



THE LINGUISTIC FUNCTIONS OF INTONATION COMPONENTS IN ENGLISH

To'layeva Sarvinoz

Student of Master's degree in UzSWLU

Mobile: +998903703038

uzdjtu2022@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7628587>

ARTICLE INFO

Qabul qilindi: 25-yanvar 2023 yil

Ma'qullandi: 05-fevral 2023 yil

Nashr qilindi: 10-fevral 2023 yil

KEY WORDS

Intonation is very important in communication as it gives information beyond just the basic meaning of the words.

ABSTRACT

Intonation is very important in communication as it gives information beyond just the basic meaning of the words. It can express the speaker's attitude or feeling about something, as well as giving grammatical information (such as distinguishing between a statement and a question). In linguistics, intonation is variation in pitch used to indicate the speaker's attitudes and emotions, to highlight or focus an expression, to signal the illocutionary act performed by a sentence, or to regulate the flow of discourse.

Intonation also can be defined as 'the higher the frequency, the higher the pitch and vice versa'. It is described that intonation is the melody of speech. The vocal cords are capable of vibrating at varying rates. Now, the number of cycles per second at which they vibrate is called the frequency of vibration, which determines the pitch of the voice. In studying intonation we study how the pitch of the voice rises and falls, and how speakers use this pitch variation to convey linguistic and pragmatic meaning. Further, it also involves the study of how the interplay of accented, stressed and unstressed syllables functions as a framework onto which the intonation patterns are attached.

Native speakers of English exploit intonation patterns in many subtle ways that are not obvious at first sight. If you speak English as a second or foreign language, these uses of intonation may have no parallel in your first language. This can lead to your breakdown in communication when a native speaker is interacting with a non-native speaker. In a conversation situation, many a non-native speaker may fail to understand some or all of the part of the native speaker's message that is conveyed by intonation patterns. The native speaker, unaware both of his or her own use of intonation and of the non-native's failure to pick up on it, wrongly assumes that the message has been fully understood. Later, it becomes evident that the message has not been fully understood, and neither participant in the conversation knows why.

One of the most difficult tasks for foreigners to learn is the intonation, i.e. the stress patterns and melody of English. Stress on words and in sentences can be inaccurate to the point of making the message completely unintelligible. One of the first language characteristic learned as a child is the intonation of the native tongue. Learning pitch patterns as a child is easier than learning new patterns as an adult. However, mastering intonation will greatly

benefit the non-native speaker's intelligibility in conversation.

It may well be the case that English makes more elaborate use of intonation to signal meaning than do most other languages. This is further reason why it should not be neglected by learners and teachers of English as a foreign language. In Linguistics, intonation can perform several functions followed:

- The attitudinal function. The most obvious role of intonation is to express our attitudes and emotions – to show shock or surprise, pleasure or anger, interest or boredom, seriousness or sarcasm, and many others. We do this by tone.
- The grammatical function. Intonation helps identify grammatical structures in speech, rather as punctuation does in writing. We use intonation to mark the beginning and of grammatical units such as clause and sentence (the demarcative function). We do this by tonality. We also use intonation to distinguish clause types, such as question vs. statement, and to disambiguate various grammatically ambiguous structures (the syntactic function). We do this mainly by tone.
- The focusing (also called accentual or informational) function. Intonation helps to show what information in an utterance is new and what is already known. We use it to bring some parts of the message into focus, and leave other parts out of focus; to emphasize or highlight some parts and not others. We do this by tonicity and by the placement of other accents. This is one of the most important functions of English intonation, and perhaps the function most readily taught in the EFL classroom. We combine accentuation with the choice of tone to present some longer stretches of the message as constituting the foreground of the picture we paint, while leaving other stretches as background. These are pragmatic functions.
- The discourse (or cohesive) function. Intonation signals how sequences of clauses and sentences go together in spoken discourse, to contrast or to cohere. It functions like the division of writing text into sentences and paragraphs. It enables us to signal whether or not we have come to the end of the point we are making; whether we want to keep talking or are ready to give another speaker a turn.
- The psychological function. Intonation helps us organize speech into units that are easy to perceive, memorize and perform. We can all repeat an arbitrary string of three, four or five members, but not a string of ten – unless we split them into two units of five. This is why we need tonality.
- The indexical function. Just as with other pronunciation features, intonation may act as a marker of personal or social identity. What makes mothers sound like mothers, lovers sound like lovers, lawyers sound like lawyers, clergymen sound like clergymen, newsreaders sound like newsreaders, officials sound like officials? Partly, their characteristic intonation.

It must be admitted that the learning of intonation patterns of a second language is difficult. It needs a constant practice to use the total system with the same facility as that of mother tongue. But as that of a particular language, learning the patterns of that particular language would enable the learner to avoid wrong intonation patterns. Therefore, the teachers of English can help their students master the difficulties of the intonation patterns of English, which are crucial in intelligibility. A systematic study and constant practice only can enable the teachers of English and learners internalize the rules of the language so that their

speech is not only effective but also intelligible and clear, avoiding all possibilities of being misunderstood due to certain absolutely unintended expressions.

References:

1. Brazil, David (1975). Discourse Intonation. University of Birmingham: English Language Research.
2. Brazil, David; Coulthard, Malcolm; Johns, Catherine (1980). Discourse intonation and language teaching. Longman.
3. Celce-Murcia, Marianne; Brinton, Donna M.; Goodwin, Janet M. (1996).
4. Couper-Kuhlen, Elizabeth (1986). An Introduction to English Prosody.
5. Cruttenden, Alan (1997) [1996]. Intonation (second ed.). Cambridge University.

