

NOTES ON THE INTONATION OF SPECIAL AND YES-NO QUESTIONS IN
ROMANIAN COMPARED TO ENGLISH

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This paper attempts to analyse basic intonation patterns of Romanian special and yes-no questions by means of the auditive method. Comparison being made to English, we have applied the Armstrong-Ward system of notation to Romanian as well.

We have found that of the five elements it is the head (not the nucleus as in English) that is obligatory for any tonogram. In contradistinction to English special questions where the place of the nucleus depends on the speaker's intention, special questions in Romanian do not exhibit any variation, their peculiarity being as follows:

- (a) The stressed syllable of the interrogative word (the head) is always high-pitched;
- (b) All the following syllables (forming the body, nucleus and tail) are uttered on a low-pitched monotone which can be broken neither by the communicative weight of the component words nor by the increasing number of syllables.

The intonation patterns of Romanian and English yes-no questions differ in several points:

- (a) The most important element of the Romanian tonogram - the head - is characterized by an abrupt rise of the voice pitch which remains steady for head and body. It is a static high level pitch. It is opposed to the English nucleus which is notable for a gliding tone-movement from a very low to a higher pitch level (a kinetic tone) if there is no tail. In patterns with tail, the nucleus has the lowest pitch (which is a static tone), while the syllables of the tail gradually ascend;
- (b) The syllables of the body are uttered on a high-pitched monotone in Romanian, while in English they form a gradual descending scale;
- (c) The syllables of the nucleus and tail in Romanian are uttered on a mid-pitched monotone. In English the nucleus and tail can never have the same pitch level.