

Date: 25.12.2023



Syllabus - Teaching Program for the Course

Intonation and Meaning

Masha Esipova | Department of English Literature and Linguistics

Course No 37551-01

Course Type: course

Scope of credits: _____

Year of study: _____

Semester: _____

Day & Time: _____

Reception Time: _____

Lecturer Email: _____

Moodle Site: _____



Course description and learning goals

Course Abstract

In this class, we will learn how intonational tunes are structured and how they combine with strings of words to convey a variety of meanings. This course thus provides the students with a basic background for reading papers and conducting research on intonationally expressed meaning. Sample topics covered include intonationally marked focus and givenness, intonation in exclamatives and non-canonical questions, intonation in requests and suggestions, intonationally expressed social meaning.

Learning objectives

1. During the first, shorter part of the course, the students will learn the basic principles of the Autosegmental-Metrical model of intonational phonology and how to measure and transcribe intonational tones and prosodic structure of English utterances using the ToBI (Tones and Break Indices) transcription system. They will also be prepared to understand similar transcription systems for other languages.
2. During the second part of the course, the students will learn how to apply the tools above to describe and analyze specific cases of intonationally expressed meaning.



Course structure (subject to change)

Week No.	Lesson topic	Readings
1-3	Introduction. Basic principles of the AM model of intonational phonology. ToBI (Tones and Break Indices) and similar transcription systems for other languages.	Required: Ladd 2008, ch. 1-3 (parts); Beckman & Ayers 1997
4	Meaning of English intonation: overview.	Required: Pierrehumbert & Hirschberg 1990
5-6	Focus and focus sensitivity; givenness; semantics-prosody mismatches in focus marking.	Optional: Beaver & Clark 2008, ch. 1 & 2; Ahn et al. 2021
7-8	Intonation in exclamatives and non-canonical questions.	Optional: Esipova 2021
9	Intonation in requests and suggestions.	Optional: Jeong 2018; Rudin 2018
10	Intonation and social meaning (focus on sex, gender, and sexuality).	Optional: Zimman 2018
11	Bonus topic (time permitting): visual prosody in editing. Review and wrap-up.	Optional: Esipova 2023

Note on the course format

By default, **the classes will be held in hybrid format (in person + on Zoom)**, but please contact the instructor in advance if you expect to be joining over Zoom with a brief justification. The classes will also be recorded, and the recordings will be made available to the students. Look out for additional announcements about the format of individual classes. Please contact the instructor if you need an alternative participation format.

Lab component: most, if not all classes are going to have a lab component, so **bring a laptop or tablet to class, if you can.**



Formative Assessment

Description of the product	Weight in the final score
Homework assignments	Must be submitted, but not graded (will be discussed in class; in some cases, answer keys/model answers will be provided for self-assessment)
ToBI homework assignment	30% of final grade
Take-home exam	70% of final grade



Final grade

ToBI homework assignment: 30%

Take-home exam: 70%



Course requirements

Attendance: you can miss two classes without an explanation. Additional absences require justification for a passing grade. Zoom attendance counts as regular attendance, as long as you inform the instructor that you will be joining over Zoom and remain active throughout the session. Please contact the instructor if you need more flexibility.

Ungraded homework assignments: 80% must be submitted for a passing grade. Please contact the instructor if you need more flexibility.

Collaboration policy

You're allowed—and encouraged—to collaborate on ungraded assignments, but (i) each of the collaborators must still submit their copy of the assignment on Lamda, even if it's exactly the same as their collaborators'; (ii) you must always indicate all you collaborators.

Collaboration on graded assignments is not allowed.

Plagiarism policy

Any instance of plagiarism in your assignments (graded or ungraded) will immediately result in you failing this course and will be reported to the administration. Please consult the department's guidelines on what constitutes plagiarism:

https://english.biu.ac.il/sites/english/files/shared/what_is_plagiarism_biu_english_literature_and_linguistics.pdf

If you use generative AI (such as ChatGPT) to assist you in your assignments, you should properly report doing so by submitting a full record of your prompts and the AI's outputs. Failure to do so will be treated as an instance of plagiarism.



Prerequisites

Course number	Course name
37-289	Semantics
OR	
37-987	Introduction to Syntax and Semantics



Bibliography: Up-to-date reading, viewing, and listening content items

The readings will be made available to the students electronically.

Required:

- Beckman, Mary E. & Gayle Ayers. 1997. Guidelines for ToBI labelling. Version 3.0. The Ohio State University Research Foundation.
- Ladd, D Robert. 2008. *Intonational phonology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511808814> (Ch. 1-3)

- Pierrehumbert, Janet & Julia Bell Hirschberg. 1990. The meaning of intonational contours in the interpretation of discourse. In Philip R Cohen, Jerry Morgan & Martha E Pollack (eds.), *Intentions in communication*, 271–311. Cambridge: MIT Press. <https://doi.org/10.7916/D8KD24FP>

Optional:

- Ahn, Byron, Sunwoo Jeong & Craig Sailor. 2021. Systematic ‘stray’ focus stress in English? Apparently! In *Proceedings of West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 39*, To appear. <https://www.byronahn.com/pub/Ahn-Jeong-Sailor-WCCFL39.pdf>
- Beaver, David I & Brady Z Clark. 2008. *Sense and sensitivity: How focus determines meaning*. John Wiley & Sons. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444304176> (Ch. 1-2)
- Esipova, Maria. 2021. What I will tell you about “matrix” wh-“exclamatives”! In *Proceedings of West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 39*. To appear. <https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/006029>
- Esipova, Maria. 2023. Discontinuity as prosody: meaning and form of jump cuts on YouTube. *NYI Constellations* 1. <https://lingbuzz.net/lingbuzz/007423>
- Jeong, Sunwoo. 2018. Intonation and sentence type conventions: Two types of rising declaratives. *Journal of Semantics* 35(2). 305–356. <https://doi.org/10.1093/semant/ffy001>
- Jeong, Sunwoo & Cleo Condoravdi. 2017. Imperatives with the calling contour. In *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society (BLS 43)*, 185–209. <https://web.stanford.edu/~cleoc/bls-imperatives-calling-contour.pdf>
- Rudin, Deniz. 2018. Rising imperatives. In Sireemas Maspong, Brynhildur Stefánsdóttir, Katherine Blake & Forrest Davis (eds.), *Proceedings of Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 28*, 100–119. <https://doi.org/10.3765/salt.v28i0.4408>
- Zimman, Lal. 2018. Transgender voices: Insights on identity, embodiment, and the gender of the voice. *Language and Linguistics Compass* 12(8). e12284. <https://doi.org/10.1111/lnc3.12284>