

UNIT-III (Section-D)

INTONATION

1.0

We have seen 'Word Stress' in section-B of this unit where the word stress is the accent on one syllable in a word. In this section, we shall learn about **Sentence Stress** and **Intonation**. sentence stress is accent on certain words within a sentence. In English speech, not all words are uttered alike some words are stressed, where as others are not stressed. There is no set rule for determining which word in a sentence is stressed. However as a general rule, words in a sentence are stressed on the basis of whether they are lexical word, (content words) or structure words (grammatical words) which we have already dealt with in **SECTION-C**.

Let us understand this through the following examples:

'This is the 'house that 'Jack 'built

'What's the 'name of the 'girl on your 'left

Who's 'turned 'off the 'fan

'Mary 'bought a 'new 'pen

The stress marks in the above sentences show how a sentence takes stress/accent and where it should fall.

1.1

PITCH AND INTONATION

In connected speech, the pitch of the voice continuously rises and falls. ***The pitch of the voice is determined by the rate at which the vocal cords vibrate the more rapidly the vocal cords vibrate, the higher will be the pitch.*** Hence, the pitch of the voice keeps on varying in connected speech. The patterns of variations of the pitch of the voice (i.e. fall and rise) constitute the **intonation** of a language.

If you say ***Put it down!***, the pitch of the voice will move from a high level to a low level. This is called ***the falling tone.***

Let us understand thus:

Put it

d
o
w
n

(Reference and courtesy : EFLU PGCTE Block-II PSE)

We can also say the same with ***a rising tone*** and in that case the pitch of the voice will move from low to high **as demonstrated** below:

n
w
o
d
Put it

(Reference and courtesy : EFLU PGCTE Block-II PSE)

Thus we can say that *Intonation* refers to significant changes of pitch and stress pertaining to sentences. Falling and rising are the two basic intonation patterns.

Example:

“sa-re-ga-ma-pa dha-ni-sa” The pitch movement is from low to high **[pitch rises]**

“sa-ni dha-pa-ma-ga-re-sa” The pitch moves from high to low **[pitch falls]**

1.2

FUNCTIONS OF INTONATION

1. The falling tone: the falling tone is used in the following contexts-

a) In ordinary statements made without emotional implication.

Example:

It's 'two o'clock.

I 'have a 'lot of friends.

It's raining.

b) In wh – questions (when said in a neutral way)

Example:

'Who's crying?

'When are we leaving?

'What's the hurry?

c) In commands

Example:

'Do as I say.

'Open your books.

'Get me some water

d) In exclamations

Example:

'What a pleasant surprise!

'How beautiful!

How wonderful!

'Splendid!

How extra ordinary

e) In rhetorical questions:

Example:

'Wasn't that a difficult exam

2. The rising tone: the rising tone is used in the following contexts-

a) In yes/no questions (which demands an answer)

Example:

Are you ,happy?

'Can you ,sing?

'Will you ,do it?

b) In polite requests

Example:

'Please sit ,down.

'Would you 'open the ,window?

c) In questions showing concern, apologies, greetings etc.

Example:

'How's your ,mother?

'Why are you ,crying?

Hel ,lo.

I am so ,sorry.

d) In alternative questions

Example:

Do you like ,tea ,coffee or `coke?

e) Enumerations

Example:


,One ,two ,three , ,four , `five

f) In tag questions where the speaker wants the listener to answer the question and give information.


Example:



She has done the `work , ,hasn't she?

You are `coming , ,aren't you?

3. The falling- rising tone - It is indicated by  (above the word/syllable)

The use of the fall rise tone indicates that the speaker implies things, which are not explicitly expressed. A fall rise tone gives the impression that the listener should understand more than a literal interpretation of the words or more than what is said.

For example: the sentence “*the girl is pretty*” is uttered with a fall rise tone as in “the ‘girl is pretty”, it implies that *she is  pretty (but she is stupid)* or there is something morally wrong about her.

- The houses are  nice (but not the people there)
-  Thank you (used mainly to express one's displeasure)

ACTIVITY-1

Read the following sentences and mark the tone (falling/rising/falling-rising)

1. Who's shouting?

2. The 'girls have left.

3. The 'box was empty.

4. 'Report immediately.

5. 'When are they coming?

6. 'When did they leave.

7. 'What a tragedy!

8. He had gone.

9. I have done it.

10. 'Which of these is your book?

ACTIVITY-2

Read the following sentences and mark the tone (falling/rising/falling-rising)

1. 'Are they coming?

2. 'Is he studying?

3. 'Please let me know.

4. 'Don't be angry with me.

5. 'Everything's going to be fine.

6. 'Shall we start now?

7. 'Is father at home.

8. 'Can you do it?

9. 'Is today Thursday?

10. 'Have you seen the film?

11. She is beautiful (but not intelligent).

Finally, we ended up **UNIT-III** with *four sections*. Hope you learnt well. The only tip we can give for this unit for better learning is - ***Practice, Practice and Practice!***

Good Luck to all!