

Phonetics and phonology:  
2. Prosody (revision)  
Part II: Intonation (cont'd)

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1. Tones in monosyllabic utterances  
(cont'd)

Utterance: a continuous piece of speech  
beginning and ending with a clear pause

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Exercise

- Mark the tone used in the recording.

1. .... yes
2. .... some
3. .... why
4. .... two
5. .... no
6. .... red
7. .... please
8. .... yes
9. .... no
10. .... wet

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Roach (1991) 3

Exercise

- Mark the tone used in the recording.

- |                                            |         |
|--------------------------------------------|---------|
| Hello, is that 661071?                     | ,yes    |
| Do you know any scientists?                | ,some   |
| Keep away from that road!                  | ,why    |
| How many dogs have you got?                | ,two    |
| Have you ever heard such a terrible thing? | ,no     |
| What colour is your car?                   | ,red    |
| Do you want my plate?                      | ,please |
| Don't you like it?                         | ,yes    |
| You haven't seen my watch, have you?       | ,no     |
| What was the weather like?                 | ,wet    |

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### 3. Structure of longer utterances

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## Components

- Tones: rise, fall, fall-rise, rise-fall, level ...
- Tonicity: placement of the nucleus (nuclear tone)
- Tonality: how to segment into intonation phrases?

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## Nucleus and intonation phrase

- Not all syllables bear a tone.
- Only nucleus (tonic syllable) bears a **nuclear tone**.
- There is a nucleus in each **intonation phrase** (tone unit).

### 3.1. Structure of intonation phrase

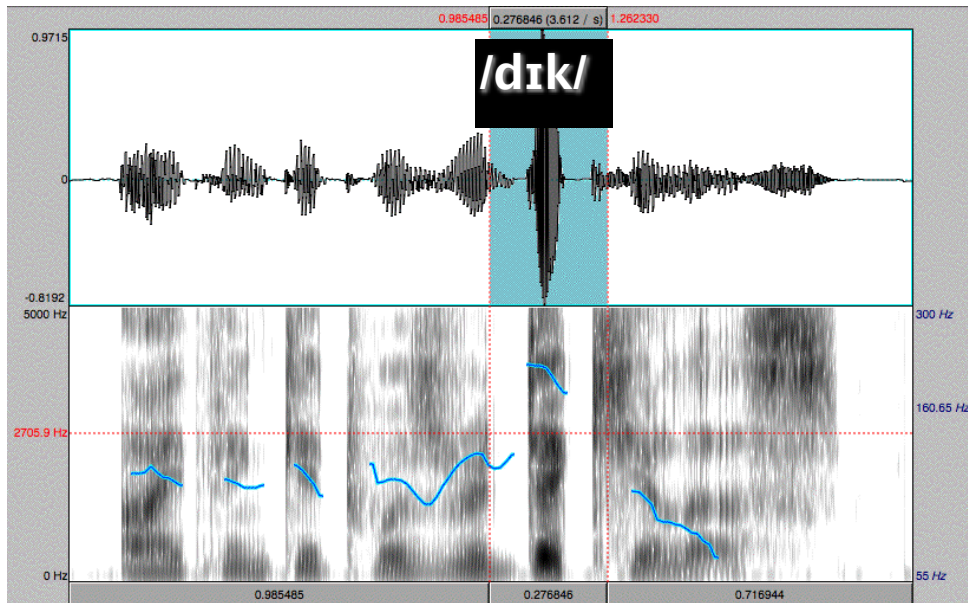
# Nucleus

- The nucleus is an obligatory component.
- It indicates the end of the focused part of the intonation phrase.
- The pitch change or pitch movement for the nuclear tone (fall, rise, etc.) begins.

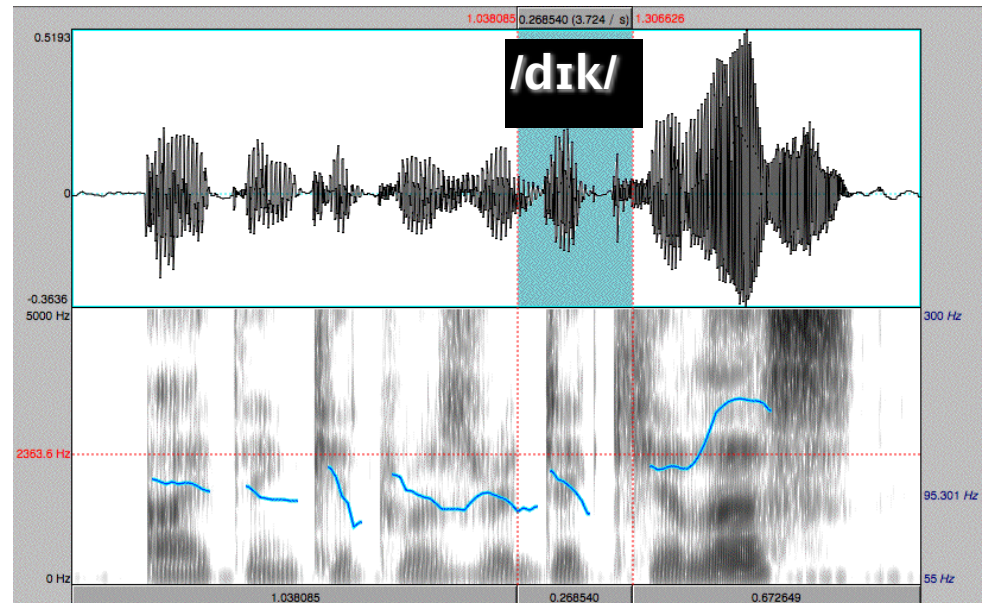
# Nucleus

- In monosyllabic utterances, the only syllable (*yes*, *no*) is the nucleus.
- Fall:            \ yes            \ no
- Rise:            / yes            / no
- Fall-rise:      v yes            v no
- Rise-fall:      ^ yes            ^ no
- Level:           \_ yes            \_ no

## Nucleus: pitch movement in longer utterances



## Nucleus: pitch movement in longer utterances



## Head

- \ those
- 'give me \ those
- those is the nucleus in the two utterances.
- In the second, the rest is called the **head**.
- A head is all that part of an intonation phrase that extends from the first stressed syllable up to (but not including) the nucleus.

## Head

- \ those  
Nucleus
- 'give me \ those  
Head Nucleus
- 'Billy 'called to 'give me \ those  
Head Nucleus
- in an \ hour -> **no head**  
Nucleus


## Pre-head

- in an \ hour  
Nucleus
- The **pre-head** is composed of all the unstressed syllables in an intonation phrase preceding the first stressed syllable.

## Pre-head: two cases

- in an \ hour  
Pre-head Nucleus
- i) When there is no head (i.e. no stressed syllable precedes the nucleus). \_\_\_\_\_
- in a 'little 'less than an \ hour  
Pre-head Head Nucleus
- ii) When there is a head.

## Tail

- look at it  

- It often happens that some syllables follow the nucleus.
- Any syllables between the nucleus and the end of the intonation phrase are called the **tail**.

## Structure of intonation phrase: summary



- (prehead) (head) nucleus (tail)

## Structure of intonation phrase: summary



- Identify and locate the components:

- It was re'markably good

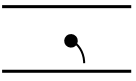
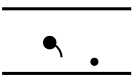

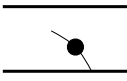
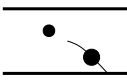
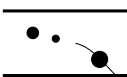


- We're 'planning to 'fly to Italy

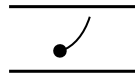
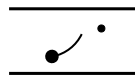

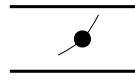
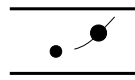
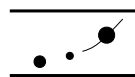


## 3.2. Pitch patterns in nucleus and tail

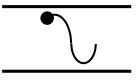
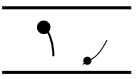

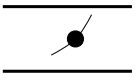
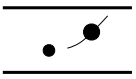

## Fall

- John 
  - Mary 
  - Jonathan 
- Compare (fr):
  - Jean 
  - Marie 
  - Jonathan 

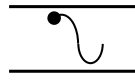
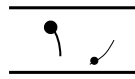

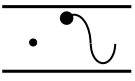


## Rise

- John 
  - Mary 
  - Jonathan 
- Compare (fr):
  - Jean 
  - Marie 
  - Jonathan 

## Fall-rise

- John 
  - Mary 
  - Jonathan 
- Compare (fr):
  - Jean 
  - Marie 
  - Jonathan 

## Fall-rise: some more examples

- true 
  - nearly 
  - happily 
- today 
  - I think so 
  - regrettably 

## 4. 'Tonicity': where does the nucleus go?

## The last content word

- Basically, the stressed syllable of the **last content word** in the intonation phrase

- It was re'markably \\_good



- We're 'planning to 'fly to \\_Italy



## Reminder: function words and content words

- **Function words** (grammatical words): pronouns, articles, auxiliary verbs, modal verbs, prepositions, conjunctions, some adverbs.
- **Closed** class words (the number is limited; basically, you cannot invent new function words)
- **Content words** (lexical words): nouns, adjectives, most verbs, most adverbs).
- **Open** class words (not possible to know the exact number of nouns in a language, for example. New words may be readily formed)

cf. Some content words may become function words in language change ("go": movement, future or intention "be going to")

## The last content word

- Basically, the stressed syllable of the **last content word** in the intonation phrase.

- I re'ceived a \\_letter from him



- 'What are you \\_looking at?



## Compounds

- Note the word stress of **compounds**.

- Is 'that my library book?



- I've 'lost my credit cards



## Compounds

- Compare the two answers:

- A: 'What's the ad dress?

- B: Gower Street.



- B: Vic'toria Drive.



## Old and new information

- We accent **new** information but **not old** information.
- That is, we **deaccent** (= remove potential accent from) **old information** (= something already mentioned).
- If all the information in the utterance is new, the nucleus is placed (as expected) on the last lexical item.

## Old and new information

- Compare the examples:
- A: Yes madam?
- B: I'd 'like a (' )gin and tonic.



- A: How about a gin and tonic?

- B: Oh I'd pre'fer a vodka and tonic.

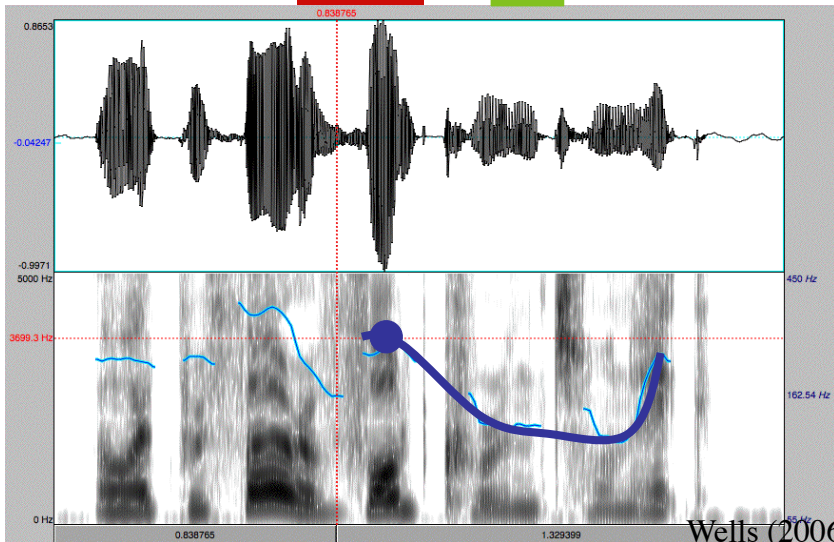




## Old and new information

- Oh I'd pre'fer a wodka and tonic.

Nucleus Tail



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## Old and new information

- A: 'Shall we have the (')beef curry?
- B: \ No, | 'let's have the prawn curry.

Nucleus Tail

- A: \ So, | you must be rich then.
- B: \ Well, | quite rich I guess.

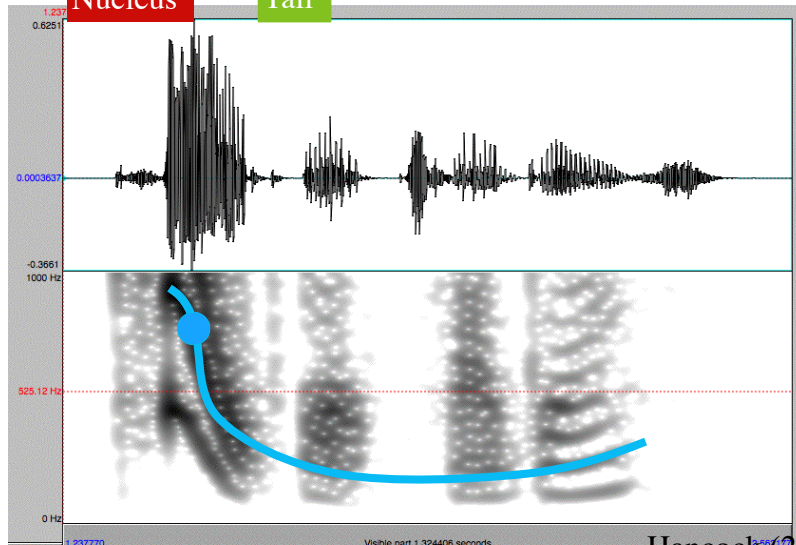
Nucleus Tail

Wells (2006), Hancock (2003) 34

## Old and new information

- quite rich I guess.

Nucleus Tail



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## Focus

- Focus: the concentration of attention on a particular part of the message.
- **Broad** focus: the whole message is brought into focus.
- **Narrow** focus: one part of the message is selectively focused.
- Focus **domain**: the part of the intonation phrase that is placed in focus.
- The nucleus marks the **end** of a focus domain.

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## Focus

- **Broad** focus: the nucleus goes on the last lexical item: .
- A: 'What happened?
- B: Se'lena's had a heat attack.
  
- **Narrow** focus: the nucleus shows the end of the focus domain.
- A: 'Who brought the wine?
- B: Mary brought the wine.

## Contrastive focus

- A particular kind of narrow focus is **contrastive** focus.
- The nuclear accent draws attention to a contrast the speaker is making.
  
- A: We 'bought it before Christmas.
- B: 'Not before Christmas, | after Christmas.

## Focus

- The place of the nucleus varies depending on the pragmatic context (= what is focused).
- She was trying to lose **'weight**.  
(broad focus, neutral; or not lose money)
- She was trying to **'lose** weight.  
(not gain weight)
- She was **'try**ing to lose weight.  
(though without much success)
- She **'was** trying to lose weight.  
(despite what you say; or but she isn't now)
- **'She** was trying to lose weight.  
(though others may not have been)

## Intonation: summary

- Tones: fall, rise, fall-rise, rise-fall, level
- The nucleus bears a tone.
- The pitch changes start on the nucleus; rise and fall-rise extends to the end of the intonation phrase.
- Placement of the nucleus: basically, the stressed syllable of the last content word. It may vary depending on the focus (and other elements).