

# Assessing intonation: A web-based experiment

**Cornelia Zwischenberger  
University of Vienna  
Center for Translation Studies**



**universität  
wien**

## **Quality Research Methods**

An international workshop on methodology in research on quality in simultaneous interpreting  
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- Web-based survey project
- Audio Samples
- Research question and findings

# Survey on Quality and Role: The professionals' view

- Method
  - Full population survey among AIC members
  - 2523 e-mail invitations containing the survey link sent out
- 2474 e-mails successfully delivered
- Fielding time: 7 weeks (22 Sept. 2008 - 10 Nov. 2008)
- Response rate: 28.5% (704)

## Survey on Quality and Role: The professionals' view

Dear AIIC Member / Dear Colleague, This questionnaire asks you as an experienced professional to share your views on the crucial issue of quality in conference interpreting. Your answers will help provide an updated and rich account of the profession's position on the two interrelated questions of quality criteria and the interpreter's role. Thank you very much for your time and cooperation!

*There are 41 questions in this survey.*

next >>

[Exit and Clear Survey]

Load Unfinished Survey

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

# Part A: Background Variables

**Survey on Quality and Role: The professionals' view**

0%  100%

**PART A**

Please answer the following questions relating to your professional and personal background

**\*Your employment status:**  
*Choose only one of the following*

freelance  
 permanent staff member

**To which AIIC region do you belong?**  
*Choose only one of the following*

Please choose..

**How old are you?**

*Only numbers may be entered in this field*

**\*Your gender:**  
*Choose only one of the following*

female  
 male

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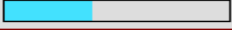
[Exit and Clear Survey]

Save Survey and Return

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

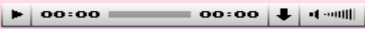
# Part B: Audio Sample

**Survey on Quality and Role: The professionals' view**

0%  100%

**PART B**  
Rating of an Audio Sample

Here is a short sample of a simultaneous interpretation. Please listen to it by clicking on the PLAY arrow and then give your impression on a six-point scale.



	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>No answer</b>
Very good	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
						Very bad	


**Any comments?**

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[Exit and Clear Survey]

Save Survey and Return

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

- German speech – SI into English → Sample
- Attempt at flattening intonation peaks with software Melodyne (failed) 
- New approach: **Shadowing** sample
  - 1) lively: show involvement
  - 2) monotonous: show “I don’t really care“

- Acoustic analysis in Praat (fundamental frequency):

- Sample with lively intonation:

Mean: **265.00 Hz** ( $\pm 75.48$  Hz)

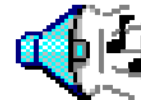
Min.: 89.06 Hz; Max.: 598.89 Hz



- Sample with monotonous intonation:

Mean: **220.36 Hz** ( $\pm 49.37$  Hz)

Min.: 71.27 Hz; Max.: 595.13 Hz





- Audio Samples incorporated into questionnaire(s)
  - Two identical versions of questionnaire (one containing sample with **lively intonation**, one with **monotonous intonation**)
- Survey recipients (2523) randomized into two groups ([www.randomizer.org](http://www.randomizer.org))

- Based on findings of former empirical work (Collados Aís 1998)
- Clearly directed **hypothesis** formulated:  
“Sample with **lively intonation** will obtain **higher ratings** than the sample with monotonous intonation“
- One-tailed T-test performed

- **Statistics:**

- **Lively Intonation:**

N: 290    Mean: 3.84 ( $\pm$  1.06)    Median: 4    Min.: 1    Max.: 6

- **Monotonous Intonation:**

N: 277    Mean: 3.68 ( $\pm$  0.99)    Median: 4    Min.: 1    Max.: 6

- **T-Test statistics:**

t-value: 1.807; df: 565;  $p=$  0.035

- Influence of various background variables (age, gender, working experience etc.) on rating
- Non-parametric two-way analysis of variance performed

- Does intonation really only play a minor role in the rating of a professional performance by professionals themselves?

But:

- Cautious interpretation of results!  
→ Difference might be much more marked, if sample would have been longer
- Further research is needed to (really) answer this question!

Thank you for your attention!