



Lecture 5

Intonation of the English language



Outline:

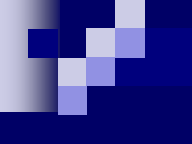
- ◇ The notion of intonation
- ◇ Two approaches to the intonation studies
- ◇ The unit of intonation
- ◇ Components of intonation: sentence-stress and rhythm



The notion of intonation

A. Gimson, R. Kingdon restrict the definition of intonation to pitch movement alone (+ sometimes variations of loudness).

D. Crystal: “The most important prosodic effects are those conveyed by the linguistic use of pitch movement, or melody”.



Russian linguists - intonation is a complex formed by significant variations of pitch, loudness and tempo closely related.

The fourth component - speech timbre which conveys certain shades of attitudinal or emotional meaning.

The unit of intonation

Speech is subdivided rhythmically into definite units (first considered as rhythmical, then as semantic or syntactic).



breath-group

дыхательная группа

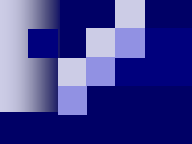
sense-group (syntagm)

смысловая группа

intonation group

речевой такт

звено



"Sense-group" calls attention to the principal peculiarity of the syntagm — a *syntagm* is a group of words that makes sense when put together (useful in practical teaching).

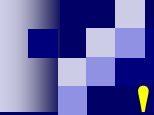
BUT!

"Syntagm" is preferable, for it is connected with a definite theory that influenced several branches of linguistics, and has many followers.



"**Breath-group**" is ambiguous => "breath-group" ≠ "sense-group" because

- 1) the words of a sense-group are joined together by sense, and not because they are followed by a new force of breath;
- 2) a sense-group (syntagm) is always distinguished in speech by intonation;
- 3) it can't be used to mean "a sequence of sense groups pronounced with one breath" because an actual pause does not necessarily indicate a sense-group in fluent speech.



"Intonation-group" is a unit in the actually realized division of a sentence into sense-groups => it is an actualized sense-group.

BUT!

The term "intonation group" reflects only one feature of the sense-group and suggests neither the semantic nor the syntactic functions of the sense group.



The Syntagm Theory

The 30s of the 20th c. (L. V. Shcherba, A. M. Peshkovsky, V. V. Vinogradov) - an attempt to discover the syntactic and semantic nature of the sense-group => ***the syntagm theory.***

The term "syntagm" used by I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay and by Ferdinand de Saussure has nothing in common with L. V. Shcherba's theory.

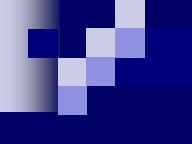
I.A. Baudouin de Courtenay

"syntagm" is 'a word' used in a sentence (in contrast to a word taken separately as a system of its forms - "a lexical unit", "a lexeme").

e. g. *to go, goes, went, gone, going* — is a lexeme; the verb *to go* in '*I often go there*' is a syntagm.

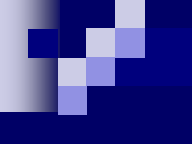
Ferdinand de Saussure

"syntagm" is two successive morphemes or two elements of a compound word or a noun with its attribute or a sentence.



L. V. Scerba's syntagm theory is based upon the syntactic and semantic relations of words which are expressed phonetically.

"**Syntagm** is a phonetic entity, which expresses a semantic entity in the process of speaking (and thinking), and which may consist either of one rhythmical group or of a number of such groups."



A syntagm is distinguished by a strengthening of the last stress, as well as by a certain typical intonation => *syntagms are bearers of intonation.*

The principal functions of syntagms:
semantic and *syntactic* <= the meaning of two sentences depends entirely on the syntagmatic division.

"One of the travelers," says Mr. Michael Collins, "was calm."

'wʌn əv ðə 'trævləz
ʃ 'sez | 'mɪstə 'maɪkl
ʃ 'kɒlɪnz | wəz ʃ 'kɑ:m...

'wʌn əv ðə ʃ 'trævləz |
(ʃ)sez (ʃ)mɪstə (ʃ)maɪkl
ʃ(ʃ)kɒlɪnz | wəz ʃ 'kɑ:m...

One of the travellers says that it was Mr. M. Collins who was quite calm.

a complex sentence

Mr. M. Collins states that one of the travellers was quite calm during the event.

a compound sentence



Incorrect syntagmatic division helps understand the important role of pitch-patterns and syntagms.

Compare: *He would 'have his 'coffee and \roll in the morning*

= a person usually had breakfast consisting of some coffee and a roll.

He would 'have his /coffee | and \roll in the morning


= a person was in the habit of having his coffee in the morning, and then he would roll.



Components of intonation: sentence-stress and rhythm

Daniel Jones: "The relative stress of the words in a sentence depends on their relative importance."

Roger Kingdon: "Sentence-stress is the relative degree of force given to the various words in a sentence."



G. P. Torsuyev: sentence-stress is based on four principles: *musical, dynamic, quantitative* and *qualitative*; word-stress is based on three principles.

- *The dynamic principle* - there are four degrees of stress: *emphatic, primary, subsidiary stress*, and *unstressing*;
- *the qualitative principle* - either words may have no sentence-stress, or the quality of the vowel may change. Compare: *many* [e] - *How many* [ə] *flowers did he bring?*
- *the quantitative principle* is expressed by the length variations of phonemes.


Functional types of sentence-stress

syntactic

logical

emphatic

- *Syntactic stress* organizes the sentence phonetically, renders the meaning clear, emphasizes the notional elements of speech.
- *Logical stress* brings into prominence a word in a syntagm important from the point of view of meaning or of the speaker's attitude.
- *Emphatic stress* is used to express the speaker's emotions or to suggest some shade of meaning which is not expressed in words.



Sentence-stress makes use of the emphatic degree of stress which is expressed partly by pitch variations, partly by the following methods:

- Glottal stop: *It was 'utterly im'possible!*
[ɪt wəz 'ʔʌtəlɪ ɪm'pɔsɪbl]
- Modifications of stress: *˘No! ˘Absolutely 'nothing. ˘Im"possible!*
- Specially distinct articulation of words, syllable by syllable, as in *˘Abso'lutely!*
[ˈæb-sə-ˈlu:-tlɪ].



Musical principle is expressed

- (1) in the pitch-patterns that are used in final stressed elements of syntagms;
- (2) in the variations of pitch among the stressed elements within the same syntagm.

The quantitative principle mostly concerns consonants – they are lengthened for the sake of emphasis, especially sonorants (except [w] and [j]):

Marvellous! ['m:a:vləs]

How late you are! [hau "l:eit ju a:]




The principles of distribution of sentence-stress
in a syntagm vary in different languages.


Compare:

*О́гненно-красное со́лнце опу́скалось
за —высо́кий холми́стый бе́рег реки́, |
и —уже потяну́ло души́стой прохла́дой.*

*'Once upon a 'time | 'two poor 'woodcutters |
were 'going 'home through a 'great 'pine-
forest.*

Form words attach to the notional words either as *proclitics* (in preposition) or as *enclitics* (in post-position).

The peculiarity of English rhythm: unstressed syllables tend to cling to the preceding stressed syllables as enclitics forming a usual rhythm pattern:  ;

or to the following stressed syllable as proclitics  (initial unstressed syllables).