

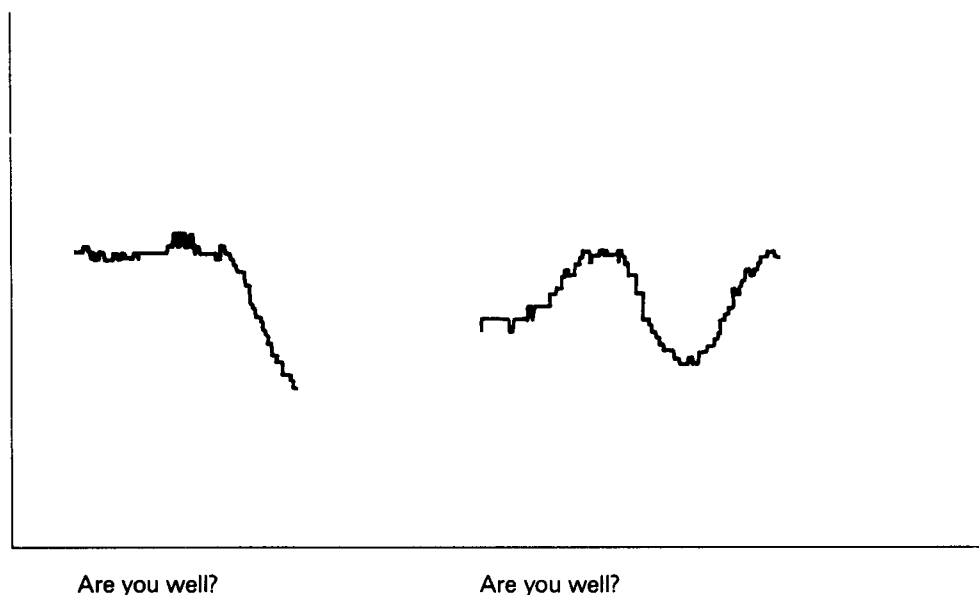
## Introduction

This introduction tells you about the aims and approach of this course and how to use it.

### The title

It is always a good idea to look carefully at the title of a book or article because it can tell you a lot about the content and prepare you for the approach which is taken. So, in this case, what is 'intonation' and what is meant here by 'context'?

*Intonation* is a feature of the spoken language. It consists of the continuous changing of the pitch of a speaker's voice to express meanings. You will have realised that people can mean different things by using the same group of words, arranged in the same order, but saying them in different ways. Here are two diagrams (fundamental frequency traces) which show the same group of words spoken in two different ways. The pitch rises and falls in different places.



A speaker is able to make the group of words mean what he/she wants it to mean by choosing the right intonation.

## Introduction

*Context* means the situation in which things are said. Features of the situation include the place and time, but also the roles the speakers are playing, their relationship, the knowledge and experience they already share and what has already been said. Speakers are influenced by all of these things when they choose the intonation of what they say.

## Who is the course for?

*Intonation in Context* is for upper-intermediate and advanced students of English who would like to improve their listening and speaking skills.

It has been designed for students working in a class with a teacher, but it is also suitable for individual students working privately.

The work in the course centres on listening and speaking activities so you will need to be able to use listening/recording facilities. The cassette is therefore an essential part of the course. You may find it useful to record your own voice when doing the activities and to be able to compare your responses with the recorded models.

## The aims

The course has two main aims:

- i) to make you more sensitive to intonation so that you have a better understanding of the English you hear;
- ii) to help you express yourself more fluently and precisely in English, and with greater confidence.

## The approach

This course does not try to relate intonation to grammar or to mood or attitudes. Instead, it presents intonation as a *system* which you can learn and put to use to convey *meanings*. The choices from the system which enable speakers to convey their intended meanings depend on the features of the context.

To be able to use the system you will need to learn about its separate features. These are introduced one at a time in this course. In each of six units you will focus on one feature and the choices which can be made from that part of the system. The other two units revise and practise what you have learnt.

To learn any system we need special terms by which we can refer to its parts. Therefore, as you work through this course and learn the system, you may find that some terms are new to you. Each one will be fully described and explained in context. However, some important terms are included in the glossary on page 61. You may find it useful to become familiar with them before you begin.

## **The organisation of the course**

There are eight units in the course. You should work through them in the order in which they are presented to build up the system of intonation. You may wish to return to some parts to revise, but work through the units from 1 to 8 to begin with.

Units 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 follow a regular pattern:

### **1 Sensitisation**

One feature of English intonation is demonstrated to help you to become aware of the choices a speaker can make and how they sound. There is usually a conversation for listening, with questions to familiarise you with the content and the context. Then you will listen to an extract from the conversation which is accompanied by tasks which focus your attention on the particular feature.

### **2 Explanation**

Here the feature is described and the meanings of the choices a speaker can make are explained. These are always shown to relate to the context. Any special transcription is introduced in this section.

### **3 Imitation**

You are given opportunities to practise the feature of intonation by repeating extracts from the conversation you have heard in the Sensitisation section.

### **4 Practice activities**

There is a variety of activities: some will help you to recognise the feature and some give you practice in producing it – in context.

### **5 Communication activity**

This activity requires you to work with a partner and exchange information. It gives you the opportunity to think about the feature you have been learning about and to use it in a freer situation. (This section is not relevant for students working alone.)

Units 4 and 8 are for revision and practice of the features you have learnt in the preceding units. They do not follow the set pattern, but include a variety of the kinds of activities you have worked on in the other units.

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## *Introduction*

### **Assessing your progress**

Throughout the course try to make yourself aware of what you are doing when you speak and be self-critical. Listen carefully as you compare your responses with the model responses on the cassettes. If you are working with other students, invite criticism from them, and be prepared to help them in the same way.

You may feel at the end of the course that you have made more progress in hearing and understanding the intonation of other speakers than you have made in using it yourself. This is natural. Remember, you were able to understand your native language before you were able to use it effectively to express yourself. This course is only a beginning. It will give you initial training, and when you are aware of intonation as a system you will be able to continue practising all the time you are speaking English.

I hope you find the course interesting and that you will continue to improve in your use of intonation long after you have finished it.

#### NOTE

Students working without a teacher will need to have the Teacher's Book, which contains the answers to the exercises, the transcripts and further explanatory notes.

Barbara Bradford

## Unit 1 Highlighting

In any conversation between speakers of English some words are more noticeable than others. We can say the speakers *highlight* these words.

### 1 Sensitisation

1.1 Listen to this conversation and try to answer the questions.

- i) What is Alan trying to do?
- ii) Why does he find it so difficult?
- iii) How does Louise react to his attempts?



*Unit 1 Highlighting*

- 1.2 Now listen to this short extract from the conversation. In the transcript below draw a box round the words which you think are most noticeable.

Alan: Turn slightly towards me.  
Your head slightly towards me.

Louise: Right?

Alan: No – only slightly towards me.

Compare your transcript with a partner. Try to say why the same word is sometimes highlighted and sometimes not.

- 1.3 Listen to the conversation again. Listen for more examples (find at least three) where a word which occurs more than once is sometimes highlighted and sometimes not.

**2 Explanation**

- 2.1 A speaker highlights the words which are most significant at that point in the conversation.

e.g. Turn slightly towards me.

Alan could have asked Louise to move in several different ways. For example, he could have said any of these:

walk		to the right
come		to the left
turn		towards me

At this point in the conversation Alan wants Louise to notice:

- a) turn – this is the action he wants her to take.  
b) towards – she doesn't know which way he wants her to turn.  
So, at this point he highlights 'turn' and 'towards'.

Later, he repeats the two words 'slightly towards' but this time he highlights 'slightly' because this is the one she hasn't responded to:

No – only slightly towards me.

A word may at one point in the conversation be very significant and at another point be part of the background of what the speaker says. In order to make the hearer notice the word when it is significant the speaker highlights it.

- 2.2 A highlighted word is more noticeable because it contains a prominent syllable. One important feature of a syllable which is heard as prominent is a slightly raised pitch. It may also be louder, but this is not the most important feature.

*Practice activities*

**2.3** When we wish to show which syllables are prominent we print them in small CAPITAL letters:

e.g. TURN slightly TOWARDS me.

Your HEAD slightly towards me.

### 3 Imitation

**3.1** Listen again to these extracts and repeat each one.

Alan: TURN slightly TOWARDS me

Your HEAD slightly towards me

Only SLIGHTLY towards me

**3.2** Now try these. Listen first and then repeat each one.

i) JUST a bit further to the RIGHT  
I mean to MY right

ii) LIKE THAT  
NOT QUITE like that

iii) HOW about a SMILE  
CAN you make it a more NATURAL smile

### 4 Practice activities

**4.1** Listen to the following utterances: you will hear each one twice. Decide which of the questions, (a) or (b), provides a suitable context for what you hear. The highlighting is not transcribed here, so you must recognise which word is made prominent.

i) They hired a car.

a) Did they take the car?

b) Did they hire bikes?

ii) No, the train was delayed.

a) Had she already arrived at the station?

b) Was the plane late?

iii) The bank's on the corner.

a) Where's the bank?

b) What's on the corner?

iv) I sent him a letter.

a) Aren't you going to send Tony a letter?

b) How does Mr Pringle know your news?

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[More information](#)*Unit 1 Highlighting*

- v) It's next Tuesday.
  - a) Is it your birthday next week?
  - b) Was it your birthday last Tuesday?

**4.2** First listen to this short conversation. Then listen again and repeat B's part.

A: What did you have for starters?

B: I had chicken soup.

A: And what did the others have?

B: Chris had tomato soup and James had tomato salad.

Now go on. Take B's part and respond to A's questions. Or work with a partner and take it in turns to take the parts of A and B. Highlight the words you want to make most noticeable in each of the responses.

- i) A: And what did you have for dessert?  
B: I had apple pie.  
A: What did the others have?  
B: Chris had cherry pie and James had cherry cake.
- ii) A: It's your birthday this month, isn't it?  
B: Yes. It's the thirty-first.  
A: Are both your sisters' birthdays this month too?  
B: Yes. Sarah's is the twenty-first and Jenny's is the twenty-fourth.
- iii) A: Where did he wait for you?  
B: At the back entrance.  
A: And where had you arranged to meet?  
B: At the main entrance, which is right on the main street.
- iv) A: When did you visit Japan?  
B: I went last year.  
A: And are you going again?  
B: Yes. I'm going again this year. In fact, I'm going this month.
- v) A: What's the problem?  
B: She's got black shoes.  
A: And why is that a problem?  
B: She needed white shoes to go with her white dress.

**4.3** Listen to this example. The same or similar words are used to reply to three different questions.

A: Is Colin happy in his job?

B: NO. He's going to MOVE.

A: What's Colin going to do?

B: He's going to MOVE.



*Practice activities*

A: Did you say Colin had moved?

B: No. He's GOING to move.

Now go on. Take B's part and use the same words to give suitable answers to the three questions.

i) A: When is Peter's birthday?

A: Is Peter's birthday the thirty-first?

A: Did you say Peter's birthday was the twenty-fourth?

B: (No.) It's the twenty-first.

ii) A: Are you going to the concert tonight?

A: How will you get in?

A: Do you think there'll be any tickets left?

B: I've got a ticket.

iii) A: What does Ann do?

A: Does Ann sell books?

A: Did you say Ann makes clothes?

B: (No.) She sells clothes.

iv) A: What's the matter with Charles?

A: Is he afraid he'll catch a cold?

A: Has Charles got flu?

B: (No.) He's got a cold.

v) A: When are you leaving?

A: Shall we see you here on Thursday morning?

A: You'll miss the party on Wednesday night, won't you?

B: (Yes.) (No.) We're not going till Thursday night.

**4.4** For this activity work with a partner if possible. B uses the same words to respond to the two different things that A says.

i) A: Paul looks happy!

A: I think Paul needs a new car.

B: He's got a new car.

ii) A: We must get some flowers.

A: Don't forget to get them a present.

B: I've got some flowers.

iii) A: Let's go to Paris.

A: Have you had a good weekend?

B: I've been to Paris.

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### *Unit 1 Highlighting*

- iv) A: You need something hot.  
A: The soup's good here.  
B: Then I'll have some soup.
- v) A: How did you know it was Mike who rang?  
A: Why hasn't he written?  
B: He said he'd phone.

## **5 Communication activity**

Student A – look at activity 1 for the information you need.

Student B – look at activity 5 for your information.