

## PROSODY OF NEGATIVE MODALITY IN TRANSLATION

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### SUMMARY

*The work is devoted to the research of the ways that reflect the prosody characteristics of the English utterances containing negative semantics in the Ukrainian oral translation. The difficulty of achieving this goal when treating prosody is in its multifunctionality and multicomponential nature. Prosody is the main means of signifying the communicative types of sentences and the pragmatics of the communicative process. Correlation of prosody with pragmatic and semantic components of communication is carried out through the prism of the emotional sphere of human speech behavior.*

*The analysis of the experimental material provided an opportunity to find both distinctive and typologically common for Ukrainian and English characteristics of negative modality at the level of negative connotative meanings prosody, such as of objections, condemnation, reproach, and specific correlates of negative modality in either of the two languages under analysis. Typologically similar characteristics include the following: the register of melody; the range of dynamic parameter and timbre components of prosody; the state of the vocal cords and larynx and their combinations. The mechanism of realization of prosody of negative connotations is typologically similar in two languages: the most frequent combinations of interaction of prosody parameters in English and Ukrainian languages are the increase in intensity and the synchronous growth of melody – 24,7% and 25,3%, respectively, in the amount of the experimental phrases. The functional significance of the temporal component at the segmental level in the English language and the absence of such a characteristic in the Ukrainian language expands the possibility of applying the time parameter at the suprasegmental level in the Ukrainian language. Knowledge of the laws of prosodic variability in two languages helps to interpret correctly and produce the semantics of a foreign language in translation.*

**Key words:** negative modality, prosody, translation, prosodic parameters, typology, specific linguistic features.

**Introduction.** At the present stage of international relations development on the globe, the computerization of science and technology in various spheres of human activity translation problems are the object of special attention of both professionals and consumers. In recent years many works devoted to the problems of translation studies have appeared in the scientific literature; much attention is paid to such questions as the use of various strategies and tactics in translation (Miram, 1998; Сдобников, Петрова, 2008), adequacy and equivalence of translation variability

of translation technologies (Bell, 1991; Сдобников, Петрова, 2008), universals (Brown, 1987) and many others.

It should be noted that issues of translating foreign language utterances with attitudinal and emotional connotations, in general, and phrases of negative attitude, in particular, are of a special difficulty for translators and interpreters. Despite the fact that this problem has long been considered by linguists, in the special literature there is still no clear classification of modality components referring to the field of negative semantics, the pool of empirical data is insufficient, an evaluation scale of the degree of the negative semantics that helps to assess the word in the original language and the corresponding unit in the language of translation is not available. It should be noted that the peculiarity of lexical and grammatical means to express negative emotions in English and Ukrainian, difference in the structure of the two languages (analytical and synthetic), are the difficulties that the translator is to overcome. Another problem for perception and interpretation is the prosody of the two languages being studied, which differs significantly in the two distant languages under analysis.

Therefore, the lack of data on the problem of prosody components' interaction in the process of translating and interpreting statements of negative semantics; insufficiency of information about the relationship of prosody and the lexical and grammatical constructions in phrases with negative connotation; ambiguity in treating the principles of negative prosody relevant signs (that cannot be neglected in the process of translation) that exists in modern linguistic literature make this research **updated and wanted**.

**The purpose** of this research is to study the ways the prosody characteristics of English phrases of negative semantics are to be interpreted in the Ukrainian language.

The difficulty to achieve this goal on the material of prosody lies in the fact that prosody is a multifunctional and multicomponent unit (Huldzen, 1962). It is the main means of communicative types' differentiation and the instrument that defines the pragmatic function of the communicative process. The correlation of prosody with the pragmatic and semantic components of the speech act is closely linked with the emotional sphere of human speech behavior (Korunets, 2003; Королева, 1989).

**The material** of the research consists of the authentic recordings of English dialogical speech that includes phrases of attitudinal meaning of negation and conflict, and the corresponding variants of their translation into Ukrainian as well. It is important to keep in mind the pragmatic orientation of negative connotations that is the partner's belief that the way the event under discussion takes place is undesirable, besides, the speaker seeks to convince the interlocutor of being on the right side, to form a different opinion of what is discussed in the listener's mind. The purpose of such verbal acts is to form an elocution effect of reproach, condemnation, disagreement, and the like.

**Results and discussion.** The complex character of linguistic analysis of emotional and modal units of negative semantics has shown that emotional construction, context, non-linguistic means, and other factors can be treated as the decoders of negative emotions and attitudes. The form of revealing the nature of emotion is an explicit meaning in a combination with the background of its implementation; the negative meaning can be reflected by prosody alone and the interaction of the last with lexical and grammatical means. Thus, emotional speech, being a psychological

presentation of a person, contains emotionally marked remarks in its structure, emotional and evaluative content of these remarks is expressed by a complex combination of expressive means at all speech levels. The complex analysis of negative attitudes is carried out on the basis of analyzing the ways of linguistic means interaction when exercising the pragmatics of the communication process.

It should be borne in mind that when translating the emotionally marked units an important role is paid to the linguistic and cultural factor that underlies the language structures of the two languages under discussion (Доценко, 2001; Королева, 1989; Смущинська, 2000). For example, "equivalent" language units differ both in their semantics (*dim* is broader in meaning than *house*, as it includes *home*, and *building*, and *block of flats*, and *condominium*, and *mansion*), and in their functioning in Ukrainian and English; for example, *кринкий чай* and *strong tea* illustrate different possibilities of lexical compatibility in two languages. Thus, the linguistic and cultural peculiarities of means reflecting negative connotations in the speakers' communicative behavior are the aspects taken into account in this research.

*Positive or negative* attitude of the subject to the evaluated object is a universal language category (Brown, 1987). Thus, in each natural language actualization of this category has a certain degree of specificity. Let's look at an example, in the XX century, when the foundations of wealth were revealed, even in capitalist England, rich people were forced to justify themselves: "*Anyway, what's wrong with being rich. It's a quality, it's attractive. Rich people are nicer, they're less nervous*". «Як-не-як, що поганого в тому, щоб бути багатим? Це гідність, це привабливо. Багаті люди приємніше, вони менш нервові». This abstract demonstrates the necessity to consider all aspects of communication process when dealing with linguistic means.

A necessary component of a detailed linguistic analysis is the relationship of three aspects: syntactic, which represents the formal relationship of a linguistic sign to other signs; semantics, which explores the relationship of signs to the denoted objects; pragmatics, which considers the relationship of signs to people who use them. Since the primacy of the formal is one of the main provisions in the description of linguistic phenomena, linguistic analysis of evaluative reactions is to be started with the examination of their formal structure.

When fixing models of negative semantics, the traditional system of letter symbols denoting lexical and grammatical categories of words was used: N - noun, Adj - adjective, V - verb, Part - adjective, Pron - pronoun, EW - emotional word. The models of the utterances with negative semantics are given in accordance with their quantitative decrease and are illustrated by the examples.

Model I: How + EW / *How terrible!* (Це жахливо!)

Model II: (Pron + Vbe) + EW + N / *It's rotten luck!* (Гниле везіння!)

Model III: What + EW / *What nonsense!* (Що за безглузддя!)

Model IV: EW + Part II / *Well said.* (Добре сказано!)

Model V: What + EW + N / *What a filthy thing to say!* (Яке грізне висловлювання!)

Paradigmatic modeling, which represents the next stage of the description, consists of identifying syntactic categories, as a result the paradigmatic models allow to identify the peculiarity of attitudinal units' syntactic functioning.

An invariant of paradigmatic series in the study is presented either by a syntagmatic structural scheme or a model with a typical significant meaning.

Paradigmatic modifications of the model include the whole set of its actualization: the opposites of its forms regarding the aim of communication (narrative - interrogative - commanding), with respect to affirmation - negation, according to the tense and so on. The highest level of the sentence paradigm is the opposition of the forms of the sentence in relation to the purpose of the statement, for example: *Isn't that fine? Isn't that nice? Isn't that shame?* In fact, the interrogative-negative form of these evaluative constructions serves as a marker of emotionality that is a characteristic of spoken language. It's interesting to mention that all utterances have the same structure as to their form, while the first two expressing a positive attitudinal connotation and the last phrase has a negative semantics in terms of lexical content and prosodic structure.

The opposition of the remarks in the negative form is very limited. Basically, the objection is registered in constructions with the common words *good* and *bad*, for example: *Not bad; No good; Not a bad idea*. In such cases, the use of the objection is conditioned by the intention not to sound too categorical in the statement. Both, in case if the interrogative-negative forms are used in the utterance to express the emphatic statement, or in case of using objections to introduce the opposite mind, we should talk about reinterpreting the constructions. In this case, prosody is the leading factor of the meaning of the communicative unit.

The interaction of the prosody components in emotional utterances, which express the elements of a single functional and semantic field of negative modality, is one of the most difficult issues of modern linguistics.

Let's consider some prosodic correlates of modal meanings of negative semantics in English.

**The prosody of objection** aims at expressing an aggressive attitude to the communicant. Most often, this effect is achieved by the opposite action of lexical, grammatical and prosodic means of rendering the meaning of the utterance. For example, *I'm to go. Pete needs my help. - Yes. Of course. There's nothing to be done at home*. The suprasegmental characteristics of an increased loudness and high melody level are accompanied with the forced breathing through a narrowed larynx, combined by facing the referent, sometimes with a gesture of negative acceological evaluation.

When the trust is denied, a general relaxation of the larynx takes place, a gesture of erroneous concession can be used, a creaking voice indicates the rejection of the previous message: *He says he'll give the money back. - I do not believe him*.

A prosodic allocation of rhyme is rather characteristic of the phrases with negation. For example, *Can I see Mr. Keen? - He's not here today.* (Його нема сьогодні). The prosodic emphasis of the rhyme is not a single feature of typological similarity in both languages under analysis, but the gesture accompaniment that demonstrates a negative attitude and shaking the head in addition are the common characters for English and Ukrainian communicants.

The main distinctive parameters that highlight the rhyme of the phrase in Ukrainian speech are a narrower range of the descending tone in the syntagmatically stressed syllable and a stronger loudness of the main stressed syllable. In comparison to the English version.

The difference in denying good and bad in the languages under investigation are interesting too. The denial of good is accompanied by the suppression of full

articulation and decrease in loudness of a phrase production, for example, *no good, not rich, not good-looking, uninteresting. Why do you marry him? He's not clever, not rich.* In these cases, it is also possible to add a "squeak" of the voice to characterize the subjective negative attitude. When denying the bad, on the contrary, there is prosody of contrast combined with the distinct focus marking in the phrase: *Why don't you marry him? He's rich and clever.* There is an announcement of a positive evaluation produced by the adjectives used in the utterance.

From the above examples, the implicit expression of an unmarked negative attitude and a positive attitude labeling of the state of affairs by the communicators is obvious.

The prosody variation in the negation of good and bad is preserved in the Ukrainian translation: the suppression of the phrase loudness and the slow pace of its realization, as well as a distinct marking of the utterance focus, for example, *Чому ти виходиш за нього заміж? Він нерозумний та небагатий. Чому ти не виходиш за нього? – Він розумний і багатий.*

At the same time, the meaning of the temporal component in the Ukrainian language is more prominent in the sentence stress (increase in the duration of the nuclear syllables of utterances) in comparison to the English negative connotations.

The objection in both languages is characterized by the presence of two centers, marked by the sentence stress: emotional emphasis and the syntagmatic emphasis: *There's no such a word in English. – В англійській мові такого слова нема.*

The prosody of objection is of a particular interest to the linguists when studying the role of suprasegmental level in the semantics of negation, especially in the cases if the lexical and grammatical means are contradicting the prosodic ones. For example, *I'm to leave. Pete needs help. – Sure. There's nothing to be done at home. Я мушу йти. Петру потрібна допомога. – Ну, конечно. Дома нема чого робити.* The distinct emphasis on the words, the irony of the sounding utterance on the whole, the lengthening of inter-syntagmatic pauses, the calm manner of speech production show the negative attitude of the speaker to what is happening. Denial of trust, rejection of the previous message in the Ukrainian phrases: *Ну, конечно. Дома нема чого робити.* – are demonstrated with the help of a narrow range of melody in the utterance and some insignificant difference in speech loudness.

The **prosody of conflict** remarks depends on the degree the conflict is promoted in a communication process. It can be a mild conflict and direct reproach – *You shouldn't have done it. Вам цього не треба було робити.* In English and Ukrainian, when expressing a mild conflict, the following common prosodic features are observed: the low voice register, the presence of heavy breathing. In Ukrainian a narrower range of melody component in the phrase compared to the English version can be noticed.

Reproach in the form of astonishment takes a special place in phonetics: *Why did you invite him? I can't get it. Навіщо ти його запросив? Я не розумію.* Typologically similar in this case in both languages is the ascending tone in the nuclear part of the utterance, the increased speech loudness in general, a wide range of melodic component of prosody.

The average level of conflict has three areas of conflict situation development: behavioral principles, knowledge and evaluation. Each of them is characterized by a special set of linguistic means involved in conflict presentation.

Behavioral principles (reasons, goals, ways to achieve the aim): *How many a time am I to say it to you? Don't go there. Скільки разів я повинна про це зговорити? Неходу туди.* – are characterized by similar prosodic construction in both languages: a low larynx position, high register of the melodic component of prosody, distinct production of each word.

Knowledge (errors in interpreting the facts and their relation): *Didn't you know it? You couldn't have missed it. Наврядчи ви цього не знали. Неможливо пропустити таке.* High melody register of the phrase realization, accelerated pace of speech are typological characters in the two languages. The specificity of the Ukrainian language is in the use of a descending tone in the nuclear syllable of the phrase and the descending-ascending melody in English.

Evaluation (significant, epistemological): *Bob is here. – What do we have to do with it? Наш приятель тут. – Ну й що з того?* Common characteristics in the two languages under analysis involve the following: slowing down the tempo of speech in the reaction, general decrease of melody within the phrase, variations in the voice timber (resembling the sound of a roar).

As it is seen from the above given examples, the pronunciation of each type of an utterance including some conflict has its own characteristics of presenting the attitude in both languages.

One of the interesting cases among the phrases of negative semantics is the **conflict rejection (distancing)**, which is usually manifested in a monotonous manner and the pace of speech slows down. For example, *I am not to be involved. Я немаю ніякого відношення до цього.* Sometimes one can refuse an offer with a touch of aggression as in the following example: *You may do it yourself. Ти й сам можеш це зробити.*

**Condemnation** is a commonly used form of a negative reaction in communication, which is conveyed by the phrases containing the attitude of reproach. For example, *I didn't know he has problems. – You could have guessed. Ти б міг зрозуміти.* In English and Ukrainian, falsetto is used as an indicator of a polemical situation, the tension of the voice demonstrates the intrusion into an unpleasant situation. Let's consider another example: *He asked to lend him the book. – And you agreed to? Й ти погодився?* The connotative meaning of surprise is conveyed by lowering the larynx down, accompanied by a gesture of contrast. The use of an ascending tone on the nucleus syllable in both languages is also a common indicator of condemnation.

*I didn't know he's got problems. – You could have guessed it. Я не знав, що в нього неприємності. – Можли б й догадатися.* The condemnation in Ukrainian in contrast to English is conveyed by a high beginning of the melody component, high loudness and a sharp decrease in the abovementioned parameters within the phrase pronouncing.

One more illustration of prosody specific functioning in English and Ukrainian: *He asked to borrow a book. – Did you give it? Він попросив запозичити йому книгу. – І ти віддав?* In the Ukrainian language, the connotative meaning of surprise is expressed by a sharp increase of the tone parameter in the nuclear, accompanied by a significant increase of loudness. At the same time, in English speech, the highest level of melody is observed in the first stressed syllable of the phrase, the descending tone is used in the nuclear part of the utterance.

One should be aware of the remarkable richness of variable phonetic techniques used in conflicting speech that cannot be underestimated: the register of melody, the range of dynamic and timbre components of prosody, the state of the vocal cords and larynx and their combinations in reflecting the timbre characteristics of speech. It is necessary to take into account the individual characteristics of human speech behavior, the use of special conversational forms in speech acts (Смушинська, 2000). The results of the experimental analysis demonstrate the variety of forms of interaction of melodic, dynamic and temporal components in the transmission of negative emotions in Ukrainian and English. The combination of distinctive suprasegmental features in negative connotations forms a variable series of prosodemes in the languages being compared.

The analysis of the research material provided an opportunity to indicate the following distinctive characteristics of negative modality at the level of prosody. The form of the melodic component is carried out in extended tonal limits in English in comparison with Ukrainian: high level at the beginning of the English phrase and average in Ukrainian; the average level of the tonal component at the end of the phrase in Ukrainian speech compared to the low level in English. Therefore, the comparison of the final tones of phonation in the two languages indicates their similarity: the use of descending tones of different intervals (wide in English and narrow in Ukrainian).

Thus, the melodic component of prosody of negative semantics is a distinctive characteristic of objections, condemnation, reproach in English and Ukrainian.

The increased loudness is often observed as a sign of negative modality in both languages. Comparing the dynamic component of negative modality in English and Ukrainian allows us to come to the conclusion about the typologically common nature of negative attitude loudness in English and Ukrainian. The main stressed syllable is most informative and produced with an increased strength characteristic in both languages. Semantically relevant syllables coincide in their characteristics. However, the dynamic component variation within the utterance's general contour changes considerably when exercising various negative connotative meanings.

Duration plays a significant role in marking the negative nature of a phrase. This component of prosody can vary from a very fast tempo of speech to a syllable-by-syllable pronunciation depending on the strength of the emotional tension of the communicative act and the individual characteristics and the psycho-emotional state of the speaker. Thus, in English and Ukrainian fear can be realized at the level of the temporal component as a significant acceleration of pronunciation, and vice versa.

In the Ukrainian language in comparison to English an important role of the temporal component in negative connotations should be noted; it is explained by the functional significance of the temporal component at the segmental level in the English language while in Ukrainian the temporal parameter is involved only at the suprasegmental one.

An important conclusion of the research is that a typologically similar mechanism of negative semantics phrases phonation is observed in two languages; the difference is seen in the variability of the degree each prosody component participates in actualizing negative attitudes in English and Ukrainian communication.

Most variable acoustic parameters are not the only way to manifest negative connotations at the prosodic level. All parameters of prosody interact in the reviling

the negative meaning in both languages. The analysis of prosody components' interaction at describing the negative connotations in English and Ukrainian showed that the most frequent combinations of prosodic parameters in English and Ukrainian are an increase in intensity with a synchronous growth of melody and duration parameters (24.7% and 25.3%), respectively.

**Conclusion.** The research of negative connotations prosody in English and Ukrainian convinces the researcher that all above enumerated peculiarities must be taken into account when interpreting the semantics of negative attitudinal prosody in both languages; it is the knowledge of the laws of prosodic variability in the two languages that helps to interpret the semantics of negative modality in translation properly. In a natural language, expressiveness is one of the universal characters, therefore, correct perception and adequate interpretation of the relevant prosody significations in the process of communication is of a particular importance. The ability to identify the expressive component of prosody greatly contributes to improving the quality of translation and strengthening the pragmatic potential of communication.

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## ПРОСОДИЯ ОТРИЦАТЕЛЬНОЙ МОДАЛЬНОСТИ В ПЕРЕВОДЕ

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#### **АННОТАЦИЯ**

*Работа посвящена исследованию возможностей отображения просодических характеристик выражения англоязычных высказываний негативной семантики в украинском устном переводе. Сложность достижения поставленной цели на примере просодии заключается в том, что просодия является полифункциональной и многокомпонентной. Просодия — это основное средство оформления коммуникативных типов предложений и отображения прагматической функции коммуникативного процесса. Корреляция просодии с прагматическим и семантическим компонентами коммуникации осуществляется через призму эмоциональной сферы речевого поведения человека.*

*Анализ материала исследования позволяет выявить как дистинктивные типологически общие для украинского и английского языков характеристики негативной модальности на уровне просодии коннотативных значений возражения, осуждения, упрёка, так и конкретно-языковых коррелятов негативной модальности. К типологически подобным характеристикам относятся также: регистр мелодии, диапазон динамического и тембровой компонентом просодии, состояние голосовых связок и гортани, а также их комбинации. Механизм реализации просодии негативных коннотаций является типологически сходным в двух языках: наиболее частотными сочетаниями взаимодействия параметров просодии в английском и украинском языках являются интенсивность при синхронном росте уровня мелодии — 24,7% и 25% случаев от общего количества экспериментальных фраз, соответственно. Функциональная загруженность темпорального компонента на сегментном уровне в английском языке и отсутствие этого признака в украинском языке, значительно увеличивает возможности применения темпорального параметра на супraseгментном уровне в украинском языке. Значение законов просодической вариативности в двух языках помогает правильно интерпретировать и производить семантику иностранного языка при переводе.*

**Ключевые слова:** отрицательная модальность, просодия, перевод, просодические параметры, типология, конкретно языковые особенности.

## **ПРОСОДИЯ НЕГАТИВНОЇ МОДАЛЬНОСТІ У ПЕРЕКЛАДІ**

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#### **АНОТАЦІЯ**

*Робота присвячена дослідженню способів відображення інтонаційних характеристик виразу англомовних висловлювань негативної семантики в українському послідовному усному перекладі. Складність досягнення поставленої мети на прикладі інтонації полягає в її поліфункціональності та багатокомпонентності. Просодія — це основний засіб оформлення комунікативних типів висловлювань та виразу прагматичної функції комунікативного процесу. Кореляція просодії з прагматичними та семантичними компонентами комунікації здійснюється крізь призму емоційної сфери мовленнєвої поведінки людини.*

*Аналіз матеріалу дослідження надав можливість визначити як дистинктивні типологічно спільні для української та англійської мов характеристики негативної модальності на рівні просодії негативних коннотативних значень заперечень, осуду, докору, так і конкретно-мовних корелятивів негативної модальності. До типологічно подібних характеристик відносяться такі: регістр мелодики, діапазон динамічного та тембрального компонентів просодії, стан голосових зв'язок і гортані і їх комбінації. Механізм реалізації просодії негативних коннотативів є типологічно подібним у двох мовах: найбільш частотними комбінаціями взаємодії параметрів просодії в англійській та українській мовах є збільшення інтенсивності при синхронному зростанні мелодики — 24,7% і 25,3% відповідно. Функціональна навантаженість темпорального компоненту на сегментному рівні в англійській мові та відсутність такої характеристики в українській мові значно поширює можливість застосування темпорального параметру на супraseгментному рівні в українській мові. Знання законів просодичної варіативності в двох мовах допомагає правильно інтерпретувати та продукувати семантику іноземної мови при перекладі.*

**Ключові слова:** негативна модальність, просодія, переклад, просодичні параметри, типологія, конкретно мовні особливості.

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