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QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND INTONATION IN SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING: EVALUATION PATTERNS

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Abstract

The main goal of this paper is to analyse the evaluation patterns of various groups of Simultaneous Interpreting (SI) recipients, paying particular attention to interpreter intonation. The research examines whether different recipients share general patterns when evaluating interpreter intonation, regardless of its degree of monotony. It also looks at whether their degree of knowledge of the SI process results in different patterns and, above all, a reduced influence of the interpreter's monotony on other quality parameters. The research comprises two studies involving different subjects and materials. The results indicate that, starting from the evaluation of interpreter intonation, certain common traits can be identified in the evaluation patterns of SI.

Keywords: Simultaneous interpreting. Quality assessment. Quality parameters. Intonation. Evaluation patterns.

1. Introduction

This paper presents a research study on the evaluation patterns of recipients of Simultaneous Interpreting (SI), paying particular attention to interpreter intonation. The goal of the research was, firstly, to understand whether different kinds of recipients have general evaluation patterns (i.e. their evaluations are consistent) of interpreter intonation, regardless of its degree of monotony. In this way, it is possible to see the role that intonation plays among the different variables evaluated by the recipients: overall evaluation of SI and evaluation of the quality parameter *par excellence* in SI (accurate transmission of meaning), but also the recipients' opinion as to interpreter attitude (understood as the way in which interpreters approach their job), professionalism and reliability. Another aim of the research was to find out whether there are intonation evaluation patterns that, depending on the degree of monotony, can influence the evaluation of the other abovementioned variables and whether these evaluation patterns are related to the degree of knowledge that recipients have of the interpreting process.

This research is based on two studies involving different subjects and materials. The first study included subjects with little or average knowledge of the SI process, and involves the evaluation of four SIs with varying degrees of monotony. The second study consists in the evaluation by six subjects with an advanced knowledge of the SI process of a corpus of 30 European Parliament SIs recorded from the *Europe by Satellite* (EbS) channel. Both studies are part of a wider research project including various focus groups and the qualitative analysis of an authentic SI corpus.

This study is the follow-up to a previous study on how the order in which recipients listen to a SI with a monotonous intonation affects other quality parameters compared to a SI with no monotonous intonation (Collados Aís 2008).

The results showed that monotonous intonation was penalised more when listened to immediately after the SI without monotonous intonation, but displayed similar difference margins when listened to first and followed by the SI without monotonous intonation. The evaluation of the SI without

monotonous intonation was similarly dependent on the listening order, just like the SI with monotonous intonation had users adapt their level of "penalisation" automatically.

2. State of the art

2.1. Research on quality assessment and intonation in simultaneous interpreting

The importance of good presentation for interpreting quality has been highlighted since the beginning of Interpreting Studies, with a special emphasis on the importance of the interpreter's voice, which should not be unpleasant or monotonous (Katz 1989), since these professionals should make use of the prosodic tools they have at their disposal (Déjean Le Féal 1981). The issue of voice and intonation and their significance has also been dealt with by professional associations (see, among others, AIIC 2004). Nevertheless, nonverbal vocal aspects were not studied until quite some time after research had begun on verbal aspects. This may be due to the late development of specific studies, techniques and tools for measuring such parameters, since even in the field of psychology and linguistics the first studies focused on verbal parameters (cf. Barrango-Droege, Collados Aís & Pazos Bretaña 2011).

In 1994, Shlesinger published a research work on voice. The author compared the vocal emission of SI with that of reading aloud and concluded that the interpreter's intonation could be qualified as *sui generis* since it presented its own particular traits of intonation and voice emission in general. The main characteristics are an increase in non-grammatical pauses in "unusual" positions and a specific prosody with the stress on elements that would not normally be stressed in spontaneous or read aloud speech.

Ahrens (2005) provides an exhaustive study of intonation based on an English-German SI corpus. Her conclusions also indicate characteristic aspects of the speech style of interpreters that are conditioned by the very process of SI and the communicative circumstances in which it is produced (Ahrens 2005: 230). Interpreters tend to have a higher prosodic segmentation of the text for strategic reasons (Ahrens 2005: 227). Nafá (2005), in a study on intonation based on a European Parliament corpus, reveals the intonation and rhetorical strategies used by interpreters to organise and structure their speeches for communicative purposes. These strategies are not applied in all cases, nor during an entire interpreting session, probably because communicatively acceptable intonation may be altered by the cognitive demands of the SI process (Nafá 2005: 678).

Studies on interpreting quality expectations among different groups of users from different fields or specialisations, regardless of other factors such as gender or age, and also among interpreters themselves, have shown a clearly lower impact of nonverbal parameters compared to verbal parameters such as accurate transmission and cohesion (cf. Collados Aís *et al.* 2011). Only in job assignments where the setting – cinema and TV– requires certain specific features (Kurz & Pöchhacker 1995; Russo 2005), do nonverbal parameters acquire a slightly more relevant position, although the usual ranking of preferences remains the same.

However, in an experiment on quality assessment carried out by Collados Aís in 1998, these expectations as regards monotonous intonation of SI were not confirmed. On the contrary, a high influence of monotonous intonation was detected not only on the global evaluation of the interpreter's work, but also on the other verbal and nonverbal quality parameters evaluated, and also on issues such as the interpreter's reliability and professionalism. These results would appear to indicate the (perhaps-even unconscious) influence of nonverbal vocal elements on recipients' judgements of interpreters, their personality and credibility, and, therefore, endorse the data coming from research in psychology in Interpreting Studies (cf. Collados Aís 1998). This was further confirmed in subsequent experiments on other nonverbal aspects, such as the first impressions subjects have of simultaneous interpreters (cf. García Becerra 2012). Even though the subsequent replication of the experiment did not confirm the previous results as regards intonation, it did highlight an interesting fact: intonation was not well evaluated in the other SIs (control interpreting texts and manipulated interpreting texts for ten other quality parameters) (Collados Aís 2007). After reviewing two previous experiments that included the same control interpreting text, it was confirmed that the intonation parameter was the worst-evaluated of the eleven quality parameters evaluated (Collados Aís 1998; Pradas Macías 2003). Both earlier (Garzone 2003) and subsequent studies (Holub 2010) have confirmed this influence. Furthermore, it was also shown that the influence of monotonous intonation on evaluation differed in relation to user type, something not expected in the initial hypothesis given that its influence was expected to be less marked compared to user expectations. For instance, the study showed that subjects from the Natural Sciences were less sensitive to the features of the interpreter's intonation than those from the Humanities, not only as regards their expectations, but also in their evaluation of an actual interpretation (Collados Aís 2010). However, the recent review of these results for the preparation of this study and the results described in the next section highlight another interesting

fact that had not been deemed too relevant previously: in subjects from both the Natural Sciences and Humanities, the evaluation pattern revealed that all evaluated parameters were valued higher than intonation and that differences were more pronounced in the case of subjects from the Natural Sciences. Furthermore, there were fewer differences between the two subject groups in the verbal parameters evaluated (accurate transmission and cohesion) and the global assessment of the interpretation compared to pleasantness of voice or the interpreter's attitude (cf. Collados Aís 2010). Other studies were carried out with methodologies taken from the social sciences and with a qualitative focus (focus groups). The results obtained from these studies show that users actually started with a certain degree of interpreter monotony in their model or stereotype of interpreting (Collados Aís 2009). This could in some ways explain the results obtained in the different studies on interpreter intonation and highlights the need to start from this model when interpreting the results obtained in any study on the topic: non-monotonous intonation would then be considered as a distinguishing feature and it would be appreciated that an interpreter "broke" with this previous model that includes a certain degree of monotony in the intonation.

2.2. Background

The main background to this study, or what inspired it, is a study on quality assessment provided by users of monotonous interpreting compared to non-monotonous interpreting, and on the consequences of differences between the various interpreting performances during the same session and their effect on the evaluation of other quality parameters (Collados Aís 2008). Since the results of previous research carried out using the same materials revealed a general trend towards the detection and punishment of monotonous intonation, despite certain contradictions (see previous section), it was decided to additionally acquire data on behaviour towards a monotonous intonation irrespective of the order in which the interpreting performances were assessed.

The methodological design included the carrying out of an experiment in which the evaluations were obtained dividing the subjects into two groups to evaluate two interpreting SI performances: one that had been manipulated in order to obtain a more monotonous intonation (ISM) and a control performance (ISC) that had not been manipulated (non monotonous intonation). The two interpreting performances were, therefore, identical, except for the intonation. While the first group viewed and evaluated first ISM and then ISC (MC group), the other group viewed and evaluated first ISC and then ISM (CM group). Eighteen subjects were involved: ten professors from various

Philology departments of the University of Granada teaching at the Facultad de Traducción e Interpretación (FTI - Faculty of Translation and Interpreting) and eight students in their last year of the Licenciatura de Traducción e Interpretación (degree in Translation and Interpreting) at the FTI, specialising in conference interpreting with English as their B language. They were divided up into two groups. The materials used were two DVDs with a speech in German voiced-over with a SI. The recording was preceded by preliminary studies to adapt it to the professional reality of interpreting. It was then tested in pilot studies, analysed from a technical-acoustic point of view and used in various studies (cf. Collados Aís 1998, 2007).

The subjects' evaluations were collected in two kinds of questionnaires. The first presented closed questions with a five-point scale for a global evaluation of interpreting performance (cf. Gile 1990) and four quality parameters: cohesion, accurate transmission of the original speech, pleasantness of voice and intonation, as well as an evaluation of the degree of professionalism they detected in the interpreter. The second questionnaire included questions on a numerical evaluation of the interpreter's attitude (also using a five-point scale) and its definition, using answers provided in the questionnaire or adding answers.

As far as the results are concerned, depending on the video viewed and the order in which it was viewed, all parameters were given a higher score in the ISC of the CM group. The main differences were in the intonation parameter, where ISC was 3.11 points higher than ISM, followed by pleasantness of voice (+2.11) and global evaluation (+1.56). The smallest differences were found in accurate transmission (+0.17) and cohesion (+0.44). In the MC group, ISC interpreting performances received a higher score than ISM for all parameters except accurate transmission, for which both performances received the same score (4). For the rest of the parameters, the main differences were found in intonation (+3.33) and global evaluation (+0.78). The smallest differences were in pleasantness of voice (+0.23) and cohesion (+0.33), as well as accurate transmission. The interpreter's attitude in the CM group received a score of 4.11 for ISC and 2.88 for ISM, with a 1.23 difference in favour of the former. The difference was 1.66 for professionalism (4.77 versus 3.11) and 1 for reliability (4.44 versus 3.44). In the case of the MC group, the evaluations of ISC where 2 points higher than ISM for attitude (2.44 versus 4.44), 1.23 for reliability (3.33 versus 4.55) and 1 for professionalism (3.33 versus 4.33). As for the definitions of attitude, there were differences in both ISC and ISM depending on the order of reception. As for ISC, the main difference was in the neutrality

item, with eight mentions when it was viewed first and no mentions when it was viewed second.

When assessing the influence of monotony of SI in the evaluations, regardless of the order of reception, ISC received the same scores in the two experimental conditions for the global evaluation and pleasantness of voice parameters. For the remaining parameters, the differences were never higher than half a point. In the case of ISM, differences ranged from 0.11 for cohesion (higher score in the CM experimental condition) and intonation (MC experimental condition) to 0.78 in the global evaluation parameter (in favour of the MC condition). The following charts (1 and 2[1]) show the inversion in evaluation peaks:

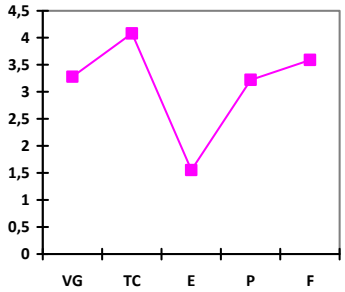

Chart 1. Monotonous SIs evaluation pattern

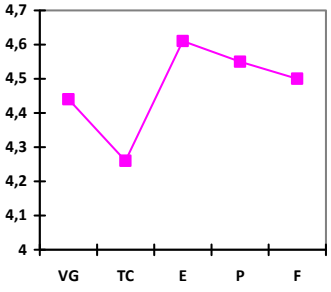

Chart 2. Non-monotonous SIs evaluation pattern

The results obtained basically show that, starting from the recognition of the interpreter's monotony, ISM is evaluated worse than ISC for basically all parameters and in both experimental conditions. However, the listening order of an interpreting performance with a monotonous intonation versus a non-monotonous one also indicates that the main differences in the evaluation were for the most part due to the moment in which the evaluations were carried out and not to any major differences noted in the interpreting performances. This led to a series of important questions. It is interesting to note, for instance, that the scores for the global evaluations of both interpreting performances, in all experimental conditions, were between 3 and 4. Although monotony in the interpretation was detected (1.33 and 1.44 respectively in the two experimental conditions for the intonation parameter), the effect of the "punishment"

1. Parameters presented in charts: global evaluation (VG), intonation (E), accurate transmission (TC), professionalism (P) and reliability (F).

still left the ISM within the range of an acceptable interpretation of medium quality, even when the content parameters were evaluated worse in the ISC (from 0.2 to 0.44 points). On the other hand, ISC had a lower score for the content parameters in the MC condition while ISM, despite an overall drop of 0.78 when viewed as the second video, had a slightly higher score for the cohesion and accurate transmission parameters. As for attitude, the differences between the viewing orders are obvious, especially as regards the differences in inference of ISC in the different experimental conditions. The contrast with monotony caused subjects in the MC condition to infer more "active" and "positive" emotions, such as interest or enthusiasm, while when there was no contrast, they perceived the interpreter as being more neutral (cf. Collados Aís 1998). Nevertheless, the scores given to the different parameters were quite consistent. ISC even received 0.44 points less for professionalism (slightly lower scores were also given to cohesion and accurate transmission), which makes one wonder whether the greater involvement of the interpreter and the association of this involvement with a positive emotion rather than a neutral one might even be considered less professional by users, who might view it as an excessive intervention on the part of the interpreter (cf. Kopzcynski 1994), possibly resulting in a certain degree of mistrust.

3. Empirical study

3.1. Goals

The goal of this study, considering the results of the previous research (see § 2.2.), is to analyse the evaluations of interpreter intonation made by different types of recipients of a SI, aiming at:

a) Obtaining a global analysis of the importance of the intonation parameter within the other quality parameters and variables evaluated in SI. More specifically, the other parameters are: accurate transmission, global evaluation, and opinions on attitude, reliability and professionalism.
b) Finding out whether there are global evaluation patterns for intonation shared by different recipients with different degrees of previous knowledge of the SI process.
c) Finding out whether there are shared evaluation patterns for different degrees of monotony among different recipient types with different degrees of previous knowledge of the SI process.

3.2. Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

The interpreter's intonation will be evaluated by its recipients in the medium-low range, irrespective of its degree of monotony and irrespective of the recipient's knowledge of the interpreting process.

Hypothesis 2

A more monotonous interpreter intonation will have a negative impact on the evaluation of other quality parameters in the case of recipients of SI with a lower degree of knowledge of the interpreting process.

3.3. Variables

The interpreter's intonation is the independent variable. The dependent variables in the study are accurate transmission, global evaluation of the interpreting, attitude, professionalism and reliability.

3.4. Materials and methods

3.4.1. Sample

The total sample of the two studies presented here was 28 subjects. Three subject-types were defined to detect possible recurrences and differences in the evaluation patterns of interpreter intonation, depending on the greater or lesser degree of knowledge of the SI process.

In Study 1 the total sample was 23 subjects evaluating four SIs. The first subject group, called Group 1, was made up of five professors from the University of Granada, two from the Faculty of Psychology specialised in speech, two from the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting (FTI) specialised in interpreting, a researcher from the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature specialised in linguistics, and 13 subjects, professors of philology at FTI and students in their last year of their MA in interpreting at the UGR. The second group, called Group 2, comprised five professors from the Department of Political Science of the UGR, who were habitual users of SI.

In Study 2, the total sample was of six specialists, members of the ECIS (Evaluación de la Calidad en Interpretación Simultánea - Quality assessment in simultaneous interpreting) research group and professors of interpreting at the UGR and the University of las Palmas de Gran Canaria, called Group 3, evaluating a corpus of 30 SIs.

3.4.2. Materials and measuring tools

For Study 1, a total of four SIs were used. Two performances were manipulated in their degree of monotony (ISC and ISM) (see § 2.2.) and two were not manipulated (authentic) and taken from the corpus described below – the performance considered to be the least monotonous (ISC') and the performance considered to be the most monotonous (ISM') by the subjects in Study 2. Evaluations (five-point scale) were collected via a questionnaire (Annex 1) that included the following items in the case of Group 1: global evaluation, intonation and attitude, while Group 2 were also asked to evaluate the accurate transmission parameter.

The materials used for Study 2 were 30 SIs, that is all the interpretations into Spanish of a multilingual corpus of speeches in German, French and English recorded from a full plenary session at the European Parliament. The evaluations of the six researchers in the sample were collected for all the speeches, for a total of 180 evaluations. Interpreting performances were evaluated (five-point scale) using the same evaluation questionnaires as used in previous studies (cf. Collados Aís *et al.* 2007), though for this study the focus was on the following items: global evaluation (VG), intonation (E), accurate transmission (TC), professionalism (P) and reliability (F) (Annex 2).

3.4.3. Procedure

In both studies, subjects evaluated each SI immediately after listening to it by filling in the relevant questionnaire.

4. Results

4.1. Results from Study 1

The results obtained for the SIs evaluated by Group 1 are presented first and then appear those for the SIs evaluated by Group 2 (including the evaluation of the accurate transmission parameter). In the case of Group 1, the data reveal that interpreting performances were identified according to their degree of monotony and that this influenced the evaluation of the rest of the items (see tables 1 to 4). In both cases, the reference used is 'N', the total number of evaluations made.

	N	Min.	Max.	Average	S. D.
Global evaluation	18	3	4	3.92	.251
Intonation	18	3	5	4.00	.333
Attitude	18	3	5	3.97	.424
Valid N (list)	18				

Table 1. Evaluations of ISC': Group 1

	N	Min.	Max.	Average	S. D.
Global evaluation	18	1	5	3.26	.769
Intonation	18	1	4	2.92	.907
Attitude	18	1	5	3.17	1.046
Valid N (list)	18				

Table 2. Evaluations of ISM': Group 1

	N	Min.	Max.	Average	S. D.
Global evaluation	18	4	5	4.05	.229
Intonation	18	4	5	4.21	.419
Attitude	18	4	5	4.11	.315
Valid N (list)	18				

Table 3. Evaluations of ISC: Group 1

	N	Min.	Max.	Average	S. D.
Global evaluation	18	2	4	2.84	.501
Intonation	18	1	3	2.26	.653
Attitude	18	2	3	2.42	.507
Valid N (list)	18				

Table 4. Evaluations of ISM: Group 1

Analysing the evaluations of the three items considered – global evaluation, intonation and attitude – we find the following evaluation patterns for the different SIs (see charts 3 to 6):

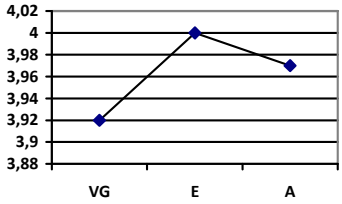

Chart 3. Evaluations of ISC'

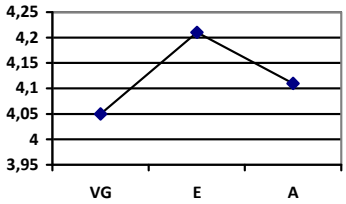

Chart 4. Evaluations of ISC

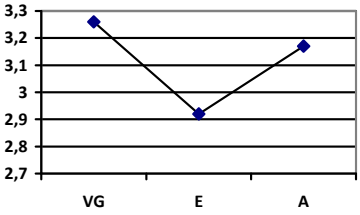

Chart 5. Evaluations of ISM'

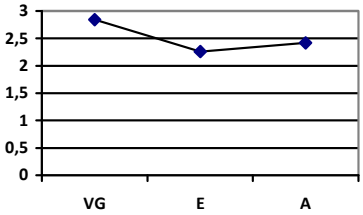

Chart 6. Evaluations of ISM

Putting together all the evaluations, irrespective of the degree of monotony of the SI, the following curve is obtained for all the items evaluated (chart 7):

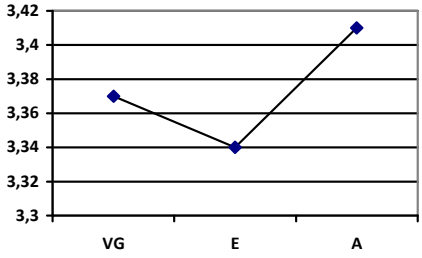

Chart 7. Overall evaluation pattern (total SIs) of Group 1

As for Group 2, the data obtained from the evaluations of the two monotonous SIs (ISM and ISM') and the two control SIs (ISC and ISC') are presented below. The resulting evaluation patterns are as follows (charts 8 and 9):

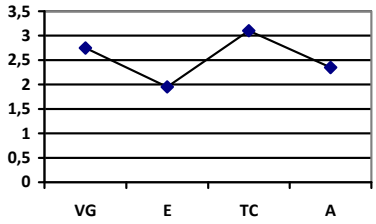

Chart 8. Evaluation pattern: monotonous SIs

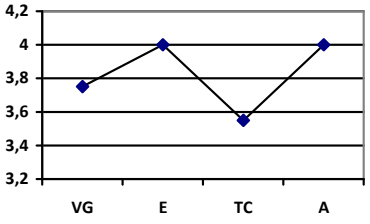

Chart 9. Evaluation patterns: non-monotonous SIs

Putting together all the evaluations of the four interpreting performances, irrespective of the degree of monotony, the following results are obtained (see table 5 and chart 10), where N is the number of evaluations made:

	N	Min.	Max.	Average	S. D.
Global evaluation	20	2	5	3,25	.953
Intonation	20	1	5	2.98	1.240
Accurate transmission	20	2	5	3.33	.783
Attitude	20	1	5	3.18	1.139
Valid N (list)	20				

Table 5. Evaluation of all SIs: Group 2

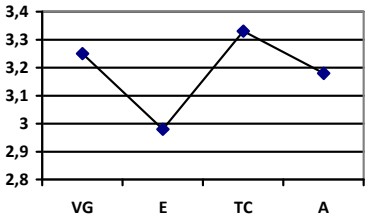

Chart 10. Overall evaluation pattern (total SIs) of Group 2

4.2. Results from Study 2

As the following table shows (see table 6), from the total number of evaluations of the 30 interpreting performances, intonation received the lowest score for all the items. We can also notice a difference of almost one point between intonation and professionalism, and between intonation and accurate transmission.

	N	Min.	Max.	Average	S. D.
Global evaluation	179	1	5	3.18	.919
Accurate transmission	180	1	5	3.55	.878
Intonation	178	1	4	2.82	.880
Professionalism	173	1	5	3.58	.893
Reliability	171	1	5	3.38	.913
Valid N (list)	168				

Table 6. Evaluation of all SIs: Group 3

The general evaluation pattern of these same parameters and items can be represented as follows (chart 11):

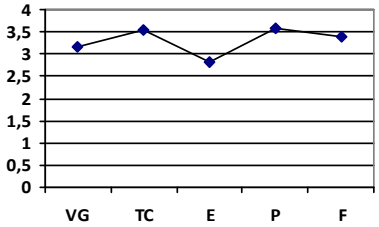

Chart 11. Overall evaluation pattern (total SIs) of Group 3

In order to analyse the possible interactions between intonation and the other items, as well as a possible evaluation pattern based on the more or less positive evaluations obtained for the intonation parameter, the results of the five interpreting performances that received the highest evaluation in the intonation parameter – the least monotonous – are presented below, followed by the five interpreting performances that received the lowest evaluation for the intonation parameter – the most monotonous. As in the previous section, the parameters considered were accurate transmission, global evaluation, professionalism and reliability.

In the case of the five interpreting performances that received the best evaluations for the intonation parameter, namely the performances considered the least monotonous, this parameter was still evaluated worse than the other items considered (see table 7). Differences range from 0.15 in the case of the global evaluation to a maximum of 0.69 in the accurate transmission parameter:

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Average	S. D.
Global evaluation	30	2	4	3.43	.606
Accurate transmission	30	3	5	3.97	.472
Intonation	30	2	4	3.28	.520
Professionalism	30	2	5	3.85	.671
Reliability	29	2	5	3.69	.696
Valid N (according to list)	29				

Table 7. Evaluations: SIs with least monotonous intonation

The resulting evaluation pattern is presented in the following chart (chart 12):

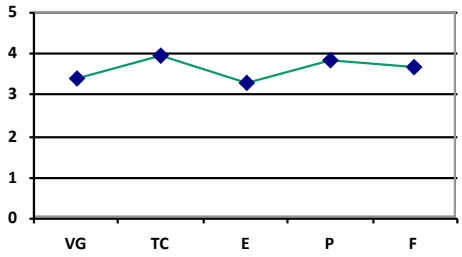

Chart 12. Evaluation pattern: SIs with least monotonous intonation

As for the results obtained for the five interpreting performances that received the lowest evaluations in the intonation parameter, namely the performances considered the most monotonous, we can observe an increase of at least 0.31 points in the case of global evaluation, of 0.98 in the case of professionalism and of 0.86 in the case of accurate transmission compared to intonation (table 8).

	N	Min.	Max.	Average	S. D.
Global evaluation	29	1	3	2.28	.621
Accurate transmission	30	1	4	2.83	.833
Intonation	30	1	3	1.97	.472
Professionalism	30	2	4	2.95	.747
Reliability	30	1	4	2.55	.648
Valid N (list)	29				

Table 8. Evaluations: SIs with most monotonous intonation

The resulting evaluation pattern is presented in the chart below (chart 13):

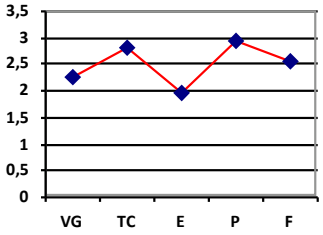

Chart 13. Evaluation pattern: SIs with most monotonous intonation

The difference between the evaluation patterns presented above, namely the overall pattern of all the evaluations made, irrespective of the evaluation made of the intonation parameter, and the patterns based on the greater or lesser monotony of intonation (E), is presented in the following chart (chart 14):

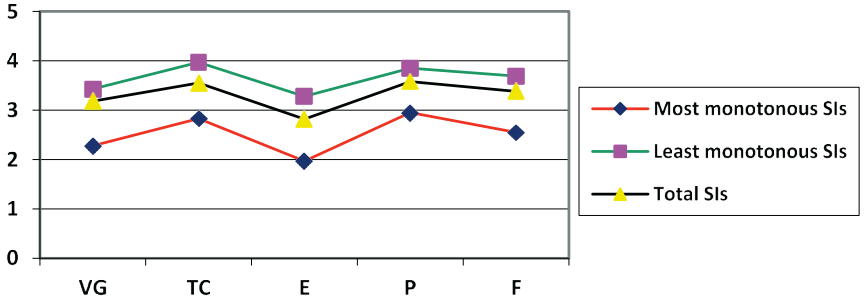

Chart 14. Comparison of evaluation patterns

5. Discussion

The results yielded by the two studies show similar evaluation patterns between subjects with different degrees of knowledge of the interpreting process if we consider the global evaluation of intonation of all the SIs evaluated, irrespective of their degree of monotony. The intonation parameter is the lowest in the evaluation ranking of the subject groups, with a low/medium score. Intonation is always evaluated with a lower score than the rest of the items considered in this study, namely the global evaluation of SI, accurate transmission, and the attitude, professionalism and reliability inferred from the interpreter.

These results seem, therefore, to confirm our first hypothesis and would be in line with the results obtained in many previous studies on quality evaluation in SI (Collados Aís 1998, 2007, 2008, 2010; Pradas Macías 2003). The reason can probably be found in the very features of interpreters' prototypical intonation, which has already been studied and qualified as *sui generis* in various studies (Shlesinger 1995; Ahrens 2005). Furthermore, the results of Study 1, Group 1 and Group 2, appear to confirm the results obtained in the study described in § 2.2. In the cases where the interpreter's monotonous intonation receives poorer evaluations, the other two and three items considered, respectively, receive better evaluations. When the interpreter's intonation receives a better evaluation, namely when it is less monotonous, there is a drop in the evaluation of the other items. This result was not confirmed in the case of Group 3, made up of specialists in interpreting quality assessment with a high level of knowledge of the interpreting process. In this case, the results would, therefore, appear to confirm our second hypothesis. One of the possible explanations of the effect described, detected in subjects with a low or average level of knowledge of the SI process, might be found in their prototypical model of interpreting, which may include a certain degree of monotony and this may even be required in certain kinds of speeches (Collados Aís 2008). If we consider one of the most striking results of the previous study (§ 2.2.), we can observe that the more the interpreter's intonation became melodic (at least compared to monotonous intonation), the less the interpreter's attitude was described by subjects as neutral. By combining this result with the "ghost" role that users require from interpreters (Kopczynski 1994), we might infer that the subjects in Study 1 deduce that the interpreter has a more active role and, therefore, a less desired one, in the case of less monotonous or more melodious SIs. The fact that this result is not confirmed by Study 2 would be explained by the fact that the subjects in this case were researchers of interpreting quality, with a high level of knowledge of the interpreting process and are, therefore, more aware that the interpreter, in order to provide a high-quality service, should not have the "ghost" role desired by users, but should rather acquire an active role to facilitate communication, even though this might involve crossing certain boundaries, which could affect, above all, formally important parameters such as complete and accurate transmission. In the case of these subjects, we have seen how differences in the evaluation of intonation can only be found in the evaluation ranges. It is interesting to note, however, that the difference is more pronounced in the case of the worst evaluations of intonation (the most monotonous intonation) compared to the general pattern than in the

case of the best evaluations of intonation (the least monotonous intonation) compared to the general pattern.

Finally, it should be stressed that there are limits within which most subjects move when evaluating an interpreting performance, in both the lower and the upper ranges, although the data show that users tend to have more reservations in the upper range. In conclusion, the results of the numerical evaluations of the four interpretations analysed in Study 1 are consistent with the results yielded by Study 2. Subjects do seem to follow evaluation patterns, with certain limits in the global evaluation, as a result of which their evaluations, though influenced by intonation, do not permit a maximum score in the potential case of an *ideal* interpretation. It is unlikely for them to opt for the maximum score probably due to the natural precautions that some recipients may have: among others, a belief in the impossibility of assessing certain parameters even when there are indicators that could enable them to infer that these parameters are being respected.

6. Conclusions

The most obvious conclusion, albeit with a certain degree of caution due to the small sample size, is that intonation, globally and irrespective of its degree of monotony, is the parameter recipients evaluate the worst, and the evaluation is never above the low/average range. Recipients seem to perceive that the interpreter's intonation is less adequate than other quality parameters evaluated in a SI, including the parameter *par excellence*, namely the accurate transmission of sense, as well as the global evaluation of interpreting, attitude, professionalism and interpreter reliability. The fact that the results are the same in studies involving both authentic and manipulated interpretations (cf. Collados Aís 2007), as well as subjects with different levels of knowledge of the interpreting process, leads us to surmise that the interpreter's intonation has *sui generis* features (Shlesinger 1994) that lead users to place the simultaneous interpreter's intonation last in the ranking.

As for an evaluation pattern based on the degree of monotony of the SI, there seem to be differences based on the level of knowledge of the interpreting process. In the case of recipients with a low or average level of knowledge, if the intonation of the SI is evaluated as low (that is, considered to be more monotonous), the global evaluation and the accurate transmission are evaluated higher, and when intonation is evaluated higher (that is, considered to be less monotonous), the global evaluation of the interpretation and accurate transmission are evaluated lower. These results are not confirmed in the case of recipients with a high level of knowledge of the SI process. Intonation is

evaluated worse than the rest of the items considered, both when it is less monotonous and more monotonous and evaluated as such, although peaks in evaluation patterns are less pronounced. Recipients with a low or average level of knowledge of the interpreting process provide better global evaluations of the SI and its accurate transmission in the case of a better evaluation of intonation, but use lower evaluation ranges overall.

Further research would be needed to confirm the results obtained, which appear to indicate that there are different evaluation patterns depending on the degree of monotony of the simultaneous interpretation, as well as the recipient's level of knowledge of the interpreting process. It would also be necessary to analyse the reasons for such differences. In this respect, it might be interesting to study whether, in the case of greater melodiousness in the interpretation, there might be a limit that, if passed, would induce the recipient to think that the interpreter's role is becoming too active, thereby resulting in a certain degree of mistrust, which would then affect the evaluation of the content parameters.

In any case, the current results, with the abovementioned caution, would suggest the need to rethink intonation as a quality parameter of interpreting, considering its multiple implications for evaluation, in both the professional field and training.

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BIONOTE

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Annexes

Annex 1. Evaluation questionnaires for Study 1

1.1. Group 1

EVALUATION OF THE SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING PERFORMANCES

Evaluation range: 1 (minimum) – 5 (maximum):

SI	Global evaluation	Intonation	Attitude
Version 1			
Version 2			
Version 3			
Version 4			

1.2. Group 2

EVALUATION OF THE SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING PERFORMANCES

Evaluation range: 1 (minimum) – 5 (maximum):

SI	Global evaluation	Intonation	Accurate transmission	Attitude
Version 1				
Version 2				
Version 3				
Version 4				

Annex 2 Evaluation questionnaire for Study 2: Group 3 (items considered in the study)

EVALUATION OF THE SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING PERFORMANCES

Identification of the interpreting performance:

1. Global evaluation (1: very bad; 5: excellent):

1.....	
2.....	
3.....	
4.....	
5.....	

2. Accurate transmission of the meaning of the original speech

(1: completely inaccurate transmission; 5: completely accurate transmission):

1.....	
2.....	
3.....	
4.....	
5.....	

3. Intonation (1: very monotonous intonation; 5: not monotonous intonation):

1.....	
2.....	
3.....	
4.....	
5.....	

4. Impression on professionalism (1: no professionalism; 5: high level of professionalism):

1.....	
2.....	
3.....	
4.....	
5.....	

5. Impression on reliability (1: no reliability; 5: high reliability):

1.....	
2.....	
3.....	
4.....	
5.....	