Chapter - IV
4.1 Introduction:

Intonation is the term used for the melody of speech, variations of pitch of the voice. The range of pitches used in the normal speech is definable in terms of frequencies (Cycles per second) but this range varies according to male and female and age group. During the normal adult male’s speech, the vocal cords vibrate between 80-120 times per second and between 150-200 times per second during the normal adult woman’s speech. Hence the pitch of the voice is determined by the frequency of vibration of the vocal cords. During the normal speech, constant variations are noticed in the levels at which the human voice is pitched since no language is spoken on the same musical note all the time. Pitch fluctuation, in its linguistic function, is called the melody of speech. Every language has speech melody in it. The pitch of
the voices rises, falls or it remains level, high or low and the voice-pitch variation produces tones

A syllable on which a pitch change takes place is usually marked with one of the following signs, depending upon the type of pitch change:

[ ` ] the pitch falls from very high to very low

(The tone is known a high fall )

[ \ ] the pitch falls from mid to very low

(The tone is known a low fall )

[ ' ] the pitch rises from very low to very high

(The tone is known high rise )

[ / ] the pitch rises from low to mid

(The tone is known low rise )

[ ' ] the pitch falls from about mid to low and then rises again to mid

(The tone is known fall-rise )

[ ^ ] the pitch rises from low to about mid and then falls again to low

(The tone is known rise fall )
An accented syllable can be spoken with a changing pitch (when it is marked with one of the several signs listed above, depending upon the type of pitch-change) or on a level pitch, high or low. A high level pitch is marked ['], i.e., with a vertical bar above and before the syllable. A low level pitch is marked ['], i.e., with a vertical bar below and before the syllable. Examples are given below.

(1) I’ve just bought a house. (The syllables just and bought are uttered with a high level pitch and the syllable house is said with a high falling tone.)

(2) I want you to do it (The syllable want is said on a high level pitch and do is said with a high falling tone.)

(3) Peter and Mack are friends (Peter and Mack are said on a high level pitch and friends with a low falling tone.)
(4) 'Pinky is a `tall girl (Pinky is said on a high level pitch and tall with a high falling tone and girl is a low level pitch)

(5) I 'trust you 'found her /weli (The syllables trust and found are uttered with a high level pitch and well with a low rising tone)

(6) ¿Can you 'come? (The syllable can is said on a low level pitch and come with a low rising tone)

(7) I 'Can you 'say `Snake ? (The syllables can and say are said on a high level pitch and snake with a high rising tone)

(8) Is the I'window `open ? (window is said on a high level pitch and open with a high rising tone)

(9) The I'window is `open (The syllable window is said on a high level pitch and open with a falling-rising tone)

(10) The I'baby is `cute (baby is said on a high level pitch and cute with a falling rising tone)
(11) 'He can come (The syllable he is pronounced with a high falling tone and come with a low rising tone)

(12) 'Open that window (The syllable open is said with high falling tone and window with a low rising tone)

(13) I 'met her 'last 'Sunday (The syllables met and last are uttered with a high level pitch and Sunday with a rising-falling tone)

(14) I 'saw it, four 'times (The syllable saw is said on a high level pitch and four on a low level pitch and times with a low falling tone)

4.2 English Intonation Pattern:

English intonation can be described in terms of

(a) Tonality, (b) Tonicity, (c) Tone

(a) Tonality: Long utterances are normally divided into small tone groups at the time of speaking and pauses may occur in the middle of an utterance. A tone group is the stretch of speech between any two pauses for
example, sentences like the following can be said without any pause in between and thus each of them forms a single tone group:

(1) I’m coming

(2) I’m coming to buy a house

(3) Daisy’s brother is teaching Physics

(4) I wish I were the President of America

(5) Can we go there?

(6) What a nice piece of shirt!

(7) Where are you going?

(8) All of us make mistakes

(9) Pass the water please

(10) We had a wonderful chance

The following sentences, on the other hand, will normally be divided into two groups. In other words, there will be one pause in the middle of each sentence. The pause is indicated by an oblique bar. A sentence may have one or more tone group(s). Examples are given below

(11) When you go out / close the door
(12) The President said, / let me thank all of you?

(13) If it rains, / come back in the house.

(14) In case you go to London, / please see my uncle

(15) Prices are coming down / in spite of recent floods

(16) When the cat is away / the mice play

(17) Because of the examiner’s illness / we had to postpone the viva

(18) If I had studied carefully, / I would not have failed

(19) With the money I have got / I can’t even buy a sandwich

(20) All those/ who have gone before you / have submitted to death.

Sentences 1-10 listed above have one group each and sentences 11-19 have two groups and sentence 20 has three tone groups. Each group is also known as breath group, because one needs to
pause in the middle of an utterance in order to breathe, hence the primary object in the division of an utterance is physiological. These groups are also called sense-groups since pauses cannot occur at arbitrarily chosen places and pauses have to be formed according to the meaning of the sentences so that the sense of the utterances is not lost.

Punctuation gives a clue to the division of an utterance into tone groups but is not always a sure guide. A full stop always indicates the end of a tone group and comma does it at times. Look at these examples:

If you go there, / you may get into trouble (a comma and signaling the end of a tone-group.)

Oh, there you are, Peter, / at last (a comma not signaling the end a tone group.)

(b) **Tonicity:** During the normal speech, choice of a syllable to initiate the pitch movement is the next step followed by the division of an utterance into tone group(s). In connected speech, normally content or
lexical words receive the accent and form or grammatical words do not receive the accent.

'Tom and 'Mary are 'friends

In this sentence, Tom, Mary and friends will receive the accent while and and are will not. This sentence cannot be divided into smaller groups. The whole sentence as one group, the speaker will have to decide on which of the three syllables Tom, Mary and friends to initiate the pitch movement. The syllable on which a pitch movement begins is called the nucleus of the tone group or the tonic syllable. Usually the choice of the nucleus will depend upon the meaning the speaker wishes to convey. Consider the following sentences

(1) 'Take the 'horse for a 'ride in the 'park

(park is the tonic syllable because it conveys the wish of the speaker, the speaker wants that the horse should be taken only to the park, nowhere else.)
(2) 'Take the 'horse for a `ride in the ,park.

(ride is the tonic syllable since the speaker insists that the other person should not make the horse run.)

(3) 'Take the `horse for a ride in the *park

(horse is the tonic syllable because the speaker wants to give special emphasis to the horse and he wants that only the horse, and not any other animal should be taken for a ride.)

In all the utterances of the sentence given above, all the content words are stressed and one of the content words, in each utterance, is made the tonic syllable by initiating a pitch movement. A form or grammatical word can also receive the primary stress or even the tonic accent if the context demands it. Examples:

(1) I 'want `you to win a *game (You is the tonic syllable. The speaker wishes the addressee, and not anyone else, to win a game.)
(2) I want you to win a game. (I is the tonic syllable. The speaker wants to emphasise that he, and no one else, is giving the order to the addressee)

Normally the last important syllable in a tone group is made the tonic syllable if the context does not demand a particular syllable to be made especially prominent. If the most important word in a tone group has more than one syllable, only that syllable of the word (which receives the primary stress when the word is said in isolation) can be made tonic syllable or nucleus in connected speech. Examples:

(1) This 'dress is `nice. (No special emphasis is required so the last prominent syllable is the nucleus.)

(2) This 'dress `is ,nice. (Special emphasis on is.)

(3) She is `always `making mis`takes. (No special emphasis.)
(4) She is always making mistakes (Special emphasis on always. It seems she is incapable of avoiding mistakes)

(5) 'Daisy likes cold-coffee (No special emphasis)

(6) 'Daisy likes cold-coffee (Special emphasis on likes. There is no question of Daisy's disliking cold-coffee)

(7) Daisy likes cold-coffee (Special emphasis on Daisy. It is Daisy who likes it, no one else)

(8) Will you 'please 'pass the 'salt? (No special emphasis)

(9) 'Don't 'go a 'way! (No special emphasis)

(10) 'How very an noying! (No special emphasis)

The first accented syllable in a tone group is known as the head. The syllable(s) preceding the first full stress of a tone, if any, constitute(s) the pre-head. The most prominent syllable in a tone group on which a pitch movement is initiated is defined as the nucleus. The syllables between the head and the
nucleus form the body of the tone group. The tone group may also have the tail if there are syllables after the syllable bearing the nucleus. Consider a few Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-head</th>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Body</th>
<th>Nucleus</th>
<th>Tail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It</td>
<td>'was</td>
<td>n’t what I</td>
<td>'need</td>
<td>ed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m</td>
<td>'going</td>
<td>to 'Paris to</td>
<td>'mor</td>
<td>row</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>'one</td>
<td>of the two</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>girls began to</td>
<td>`cry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>'Go</td>
<td>and 'get</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>him some</td>
<td>'Wa</td>
<td>ter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That</td>
<td>'car’s</td>
<td>very</td>
<td>'beau</td>
<td>tiful</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) **Tone:** Finally, after the division of a sentence (where necessary) into tone-groups and the choice of the tonic syllable/nucleus, a speaker needs to choose one of the various tones for tonic syllable discussed earlier (see 4 1). A stressed syllable can be uttered with a changing pitch and then it is said to have a
kinetic tone. Or it can be spoken on a level tone, high or low and this syllable is said to have a static tone.

4.3 **Functions of Intonation:**

English Intonation is different from the intonation of any other language. It is essential to learn the shapes and also the meanings of the English tones. Intonation can be used to convey information, which is not overtly expressed by the words in the utterances. For instance, *She's very pleasant* with a falling intonation means precisely what is said but the same sentence with a falling rising intonation probably means that she is not dependable although she may be pleasant. There is a chance of serious misunderstanding between the speaker and the listener (particularly when the listener does not share the linguistic background with the speaker) if a mistake is committed in the use of intonation. The meanings of English tones are important.

English Intonation serves the following Functions

A Grammatical and
B. Attitudinal

(A) **Grammatical Function:**

The listener can easily detect if a particular sentence is a statement or a question, a command or a request, with the help of intonation. Examples-

(i) She is arˈiving ˈlate

She is arˈiving ,late?

(ii) ˈOpen the ˈdoor.

ˈOpen the ,door.

The two utterances in each pair, given above, are different only in their intonation patterns, but they have obviously different meanings as sentences. The difference is not lexical but a grammatical one in meanings. The first utterance of the sentence No. 1 is a **statement** and the second utterance of the same sentence is a **question**. Similarly the first utterance of the sentence No. 2 is a **command** and the second utterance of the same sentence is a **request**. Hence the **falling tone** is used for **statements** and **commands**.
whereas rising tone is used for question and requests in the above examples

Even though intonation has to perform a grammatical function there are no hard and fast rules regarding the choice of a particular pitch pattern for a particular type of utterance. At this point, it is essential to realise what tones Indian undergraduates must learn to use in their English speech. It is not necessary for them to learn all the tones that native speakers of English use. It is sufficient if they learn the following tones and their use to make their English sound like English, at the national and International levels.

(a) **The Falling Tone** may be used in

(i) Ordinary Statements made with no emotional implications. Example

I’m ‘going to Delhi

(ii) Wh- Questions (i.e., questions starting with a question word such as, why, what which or how)
asked neutrally and sometimes in an unfriendly way. Examples.

'Where are you `going?'

'What are you `doing?'

(iii) Commands, Example

'Sit `down.

(iv) Exclamation, Example

'What a `beautiful flower'

(b) **The Rising Tone:** may be used in

(i) incomplete utterances, often the first of the two clauses in a complex sentence. Example

'When you /come here, (incomplete)/ I'll /get you What you `want (complete)

(ii) Yes/no questions (i.e., questions, which demand and answer yes or no)

Examples

'Are you /spinster ?

'Have they /come ?
Will she do it?

(iii) Wh- questions asked in a warm and friendly way Examples

’Why did you do it?

’What time is it?

’How’s Your brother?

(iv) Polite, requests and encouraging invitations Examples

’Sit down

’Open the door / ’shut the window

’Write a note

’Work hard.

(B) Attitudinal Function:

English intonation helps in discovering the mood or attitude of the speaker. The attitude conveyed by intonation needs to be interpreted within a given context. Some examples are given below to discuss some of the attitudes, which can be expressed by
different tones with respect to various types of sentences:

(1) **Falling Tone:**

(a) **Low-Fall:** This tone is associated with certain attitudes, like: detached, matter of fact, bored, uninterested, etc. Examples:

(When will you go to Paris?) Sunday [uninterested]

(Who is your examiner?) Jack (detached)

Your teacher was looking for you. (matter of fact)

When do you think she'll work? (bored, uninterested)

Is he coming?

Do you think so? (curt, exhibiting impatience.)

Is he coming

Can you sing a song? Showing no

Could you listen to her involvement)

(He is studying hard, isn't he? (expecting

(I am very tired, aren't we all? agreement)

Come and meet me at six. (expecting to be obeyed without any doubt).
'Good night (pleasant but a routine sort of greeting)

'How tragic! (board, even mildly sarcastic)

(b) **High Fall**: This tone is normally associated with certain attitudes like: expressing surprise, anger, disbelief agreement, greetings, etc. Examples:

'Why? 'How (Expressing, surprise, anger, disbelief)

'Why, can't you, study (anger, disbelief)

(She did not work hard) 'did she? (demanding)

(these toys are lovely,) 'aren't they? (agreement)

Open the 'door. (angry command)

Go a'way.

'Good 'morning (hearty greeting)

'What a 'beautiful 'view! (strong surprise)

(2) **Rising tone:**

(a) **Low Rise**: This tone is normally associated with grudging, encouraging, doubt, information, greetings. Examples.
No, perhaps (grudging, encouraging)

Cheer up (reassuring, encouraging).

It won't last long.

Who's that speaking? (polite enquiry)

Can he? (doubtful)

(She didn't attend the class,) did she? (asking for information)

(These are lovely flowers,) aren't they? (information)

Wait here (gentle command or request)

Give me your book (polite request)

Best of luck (Cheerful good wishes)

(b) High-Rise

This tone is normally associated with surprise, disbelief or eagerness. Examples are given below

'Present? ('Did you say present'?) or 'Do you want some present'?)

(expressing eagerness and enthusiasm)

'Candles? ('Did you really say candles'?)
(expressing disbelief or surprise)

'Jack ? ('Are you there, Jack ?' or 'Did you say Jack'?)

'She 'would? (expresssing surprise, disbelief)

'Is he a 'round ? (expressing eagerness)

(3) **Falling Rising Tone:**

The fall and rise may either occur within the same syllable or on different syllables. This tone usually indicates something not expressed or something implied in the utterance along with other attitudes. Examples:

(Do you go to club?) 'sometimes. (not frequently )

(Do you teach?) 'Now. (doubtful)

I 'met her at the 'theater. (reproaching she said she had to go to her school’)

The 'coffee was good (but the host wasn't willing to serve us).

'He 'can't (l'm almost sure he can.)
I'm happy to see you doing 'good (encouraging, sympathetic)

'When will you 'bring me some more 'magazines? (a polite rise on bring and mild insistence on when to know the exact time)

'Mind your 'language (strong but sympathetic warning)

(4) **Rising-Falling Tone:**

Just like the falling-rising tone, this tone is a combination of a rising and a falling tone. The rising-tone usually reinforces the meaning expressed by the following falling tone. The initial rising tone may also exhibit warmth, friendly attitude, anger or sarcasm.

Examples

(Do you believe it?) ^yes (enthusiastic agreement)

It was ^frightful (enthusiastic agreement)

But is her ^baby so ^cute?

(suspicious interest)

Are you ^sure she can ^sing?

(suspicious, mocking)
How wonderful. (sarcastic)

The above statements and examples prove that intonation has a grammatical and an attitudinal functions to play since it not only distinguishes between different types of sentences but also it conveys various attitudes of the speaker to the listener.