

# Unit 11

## Intonation (3):

the secondary tones of English and their meaning

Slides for the session of

*Phonetics with Listening Practice (British)*

held on

13 / 14 pluviôse de l'année CCXXX de la République

01 / 02 February 2022

## English Phonetics: Unit 11:

[ˈɪŋ.gəlɪʃ fə.ˈnet.ɪks ˈjuː.n.ɪt.ɪ.ˈlev.ŋ]

## Intonation (3)

[ˈɪnt.ə.ˈneɪf.(ə)ŋ ˈθriː]

the secondary tones of English and their meaning

[ðə ˈsek.ən.dɪ.i ˈtʰəʊnz əv ˈɪŋ.gəlɪʃ əŋ ðeə ˈmiːn.ɪŋ]

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[ˈɹɒb.ət ˈspens]

based on material by M. A. K. Halliday

[ˈbeɪst ən mə.ˈtʰɪɹ.i.ət baɪ ˈjɛm.ɛɪ kʰeɪ ˈhæɪ.lɪd.ɛɪ]

## Outline

## Tone 1

tonic  
pretonic

## Tone 2

tonic  
pretonic

## Tone 3

pretonic

## Tone 4

tonic

## Tone 5

tonic

① **Tone 1**  
tonic  
pretonic

② **Tone 2**  
tonic  
pretonic

③ **Tone 3**  
pretonic

④ **Tone 4**  
tonic

⑤ **Tone 5**  
tonic

## Secondary tones of Tone 1 (tonic)

Tone 1 medium

tonic fall starts at same height as last syllable of pretonic  
(KEY: neutral)

// .1. John's de- / cided to be- / come a \*/ doctor //

Tone 1 wide

tonic fall starts higher than last syllable of pretonic  
(KEY: strong / unexpected)

// .1+ ^ it's the / only / place I've / ever \*/ lived in //

Tone 1 narrow

tonic fall starts lower than last syllable of pretonic  
(KEY: mild / expected)

// .1- how can an / ashtray be \*/ vegetable //(‘20 Fragen’)

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Intonation (3):

Outline

Tone 1

tonic

pretonic

Tone 2

tonic

pretonic

Tone 3

pretonic

Tone 4

tonic

Tone 5

tonic

## Secondary tones of Tone 1 (pretonic)

### Tone 1 level

each pretonic foot has level tone; pretonic feet at same height (before medium fall), stepping up (before wide fall), stepping down (before narrow fall)  
(KEY (FORCE): neutral) (examples: previous slide)

### Tone 1 bouncing

each pretonic foot 'bounces' (down and up)  
often with 'wide' tonic  
(KEY (FORCE): forceful)

// <sub>-1+</sub> why don't you / ask him to / give you your <sup>\*</sup> / money back //

### Tone 1 listing

pretonic resembles sequence of tone 3 + tone 3 (...)

// <sub>...1.</sub> <sup>^</sup> a / pound of / apples / <sup>^</sup> a / grapefruit / <sup>^</sup> and / half a dozen <sup>\*</sup> / oranges //

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Intonation (3):

Outline

Tone 1

tonic

pretonic

Tone 2

tonic

pretonic

Tone 3

pretonic

Tone 4

tonic

Tone 5

tonic

## Secondary tones of Tone 2 (tonic)

Tone 2 rising

unmarked: 'normal question'

//2. have you / seen their / new \*/ house //

Tone 2 falling-rising

tonic falls (focus) then rises (speech function), sharp change of direction  
marked: 'specifying the point of the query'

//2 have you / seen their / new \*/ house //

\*//2 couldn't we go / out / just for an / hour / Daphne //

\*//2 honestly //

\*//2 why //

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Intonation (3):

Outline

Tone 1

tonic

pretonic

Tone 2

tonic

pretonic

Tone 3

pretonic

Tone 4

tonic

Tone 5

tonic

## Secondary tones of Tone 2 (pretonic)

Tone 2 high

pretonic feet are high and level

KEY: neutral

\_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    **V**  
// .2 have you / seen their / new \*/ house //

Tone 2 low

pretonic feet are low and level

KEY: intense (surprise / disapproval / concern)

(in U.S. English: neutral)

\_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    /  
// -2. don't you / think you \*/ ought to / tell them //

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Intonation (3):

Outline

Tone 1

tonic

pretonic

Tone 2

tonic

pretonic

Tone 3

pretonic

Tone 4

tonic

Tone 5

tonic

## Secondary tones of Tone 3 (pretonic)

### Tone 3 mid

pretonic feet are mid and level

(KEY: confirmatory / reassuring)

// .3 ^ I / don't sup- / pose it / really \* / matters //

### Tone 3 low

pretonic feet are low and level

(KEY: unconcerned / uncertain)

// -3 ^ I / don't sup- / pose it / really \* / matters //

Neither of these choices of pretonic is available before the 'tone 3' tonic segment of compound tones 13 and 53.

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Intonation (3):

Outline

Tone 1

tonic

pretonic

Tone 2

tonic

pretonic

Tone 3

pretonic

Tone 4

tonic

Tone 5

tonic



## Secondary tones of Tone 4 (tonic)

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Intonation (3):

Outline

Tone 1

tonic

pretonic

Tone 2

tonic

pretonic

Tone 3

pretonic

Tone 4

tonic

Tone 5

tonic

Tone 4 high (preselects down-stepping pretonic)  
each pretonic foot level, last syllable of pretonic falls slightly  
(neutral: logical complication of some kind)

//<sub>4</sub> ^ if he / had any / common \*/ sense //

Tone 4 low (preselects swinging pretonic)  
each pretonic foot falls and rises, with main force of fall  
(marked: exclusive / contrastive / expressing strong reservation)

//<sub>4</sub> ^ but it / certainly / couldn't be \*/ animal //


(context: '20 Fragen')

## Secondary tones of Tone 5 (tonic)

Tone 5 high (preselects up-stepping pretonic)  
each pretonic foot level; last syllable of pretonic rises slightly  
(neutral, expressing strong assertion / override / surprise)

  
//<sub>5</sub> it's / simply / not \*/ true //

Tone 5 low (preselects swinging pretonic)  
each pretonic foot rises and falls, with main force on rise  
(intense, showing awe or disappointment)

  
//<sub>5</sub> look at that / lovely old \*/ steam engine //

Tone 5 low with breathy voice quality: awe  
Tone 5 low with normal voice quality: sarcasm

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Intonation (3):

Outline

Tone 1

tonic

pretonic

Tone 2

tonic

pretonic

Tone 3

pretonic

Tone 4

tonic

Tone 5

tonic