



# Unit 11

## Intonation (3):

the secondary tones of English and their meaning

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*Phonetics with Listening Practice (British)*  
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11.1

English Phonetics: Unit 11: [ˈɪŋ.gəlɪʃ fəˈnet.ɪks ˈjuːn.ɪ.ˈlev.ŋ]

Intonation (3) [ˈɪnt.əˈneɪʃ.(ə)n ˈθriː]

the secondary tones of English and their meaning [ðəˈsek.ŋdɪ.i ˈtʰəʊnz əv ˈɪŋ.gəlɪʃ ən ðeəˈmiːn.ɪŋ]

Robert Spence [ˈrɒb.ət ˈspens]

based on material by M. A. K. Halliday [ˈbeɪst ən məˈtʰɪɹ.i.ət baɪ ˈdʒem.ɪ kʰeɪ ˈhæl.ɪd.ɪ]

11.2

### 1 Tone 1

#### 1.1 tonic

Secondary tones of Tone 1 (tonic)

Tone 1 medium

tonic fall starts at same height as last syllable of pretonic

(KEY: neutral)

//<sub>1</sub> John's de- / cided to be- / come a \*/ doctor //

Tone 1 wide

tonic fall starts higher than last syllable of pretonic

(KEY: strong / unexpected)

//<sub>1+</sub> ^ 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)

//<sub>1</sub>. how can an / ashtray be \*/ vegetable //('20 Fragen')

11.3

## 1.2 pretonic

### 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 \*/ money back //

#### Tone 1 listing

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

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

11.4

## 2 Tone 2

### 2.1 tonic

#### Secondary tones of Tone 2 (tonic)

##### Tone 2 rising

unmarked: 'normal question'

//<sub>2</sub>. 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'

//<sub>2</sub> have you / seen their / new \*/ house //

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

\*//<sub>2</sub> honestly //      \*//<sub>2</sub> why //

11.5

## 2.2 pretonic

Secondary tones of Tone 2 (pretonic)

Tone 2 high

pretonic feet are high and level

KEY: neutral

\_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    **∨**  
//<sub>.2</sub> 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)

\_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    **/**  
//<sub>-2</sub> don't you / think you \*/ ought to / tell them //

11.6

## 3 Tone 3

### 3.1 pretonic

Secondary tones of Tone 3 (pretonic)

Tone 3 mid

pretonic feet are mid and level

(KEY: confirmatory / reassuring)

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

Tone 3 low

pretonic feet are low and level

(KEY: unconcerned / uncertain)

\_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_  
//<sub>.3</sub> ^ 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.

11.7

## 4 Tone 4

### 4.1 tonic

Secondary tones of Tone 4 (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 hē / 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')

11.8

## 5 Tone 5

### 5.1 tonic

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

11.9