# THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGLISH AND UKRAINIAN INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES CLASSIFICATION

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*У статті досліджено структуру, семантику і прагматику питальних пропозицій англійської та української мов. Визначено принципи класифікації пропозицій досліджуваного типу, проведено порівняльний аналіз структури, семантики і прагматики англійських та українських інтерогативів з погляду їх функціонування в художній літературі для дітей.*

*__Ключові слова:__ інтерогативні конструкції, прагматика, мовленнєві акти, комунікативна семантика, граматичні трансформації, лексико-семантичні трансформації.*

**Sitko A. V., Struk I. V. The Principles Of English And Ukrainian Interrogative Sentences Classification.** *The present article discusses some aspects related to the contrastive typology of the English and Ukrainian languages aiming at structuring the interrogative sentences. The main isomorphic and allomorphic structural, semantic and pragmatic peculiarities of languages under investigation serve as a basis for the interrogative sentences classification taking into account the constructive nature of this process.*

*__Key words:__ interrogative constructions, pragmatics, speech acts, communicative semantics, grammatical transformations, lexico-semantic transformations.*

**Defining the problem and argumentation of the topicality of its consideration.** In resent years the study of syntax and interrogative sentences has undergone a considerable shift of interest away from prescriptive towards more descriptive, scientific positions. One of the consequences of this shift of interest has been the increase in empirical research towards the comparative analysis.

The interrogative sentence and answer to make it is one of the most used forms of the lingual communication; in such a way the communicative function of the language is distinguished in its all complete sense. According to the data of the sociological and psychological researches, the interrogative sentence happens in the common speech approximately every 40 words.

**Setting the goals and tasks of the article.** Our ***main objective*** in presenting this paper is to outline similar general features of English and Ukrainian interrogative sentences serving as a basis for their classification as well as to identify and classify accordingly the main isomorphic and allomorphic structural, semantic and pragmatic peculiarities of languages under investigation.

Syntax as the part of grammar deals with sentences and combinability of words. The core of syntax is the study of the sentence, its components, their structure and relations between these components and on the other hand structural and communicative types of sentences. The sentence is a minimal unit of communication. From the viewpoint of their role in the process of communication sentences are divided into four types: declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory ones. These types differ in the aim of communication and express statements, questions, commands and exclamations [6].

**The outline of the main research material.** An attempt to revise the traditional communicative classification of sentences was made by the American scholar Ch. Fries who first classified them as a deliberate challenge to the «accepted routine» not in accord with the purposes of communication, but according to the responses they elicit [7].

In 1976 article entitled "The Classification of Illocutionary Acts", the philosopher John Searle, one of Austin's former students, pointed out that there is a seemingly endless number of illocutionary acts. There are statements, assertions, denials, requests, commands, warnings, promises, vows, offers, apologies, thanks. Condolences, appointments, namings, resignations and so forth. J.Searle treated questions as a subcategory of directives [9] but L. Bulatetska supposes them as a separate category [1, 92]. A question is an utterance used to get the listener to provide information. This class includes acts of asking, inquiring, requesting and so on.

Grammatical meaning and form of interrogative sentences as well as their pragmatic characteristics may vary. Therefore, one may say that interrogative sentences are distinguished only on the ground of the most general formal and semantic properties. We fully subscribe I. Alexeyeva's words indicating the essential formal properties such as specific interrogative intonation, inverted word order, interrogative pronouns each of which is distributed differently in different types of interrogative sentences [5, 242]. As to their content, interrogative sentences are characterized by the idea of an informational lacuna expressed structurally: *Where shall I put it up?* (18, 29). The formal properties mentioned above may occur in various combinations: cf. *When are your folks coming here?* (13, 63) (inversion, interrogative verb form, interrogative pronoun); *What is it?* (14, 196) (inversion, interrogative pronoun); *How?* (13, 106) (interrogative pronoun); *I suppose you're not strong enough to bring the raft to this side, are you?* (13, 159) (tag question attached); *Have you seen Oz?* (14, 97) (intonation, inversion, etc.). This linguistic paradigm is represented in works of such prominent theorists of grammar as L. S. Barkhudarov, E. A. Kruisinga, P. H. Matthews, H. A. Poustma, O. Espersen, O. H. Pocheptsov, N. A. Kobrina and others.

The problem of the interrogative sentences classification has always been interesting to the scientists. The

first principle of interrogative sentences classification is the syntactic one. Interrogative sentences contain questions. Their communicative function is asking for information. They belong to the sphere of conversation and only occasionally occur in monological speech. Our approach shared by L. Barkhudarov, I. Alexeyeva, N. Kondratenko and I. Korunets’[2; 5; 8] is that all varieties of questions may be structurally reduced to two main types – general questions (also called «yes – no» questions) and pronominal questions (otherwise called «special» or «wh» – questions). Both are graphically identified by a question mark. The two main types have a number of structural and communicative modifications, the most conspicuous of which are alternative, disjunctive and suggestive questions. They are in both languages, practically, the structural and communicative modifications of these two structural types.

Sentences of interrogative modality, however, possess a common communicative function and mostly identical structural forms in both contrasted languages. General questions in English start with an auxiliary, modal or linking verb followed by the subject, whereas in Ukrainian – with any part of the sentence. The most used English and Ukrainian general questions which obtain isomorphic features refer to the following models: Vmod n’t + S (N, Pr pers n) + P (V, Adj, N)… ?; (cnj + )V aux n’t + S (N, Pr pers n) + P (V, Adj) …(+ O) …?; V aux + S (N, Pr pers n) + V…(+ N)…? ; do +Pr pers n + think +…?; (Adv +) S + V aux + V…?: *Will they not know me for a king if I have not a king’s raiment?* (17, 102); *Невже ж оце мама будуть бити неслухняного глечика, що розбився?* (11, 207); *Do you think Tinker Bell was grateful to Wendy for raising her arm?* (12, 69). The allomorphic singularities in general questions structure of languages under research refer to the following structural modifications: 1) in English – Vmod + S (N, Pr pers n) + P (V, Adj, N)…?; Vmod + S (N, Pr pers n)…?; Vmod + S (Pr pers n) + not + V…?; V aux + S (N, Pr pers n)?; V aux n’t + S (N, Pr pers n) + Adj + N…?; V aux + S (N, Pr pers n) + not + V + O…?; to be + there + N (Pr )…?; V + Pr pers n ; to be + S (Pr pers n) + not + Adv …?; to be +Pr pers n …( + N / Part II / Adj)…?; to be +Pr dem + Pr pers …?; Pr dem + N (, intj)?; S + V aux n’t + Predicative…, I hope?; S + to be + not + V…?: *Could we not kidnap these boys’ mother and make her our mother?* (12, 90); *“He is in danger, I hope?”* said the old lady (15, 263); *Isn’t it beautiful picture?* (16, 119); 2) in Ukrainian – cnj + to be + not + O…?; Adv / N / V ?; to be + S (Pr pers n) + V…?; S (N, Pr pers n) + to be + Adj…?; to be + it+ N prop…?; Listen, V aux n’t + S (Pr pers n) + V…?; N’s + S?; to be + not +S + Pr poses indep…?; (prep, cnj + ) Pr pers ?...; to be + S (Pr pers n) + O (Pr neg)+ V…?; S (Pr pers n) + Vmod + not…?: *Хіба оці квіти біля хати, оці яблуні в садку тільки для нас цвітуть?* (10, 15); *Слухай, – насторожилася вона, – а ти тут поблизу нікого не стрічав?* – і глянула довкола (10, 82); *Ящірчин хвіст?* – перепитав заєць (10, 10).

Structural identity is observed in disjunctive (tag) questions consisting of an affirmative or negative statement followed respectively by a negative and affirmative question-tag [3, 42]. Therefore English and Ukrainian disjunctive questions which obtain isomorphic features refer to the following models: S + V aux + V…, V aux +not + S (Pr pers n) ? and S + V aux + not + V+ O, V aux + S (Pr pers n) ?: *Now, you are a nice young fellow, ain’t you?* said Sower-

berry; giving Oliver a shake, and a box on the ear. (15, 44); *Павлик брав, а мені хіба не можна, чи що?* (10, 167).

Allomorphism is observed, however, in the ability of some Ukrainian tag-questions to be transformed into general questions. For example: *"You are all right, aren't you?" "У тебе все гаразд, чи не так?* or *Правда ж, у тебе все гаразд?"*. Allomorphic features refer to the following models 1) in English – S + V aux + V…, V aux + S (Pr pers n) ? and S + V aux + not + V…, V aux +not + S (Pr pers n) ?: *You’d never have me anything else, if you had your will, except now; - the humour doesn’t it?* (15, 165); 2) in Ukrainian – Let’s + V, shall we ? and Pr pers n + to be + Adj, to be + not + Pr pers n ?: *Давай і справді покатаємося на свинях! Га?* (11, 72).

Alternative questions are characterized in both languages by isomorphic features. The beginning of these sentences presents a general question. The latter manifest themselves in the existence of a semantically and structurally common alternative conjunction or corresponding to the Ukrainian conjunction чи. The introductory part in these sentences coincides in both languages and may be either a general question or a special question by its structure. The very existence of alternative questions, however, is regarded by some grammarians as disputable today. Despite this, the alternative questions can not be denied specific semantic and structural peculiarities of their own. Thus, the introductory part, whether a general or a special question by its form, is always pronounced before the alternative conjunction with a rising tone [3, 339]. The allomorphic singularities in the structure of questions of the languages under research refer to the following structural modifications: 1) in English – V aux + S (Pr) (+ V) + Adj (O) or Adj (O)…?; V aux + S + V or V aux + S + V…?; V aux + S + N or N…?; What + V aux / mod + S+ V+ O or O…?: *What have papers to do with soul or spirit?* (15, 85); 2) in Ukrainian – Which one + V aux + S+ Adj or Adj…?; to be + S+ P + that + O or O?; Who + needs + prep + O (Pr pers) or + prep + O (Pr pers)?; Who + to be + Adj + O or O?; Pr pers n + think: to be + Pr pers n or + not ?; V mod + S + V or + not ?: *Які тобі – чорні, червоні чи жовті?* (10, 280).

Special/Pronominal questions are characterized in the contrasted languages by generally common if not presumably universal features. English and Ukrainian special questions which obtain isomorphic features refer to the following models: (cnj) Why (Where, When, What, How, How long /ago (often) + V aux + S (N, Pr pers n) + V,… (N)…? How/many / much (What) (+ O (N)+ V mod + S (N, Pr pers n) + V…? What + N (Pr)…? (cnj) Why (What/ else, Which one) + V mod + S + V…? (part) How (What)? How(Why) + V aux + not + S (N, Pr pers n) + V…? How dare + S (N, Pr pers n) + V…? Why + not…? How (What, Where) + to be + S (N, Pr pers n) …(prep)? What + to be + Pr dem / N… ?: *What did he see?* (17, 49); *What are you thinking of, Trot?* (13, 117); *Що ж мені тепер робити, їжаче?* (10, 9); *Чому ж ні?* (10, 229).

They are started with an interrogative pronoun or adverb which may sometimes be preceded by prepositions, particles or interjections. Allomorphic is the use of prepositions in the final position in English: *What do we need a raft for, Cap’n?* (13, 58).

**Semantic structure of interrogative sentences.**

As to the second principle of classification it is the semantic one. Talking about the semantic structure, the

interrogative sentence includes two components: the competence inquiry (a question concerning the presence of information about a composing situation or about a situation in the whole) and the subject of the inquiry. Basic for this approach are the ideas of O. H. Pocheptsov [4, 9]. Thus, the following two types of interrogative sentences are found: 1) those with the question itself: *How was it that you appeared to me as a great Head?* (14, 156); 2) those with the judgement: *Be quiet, sir! Can't you see these are strangers and should be treated with respect?* (14, 197). According to the possible combinations of the addresser's knowledge about the answer character to the competence inquiry and about the meaning of an answer to the question itself, four cases are distinguished [8, 10]: 1) an addresser knows neither the fact whether an addressee can answer the question, nor the answer to the question: *How far is it to the Emerald City?* (14, 24); 2) an addresser knows the future answer character but he doesn't know the meaning of the answer: *What is your name?* (15, 42); 3) an addresser knows not only the future answer character but also the answer itself: *Are you lonesome because you're a magician?* (13, 144); 4) an addresser doubts the addressee's ability to answer the question but he knows the answer himself (this situation takes place when the teacher asks the student).

The third principle of interrogative sentences classification is the pragmatic one. It points out the main pragmatic characteristic of the interrogative sentence, which is the intention of the inquirer. The intension is subdivided into starting intension (the filling of the informational lacuna) and final intention (the fulfillment of an act) [4, 19]. The study of the final intention character suggests two following types of the interrogative sentences: those, whose final aim is the linguistic act and those, whose final aim is the paralinguistic act.

Depending on whether the question is connected with the physical act or with emotions paralinguistic questions are subdivided into: 1) those, whose final aim is to arise emotions: *But suppose you haven't the right key with you. What then?* (13, 158); 2) those, whose final aim is to show some emotions: *'Dear me!' she exclaimed in surprise. 'Have YOU been here all night, too?'* (14, 13).

**Concluding remarks.** The work presented above is a piece of research endeavouring to bring together developments and experiences both in the field of pragmatics and contrastive typology of the English and Ukrainian languages. Its main objective is to contribute to the principles of English and Ukrainian interrogative sentences classification. We have proposed, so far, an outline of main isomorphic and allomorphic structural, semantic and pragmatic peculiarities of languages under investigation. Thus, English and Ukrainian interrogative sentences may be classified not only by a syntactic principle, but also by semantic and pragmatic ones. To know them all is very important especially in the process of translation. We believe that, despite so much criticism of the lack of validity in this kind of methodology, this research methodologically has been shown to provide a very promising framework for the investigation of the pragmatic aspects of translation, a field of study that could either be only tackled speculatively. In the last few years substantial effort has been put in this area of research, resulting in a large amount of very valuable insights about the pragmatic and contrastive typology affective factors involved in translation. The validity of the results comes from the contrast and convergence of the data obtained with different methodologies. Our line of empirical research is based on this general approach. The ultimate goal of this work has obviously been to shed light on the comparative analysis of English and Ukrainian interrogative sentences structure, semantic and pragmatic. The obtained results draw from the common or divergent features respectively the isomorphic regularities and the allomorphic singularities in the languages contrasted.

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