

Hallidayan influence on intonation

I first became aware of Halliday's work on intonation in the early 1970s following the publication of Halliday (1970), the "grey book", which formed a part of a new series of textbooks published by Oxford University Press under the title *A Course in Spoken English*. I was then a new member of staff in what was to eventually become the Centre for Language and Communication Research at Cardiff University. My first linguistics mentor was David Young (see Young 1980, 1984) who set the Centre's orientation towards systemic-functional linguistics, which was then firmly established with the arrival of Robin Fawcett and Gordon Tucker.

I learnt my phonetics both within the Centre (classic Daniel Jones tradition) and from the Summer Institute of Linguistics where I benefited from their strict training regime in articulatory phonetics and practical phonemic exercises, and was exposed to the ideas of Kenneth Pike ('particle', 'wave' and 'field'). I learnt there about the phonological hierarchy, and so was ready to accept Halliday's rank scales in phonology, crowned as it was with intonation.

What I appreciated with Halliday's approach was not only the way in which intonation was integrated with the rest of phonology, but also the way in which it was integrated with the rest of language – syntax and 'speech acts', as well as attitude. However, the main discovery for me was the concept of information structure – the semantics of intonation – which appeared to have escaped everybody else's notice, and the trio of subsystems, tonality, tonicity and tone. I felt that I was able to contribute the notion of information *status* (in tone) to Halliday's information *unit* (tonality) and intonation *focus* (tonicity).

My exposure to Pike led me to consider intonation beyond the clause complex, and I see intonation as contributing to phonological 'paragraphs' and to spoken genres. I believe that intonation has six main functions in English discourse with specific features operating at the following levels:

1. Genre identification (intonation as part of the prosodic composition of a genre)
2. Phonological paragraphing (height of onset in the pretonic, depth of fall)
3. Information structure (tonality, tonicity, tone)
4. Communicative intention/speech acts (tone in independent clauses)
5. Attitude (degree of pitch movement, the 'secondary' tones)
6. Syntax (tonality, tonicity, tone in disambiguating identically worded clauses)

Halliday's original description of English intonation (Halliday 1967) was based on a corpus of language data from the 1960s. Language changes, and intonation with it, and I have sought to incorporate two new patterns that have entered the standard British accent of the younger generation, the so-called "high rising terminal" which I think could be better designated the 'raised rising tone' (to distinguish it from Tone 2), and the mid level tone for routine listing.

My teaching experience with the Halliday model led me eventually to abandon the designation of tones by numbers in favour of iconic symbols; this certainly aided the incorporation of new patterns.

I look forward to co-operating with researchers on learners' acquisition of tonality contrasts in English. One thing that I think that needs to be included in further research is the matter of timing of the movement of pitch, eg the length of falls as well as the height of falls.

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