing emotional state, communicative intention and organisation of speech act is emphasized. The characteristics of intonation contours, their classification and role in each of the languages under consideration are analysed. Special attention is paid to the problems arising in intercultural communication due to differences in intonation patterns. The results of the study make it possible to highlight universal and specific features of intonation systems due to linguistic and cultural factors, which can be useful for language learners and specialists in the field of intercultural communication.

The aim of the article is to make a comparative analysis of intonation patterns and to study their influence on semantic connotations in English, Russian and Kazakh.

Despite the fact that we live in times of globalisation and the Internet, when people have access to an unlimited number of resources, the problem of differences in intonation patterns between English and Russian still remains relevant [1].

Intonation, being an integral element of oral communication, forms the rhythmic and melodic structure of an utterance and determines its communicative function. Despite the universality of intonation as a phonetic phenomenon, its specific characteristics vary depending on the linguistic system. Differences in intonation between speakers of Russian and English often explain mutual misunderstanding. Unfortunately, many people do not think that intonation differences in the two languages lead to communicative disorders and emotional dissatisfaction of speakers. While English intonation seems extremely emotional to Russians, Russian speakers are perceived in English-speaking communities as straightforward, categorical and even rude interlocutors [2].

Despite the certain importance of such concepts as duration, speech rate and timbre of pronunciation for the study of English intonation for sociolinguistic research, for research purposes we will abstract from the above elements of intonation and consider intonation in a

narrow sense, concentrating on the melody of speech in English, in other words, on the consideration of nuclear tones and their communicative meanings [3].

By means of intonation not only the spoken speech is organised and designed, but also the communicative-pragmatic and emotional-expressive meaning of an utterance is determined. In addition, intonation plays a major role in the differentiation of utterances in the speech act and in the dissection of the text into semantic-structural parts. Intonation is the most important feature of oral, sounding speech, it is a complex linguistic whole consisting of several components: melody, tempo, pause, stress, rhythm, intensity, timbre. At the acoustic level, these components correspond to tonal, dynamic and temporal parameters [4].

It is arguably true that the incorrect production of intonational patterns on English would result to ineffective communication, different interpretations and unintelligibility, among many others. Yet, the feature has traditionally been neglected in the second language teaching even when the nonsegmental features are studied [5, p.49].

Materials and research methods

The following methods were used for a comprehensive study of the complex comparative analysis of intonation patterns and the implications on semantic connotations in the English, Russian and Kazakh languages: comparative analysis, descriptive method. Audio recordings of spontaneous speech from speakers of each language were collected for the research. These recordings covered different types of communication, including interviews, dialogues and monologues. In addition, to ensure the diversity and representativeness of the data, existing corpuses of texts and authentic audiovisual materials (e.g., films, podcasts, and public speeches) were analyzed. This allowed intonation patterns to be studied in a variety of contexts.

Results of the research

Intonation is a critical element of language that determines the meaning and emotional colouring of utterances. Intonation patterns, which vary both within and between languages, are an interesting subject for comparative analysis. In this paper, we investigate the intonational features of English, Russian and Kazakh and their influence on semantic nuances. In English, intonation, including pitch, tempo, strength and duration, plays an important role in expressing emotions and meanings. It fulfills the following main functions: semantic-distinctive (statement/question), emotional-expressive (expression of feelings), syntactic (division of speech) and pragmatic (indication of intention).

English is characterised by relatively fixed intonation patterns. The main intonation patterns include ascending, descending and ascending-descending tones, each of which fulfils a specific communicative function. Ascending intonation is usually associated with questioning constructions, expressions of doubt, or expectation of a response. Descending intonation, on the other hand, is usually used in affirmative sentences and indicates the speakers' confidence. It is important to note that intonation in English is a meaning-distinguishing element. For instance, rising intonation (usually used in questions): "Are you coming?"; descending intonation (usually used in statements): "I am going to the store". Ascending intonation can also indicate uncertainty or expectation of an answer, whereas descending intonation is often taken to indicate certainty or completeness of thought. It is important to note that in English, intonation can change the meaning of an utterance: "You are going". With descending intonation will be perceived as a statement, and with ascending intonation - as a question. Along with intonation, prosodic characteristics such as stress and rhythm, as well as the relationship between intonation and modality, play a significant role in shaping the meaning of an utterance.

The Russian language is rich in intonation possibilities, allowing to convey the subtlest shades of meaning. Unlike languages with a fixed word order, such as English and Russian

provides more freedom in the use of intonation. The Russian intonation is characterised by greater variation and expressiveness. The main types of intonation include: (to express confidence), rising contours (to express questions and doubts) and incomplete structures that create a sense of understatement. The intonation also serves as a tool to emphasise important parts of a sentence: descending the intonation in statements: “I will go to the shop”; the upward intonation in questions: “Will you go?”.

In addition, in Russian, the intonation can serve to express emotions: “How great” with an ascending intonation sounds more enthusiastic than with a descending intonation. It is also worth noting that in the Russian language intonation can change the meaning of an utterance. For instance, the phrase “Did you do it?” with the different intonation can mean both surprise and accusation. In Russian, the intonation is a powerful tool that can completely change the meaning of an utterance, even if the words and grammar remain unchanged.

The intonation system of the Kazakh language, as a representative of the Turkic language family, is characterised by relative restraint in terms of variation, but plays an essential role in expressing modality and syntactic relations. The Kazakh speech is characterised by the following intonation patterns: narrative utterances are usually pronounced with flat or slightly descending intonation; in interrogative sentences that do not contain interrogative words, a sharp ascending tone is observed. The intonation of an utterance is closely related to morphological indicators. Similar to Russian, intonation in Kazakh is capable of conveying a wide range of emotional shades and semantic nuances, using ascending and descending intonation contours. The main intonation patterns include rising and falling intonation: Descending intonation: “Men dukenge baramyn”. (I am going to the shop.); Ascending intonation: “Sen barasyn ba?” (Are you coming?); Kazakh also uses intonation to emphasise information or change emphasis. For example, the phrase ‘Ol meni kordi’ (He saw me) with different intonation can emphasise different parts of the sentence. This connection is especially noticeable in the context of the agglutinative structure of the language and its word-formation processes.

Comparing the intonation patterns of the three languages, several key points can be highlighted. Table 1 presents data on Comparative table of intonation patterns in the Kazakh, English and Russian languages.

Table 1. Comparative table of intonation patterns.

Item	English	Russian	Kazakh
rising intonation	Ascending intonation ‘Are you coming?’ - standard rising intonation in yes/no questions, expresses uncertainty, expectation of an answer.	‘Are you coming?’ - a rising tone at the end expresses a question, may be accompanied by a tinge of surprise or doubt.	‘Sen barasyn ba?’ - a clear rising tone on the particles ‘ba/me’, intonationally signalling a question.
falling intonation	“I am going to the store.” - typical of statements, conveys finality of thought.	“I am going to the store.” - is also characterized by a smooth falling tone, signaling the completion of the statement.	“Men dukenge baramyn.” - A smooth or slightly descending tone, concluding the phrase, neutral in emotion.

Emotional coloring	Moderate: emotions are most often expressed lexically, intonation regulates the degree of involvement or formality.	Strongly expressed: intonation can completely change the meaning of the phrase, reflecting emotions - anger, joy, irony, etc.	More restrained, but shades of respect, reverence and interest are expressed intonationally, especially in combination with speech formulas.
Emotional coloring	Moderate: emotions are most often expressed lexically, intonation regulates the degree of involvement or formality.	Strongly expressed: intonation can completely change the meaning of the phrase, reflecting emotions - anger, joy, irony, etc.	More restrained, but shades of respect, reverence and interest are expressed intonationally, especially in combination with speech formulas.
Changing the meaning	A question with a drop in tone is rhetorical; a rise in tone is a real question. The difference between a statement and a question often depends only on intonation.	The accent shifts to the right word - you can use intonation to emphasize the object, subject, or verb, changing the semantic core.	Intonation intensifies the focus: it emphasizes key words (especially verbs and pronouns), forming accents depending on the context.
Cultural characteristics	Standardized patterns: questions are polite but formal; adherence to intonation norms is important for politeness.	Intonation carries an emotional and cultural load: excessive monotony can be perceived as coldness.	Intonation emphasizes respect, especially when communicating with the elderly or elders; tone in combination with grammatical polite forms is important.

1. Structural features of intonation:

- English is characterized by a greater predictability of intonation patterns, especially in questions (typically with a rising tone) and statements (typically with a falling tone). Intonation is generally more standardized.

- Russian is characterized by greater flexibility of intonation. The intonation pattern strongly depends on the speaker's emotional state and the communicative purpose of the utterance.

- In Kazakh the intonation system is relatively even and restrained. Intonation interacts closely with grammatical elements, such as question particles, to convey meaning.

2. The role of intonation in expressing emotions:

- Russian: Intonation plays a key role in conveying emotional colouring. Tone of voice can dramatically change the meaning of a phrase, expressing, for example, sarcasm, approval or indignation.

- English: Emotions are mostly expressed through word choice, but intonation is also important for conveying nuances such as irony, doubt or politeness.

- Kazakh: Emotional expression is usually reserved, often reflecting respect or interest. Intonation is strictly regulated by social and ethical norms of communication.

3. Cultural influences on intonation:

- English culture: Intonation is used to soften straightforward emotional utterances (e.g., using an ascending-descending tone for polite requests).

- Russian culture: Intonation is often used to emphasise sincerity and strength of feeling.

- Kazakh culture: Intonation is often used to emphasise sincerity and strength of feeling.

Table 2 presents data on the main functional features of intonation in three languages - English, Russian and Kazakh.

Table 2. “Functional-intonation characteristics of the English, Russian and Kazakh languages”

Function/ Language	English	Russian	Kazakh
Declarativity	Falling tone	Lowering tone	Even/flattering tone
General issues	Rising Tone	Uplifting	Sharp rise
Emotional colouring	Moderate	Strongly pronounced	Restrained
Pragmatic function	Explicit	Explicit	Depends on the context
Expression of modality	Standardised	Flexible	Contextualised

Table 2 shows which intonation contours (e.g. falling or rising) are used to express specific communicative functions, namely declarative, general questions (question intonation), Expressions of emotion (emotional colouring), pragmatic function (speaker's intention), modality (attitude to the utterance: confidence, doubt, politeness, etc.).

1. Declarativeness:

- In English, a descending tone is often used for statements, giving the utterance completeness and neutrality.

- Russian also uses a descending intonation, but it may be more variable and depend on the emotional state of the speaker.

- In Kazakh, affirmative sentences are usually pronounced with a flat or slightly descending intonation, without pronounced emotional accents.

2. General questions (requiring a yes or no answer):

- In English, such questions are usually characterised by an increase in tone at the end of the sentence, especially on the last stressed word.

- In Russian, the interrogative intonation is manifested by raising the tone in the second part of the sentence.

- In Kazakh, interrogative particles (e.g. ‘ba’, ‘me’) are pronounced with a particularly sharp increase in tone, which is a clear indicator of a question.

3. Emotional colouring:

- In English the emotional colouring of speech is expressed moderately by intonation, more often lexical means or additional explanations are used.

- In Russian, intonation plays a key role in expressing emotions. One and the same phrase can have a completely different meaning depending on the intonation.

- In Kazakh, emotions are usually expressed more reservedly, especially in formal settings. Respectful intonation is valued more than boisterous expression.

4. Pragmatic function):

- In English, intonation clearly indicates the type of utterance, such as request, irony, or doubt.

- In Russian, intonation is actively involved in conveying pragmatic meaning, even to the point of giving the utterance an opposite meaning.

- In Kazakh, meaning is often determined by context and grammatical means (affixes, particles), not only by intonation.

5. Expression of modality (attitude to an utterance):

- In English, modality is often expressed using certain intonation patterns, such as an ascending-descending tone to express doubt or politeness.

- The Russian language has a flexible intonation system that allows to give different modal tones to a phrase.

- In Kazakh, intonation also serves to express modality, but often through context, taking into account the social relations and status of the interlocutor. Intonation is less free in expressing modality than in Russian.

Discussion

To summarise, the following key points can be highlighted:

1. Although intonation in all three languages fulfils similar functions (expressing questions, statements, emotions and accents), the ways of its realisation show certain differences.

2. While in English and Russian rising intonation predominantly signals a question or expectation, in Kazakh its range is wider and includes expressions of surprise or interest.

3. Changing intonation in all languages affects the meaning of an utterance, but in Russian this function is particularly important because of the flexibility of word order.

4. Intonation patterns can reflect cultural characteristics. In Kazakh, in particular, the use of intonation to express respect is more pronounced, which is probably related to cultural traditions.

Conclusion

Thus, intonation is an important aspect of language communication that varies between different languages. The intonation systems of English, Russian and Kazakh demonstrate both universal and unique features. English intonation is more regulated, while Russian intonation is more expressive and variant. Kazakh intonation, influenced by structural agglutination, relies on grammatical markers and a more even distribution of melody. These differences significantly influence the interpretation of the meaning of an utterance and play an important role in intercultural communication. Analysing intonation patterns in English, Russian and Kazakh reveals both common features and unique characteristics of each language. Understanding these differences can significantly improve intercultural communication and help language learners communicate their thoughts and emotions more accurately. Understanding the intonation features of different languages helps to avoid communicative misunderstandings and contributes to successful interlingual interaction.

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