Ling-J. Intonation and Meaning: Syllabus

V-NYI, Summer 2025

Up to date as of July 9, 2025

Time

Block 3: Fri/Wed/Mon; 12:00–1:20pm (NY), 7:00–8:20pm (SPb/Kyiv)

Instructor

Masha Esipova (['mɑʃə 'jesɪpəvə])
Lecturer (tenure-track) at Bar-Ilan University
Website: http://esipova.net
Email: maria.yesipova@gmail.com

Course description

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. Sample topics covered include intonation in canonical and non-canonical questions, intonation in requests and suggestions, intonation in exclamations, etc.

Course materials

All course materials will be added to the NYI website. Please do not share these materials with anyone outside NYI without the instructor's permission.

Readings

You are not obliged to do any readings for this course. However, the materials folder contains most of the readings that the classes will be based on, in case you want to gain a deeper understanding of a specific topic.

Pass/fail criteria

The main criteria for passing or failing this class are (i) attendance, and (ii) an assignment at the end of the course.

Schedule (subject to change)

Date	Topics	Readings (all optional!)
7/11	Intro. What is intonation? The basics of the Autosegmental-Metrical framework.	Ladd 2008, ch. 1–3
7/14	Intro to Praat. Brief overview of ToBI. Intonation in yes/no questions: overview.	Beckman & Ayers 1997; Esipova 2024a, sections 1–2
7/16	Rhetorical questions and polarity.	Biezma & Rawlins 2017
7/18	Question intonation beyond questions. Echo questions.	Rudin & Rudin 2022; Esipova 2024a, sections 3–7; Biezma et al. 2021
7/21	Exclamations.	Nouwen & Chernilovskaya 2015; Esipova 2024b
7/23	Spillover. Bonus (if we have time): beyond language: visual prosody in editing.	Esipova 2023

Bibliography

Beckman, Mary E. & Gayle Ayers. 1997. Guidelines for ToBI labelling. Version 3.0. The Ohio State University Research Foundation.

Biezma, María, Bettina Braun & Angela James. 2021. Prosody is adding what?: Echo questions are not a thing. In Nicole Dreier, Chloe Kwon, Thomas Darnell & John Starr (eds.), *Proceedings of the Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 31*, 241–261. doi: 10.3765/salt.v31i0.5084.

Biezma, María & Kyle Rawlins. 2017. Rhetorical questions: Severing questioning from asking. In Dan Burgdorf, Jacob Collard, Sireemas Maspong & Brynhildur Stefánsdóttir (eds.), *Proceedings of Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 27*, 302–322. doi:10.3765/salt.v27i0.4155.

Esipova, Maria. 2023. Discontinuity as prosody: Meaning and form of jump cuts on YouTube. *NYI Constellations* 1. https://lingbuzz.net/lingbuzz/007423.

Esipova, Maria. 2024a. Prosody across sentence types. In Yao Zhang, Fengyue (Lisa) Zhao, Youngdong Cho & Yifan Wu (eds.), *Proceedings of Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 34*, 68–87. doi:10.3765/pe3dtd58.

Esipova, Maria. 2024b. What I will tell you about "matrix" *wh*-"exclamatives"! In Robert Autry, Gabriela de la Cruz, Luis A. Irizarry Figueroa, Kristina Mihajlovic, Tianyi Ni, Ryan Smith & Heidi Harley (eds.), *Proceedings of West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 39*, 519–527. Somerville, MA, USA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project. https://www.lingref.com/cpp/wccfl/39/paper3668.pdf.

Ladd, D Robert. 2008. *Intonational phonology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511808814.

Nouwen, Rick & Anna Chernilovskaya. 2015. Two types of wh-exclamatives. *Linguistic variation* 15(2). 201–224. doi:10.1075/lv.15.2.03nou.

Rudin, Catherine & Deniz Rudin. 2022. On rising intonation in Balkan Slavic. *Journal of Slavic Linguistics (FASL 29 extra issue)* 30. 1–10. doi:10.1353/jsl.2022.a923073.