

○ **M.A.K. HALLIDAY AND W. GREAVES,
INTONATION IN THE GRAMMAR OF
ENGLISH**

(LONDON: EQUINOX. 2008. PP. IX, 224. CD ROM)

I nail my colours to the mast first. Meeting Halliday's ideas on language in the early 1980s had an impact as profound as that of reading Greer on women, or Camus on outsiders. And later, in teaching phonology and pronunciation, my central reference has remained Halliday's 1970 work *A Course in Spoken English: Intonation*. It has been a tantalizing wait, then, for this new publication by Michael Halliday and William Greaves. But its development over the past ten years, which included extensive trialling with students in Canada and elsewhere, has fully paid off in the achievement of depth, clarity and integrity. This book represents a unique contribution to the scholarship of phonology.

One of the most powerful dimensions of systemic functional linguistics has been its recognition of the spoken features of rhythm and intonation (prosody) as grammatical. Thus, far from being simply paralinguistic, prosody serves to systematically realise meaning in all three metafunctions of language: *Ideational*, where language construes experience; *Interpersonal*, where it enacts relationships; and *Textual*, where it engenders discourse.

How does the current publication sit in relation to phonology worldwide; and in relation to the teaching/learning of L2 pronunciation? First, the field of phonology remains primarily centred upon the segmentals of speech, with attention in recent years additionally being extended to macro issues of language variety (English as a Lingua Franca) and speaker identity (see in particular the 2005 special issue of *TESOL Quarterly*, 39/3). However, prosody – in the middle, and in the centre, so to speak – remains relatively neglected, notwithstanding work in the Hallidayan tradition (for a summary see Greaves, 2007), as well as that of the Birmingham school. Second, while L2 pronunciation is repeatedly identified as an area of prime importance to learners and their teachers, the majority of existing materials inadequately or even wrongly present the prosodic features of English (a notable exception, dating from 1994, being Halina Zawadzki's *In Tempo*). This new publication by Halliday and Greaves will make a major contribution both directly and indirectly towards that understanding of prosody which is fundamental to effective teaching of the spoken features of English.

Intonation in the Grammar of English is in two main parts, with a third providing an analysis (coding) guide.

Part 1, chapters 1–4, is concerned with the study of speech sounds. It explores the acoustic dimension of speech; describes its prosodic organisation; and specifies the role of intonation within the lexico-grammar of English. The descriptive insights offered by computer-based instrumental analysis are indeed impressive, and are laid out here in remarkably clear fashion. But I also liked the caveat (p. 5) that *human* perception of speech sounds is still foundational to analysis; and would note that such awareness is not often easily developed by language teachers, particularly perhaps when that language is ‘their own’.

Part 2, chapters 5–7, expands on the three systems of Tonality (taking the form of Tone Groups), Tonicity (placement of the Tonic), and Tone (melodic contour). These ‘3 Ts’ are used to analyse the functions of intonation in each of the three metafunctions, beginning with *Textual*, and working through *Interpersonal* to *Ideational*. Each chapter proceeds to set out principles and examples with unalloyed clarity of meaning. A minor issue rests with the actual terms, which although transparent to those who know them, often, due to phonetic similarity, represent a source of confusion for students.

The section dealing with the *Textual* metafunction shows how the tone group (in ‘the sounding’), maps onto the clause (in ‘the wording’) as the unmarked option, the latter which is suggested to constitute 60% of ‘continuous dialogue’ (p. 101). The role of the Tonic is fully demonstrated, and the semogenic power of Theme/Rheme in relation to Given/New is illustrated with examples of unmarked and marked options. There is a nice metaphor of the engendering of text as a current alternating between ‘known’ and ‘unknown’. A little more explanation of the occurrence and impact of ‘silent beats’ would be welcome here, as this is another feature which often proves challenging to student perception (and one which is vital to fluency – see Szczepek Reed, 2006).

The next section on intonation in *Interpersonal* meaning explores systems of mood and modality through the four major speech functions of statement, question, offer and command (with a reminder that commands include requests), demonstrating again both unmarked and marked options, as Tone (in the sounding) plays ‘with’ or ‘against’ Mood (in the wording). One example is reproduced below (p. 113). It illustrates a marked option, where we have a statement realised in the lexico-grammar as declarative mood, and co-realised in the prosody as a rising tone (Tone 2). The communicative outcome is ‘a challenge’, for in a productive tension of meanings, it is always intonation which wins out.

// 2 ^ no I* / haven't / got the / tickets //

(Tone Group is marked by double slash; feet by single slash; Tone by Arabic numeral; silent beat by caret, and Tonic syllable by bold font + preceding asterisk.)

Halliday and Greaves then build upon earlier work in illustrating seven primary tones: five 'simple' tones, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5; two 'compound' tones of 1-3 and 5-3 (the addition of the hyphen a useful guide to the pronunciation of 'one-three', 'five-three'). There is not much space for discussion of dialect differences, but it is correctly noted that the high rising terminal (Tone 2) is becoming the unmarked option for a statement among some speakers in Australia and New Zealand.

In exploring the role of intonation in the *Ideational* metafunction, we meet the co-realisation of logical relations across clauses (rather than in the realisation of transitivity, the latter in which intonation plays no part). Intonation beyond clause-complex, ie in 'paragraph' type stretches, or 'Paratones', is not dealt with here (but see, for example, Tench, 1996).

A microtext of a Radio chat show is analysed acoustically, phonetically and semantically, with rich results. As the authors note: 'The listener is always processing at all strata at once, and it seems to us desirable for the analyst to do the same' (p. 163).

Chapter 7 is mainly concerned with illustrating the 19 'secondary' tones of English, which represent more delicate exponents of the 7 primary tones. The authors here provide counter-examples through 'Tone substitution' in order to illuminate meanings. As Halliday and Greaves note, there is further work to be done in describing what we might call 'tertiary' tones: this is an exciting prospect, and one in which technology will prove an asset. This section is a particularly welcome addition to the literature: nowhere else, to my knowledge, are the systems described with such insight and elegance. An appendix to this section analyses a series of spoken texts, both Australian and British.

The third part of the book, a brief Analysis Guide, serves to describe the SFL model in an economical way. There is a coda to that section which could possibly assist the reader better if transposed as an introduction.

The book comes with a CD-ROM which provides video extracts from Anne Thwaite's *Language in Contexts* (Thwaite 1997), audio clips, and a digital version of the print text itself. The video clips naturally embody context of situation and culture; their richness may remind us of the constraints of working with monomodal texts in this field. Audio clips also provide an interesting range of voices and dialects. The speakers in the latter are not credited but certainly include both Halliday and Greaves, a fact which might be of interest to readers.

The book is clearly signposted and pleasantly laid out. An index would have been useful; as would headers/footers to remind us of chapter number and chapter section.

I consider this to be a landmark study. The fusion of human and technological perception with grammatical analysis – and always, the ‘return to the data’ – results in an exceptionally lucid and scientific work. I believe it will provide a source of insight to linguists and language teachers for many years to come. There is another recent publication which has applied Hallidayan prosodic analysis directly to the field of second language teaching and learning: John Wells’ *English Intonation: An Introduction* (Wells 2006); and this, I suggest, could well serve as a companion to the present volume.

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Intonation is like the music of a language. Intonation means the changes that someone makes to the sound of their voice when speaking. The up and down movements in the voice can show meaning or emotion. These movements can also take the place of punctuation, such as commas or question marks. Today on Everyday Grammar, we will explore the subject of intonation by using humor. We will show you how one comedian used intonation in ways that can teach you about American English and grammar.

Rising intonation.

The term rising intonation means the upward movement of the voice, often at the end of a sentence. In general, Americans use rising intonation in what we call "yes/no questions" -- questions that ask for either a "yes" or "no" answer.

Intonation Patterns

There are three basic pitches in English- these are normal, high, and low. There is also a very high pitch, which is used to express strong emotions such as surprise, anger, or fear. (The very high pitch will not be covered in this text). The normal pitch is where the voice usually is. High is where the voice rises to indicate information focus. The intonation pattern for statement, commands, and WH questions is basically the same- the voice starts at a normal pitch, rises at the intonation focus word, falls back to normal after the intonation focus word, and falls to low at the end of the sentence. With yes/no questions the pitch starts at normal and rises at the end of the sentence.

Statement: I like riding horses.

5.3 Intonation in the ideational metafunction

5.3.1 Intonation in tactic sequences

5.3.2 The meaning of tone concord

5.3.3 Summary of intonation in the logical metafunction.

129 130 132 134. A detailed demonstration: how sound makes meaning in the microtext "Prince Lazarus". The Links folder In addition to the "live" version of Intonation in the Grammar of English, the CD contains Links, a folder containing the soundfiles themselves. Pausing the cursor above any of the sound icons in the book reveals the precise name of the sound in the Links folder. This should allow you to identify the source file, should you want to explore it further in Praat (see below). The Thwaite folder The CD also contains the video files, soundfiles and transcripts from Thwaite, A. (1997) Language in Contexts. Pronunciation in English is an important element of proper language learning. Without a sound statement and correct intonation, your speech will not be understood by an English-speaking person, even if you ideally know the grammatical rules and have a wide vocabulary. That is why it is important to study the sounds, intonation, other points of pronunciation in English. But what is intonation in English? In this article we will understand what types of intonation are, and what functions it performs. When teaching grammar or lexis, we find ways of making the language accessible to our learners. Intonation is crucial for communication. It's also a largely unconscious mechanism, and as such, a complex aspect of pronunciation. It's no surprise that many teachers don't feel confident about tackling it in the classroom. When teaching grammar or lexis, we find ways of making the language accessible to our learners. How then to do this with intonation? What is intonation? Why teach intonation? English has particularly wide pitch range. In each tone unit, the pitch movement (a rise or fall in tone, or a combination of the two) takes place on the most important syllable known as the 'tonic-syllable'. The tonic-syllable is usually a high-content word, near the end of the unit.