

THE TERMINOLOGY OF ENGLISH INTONATION

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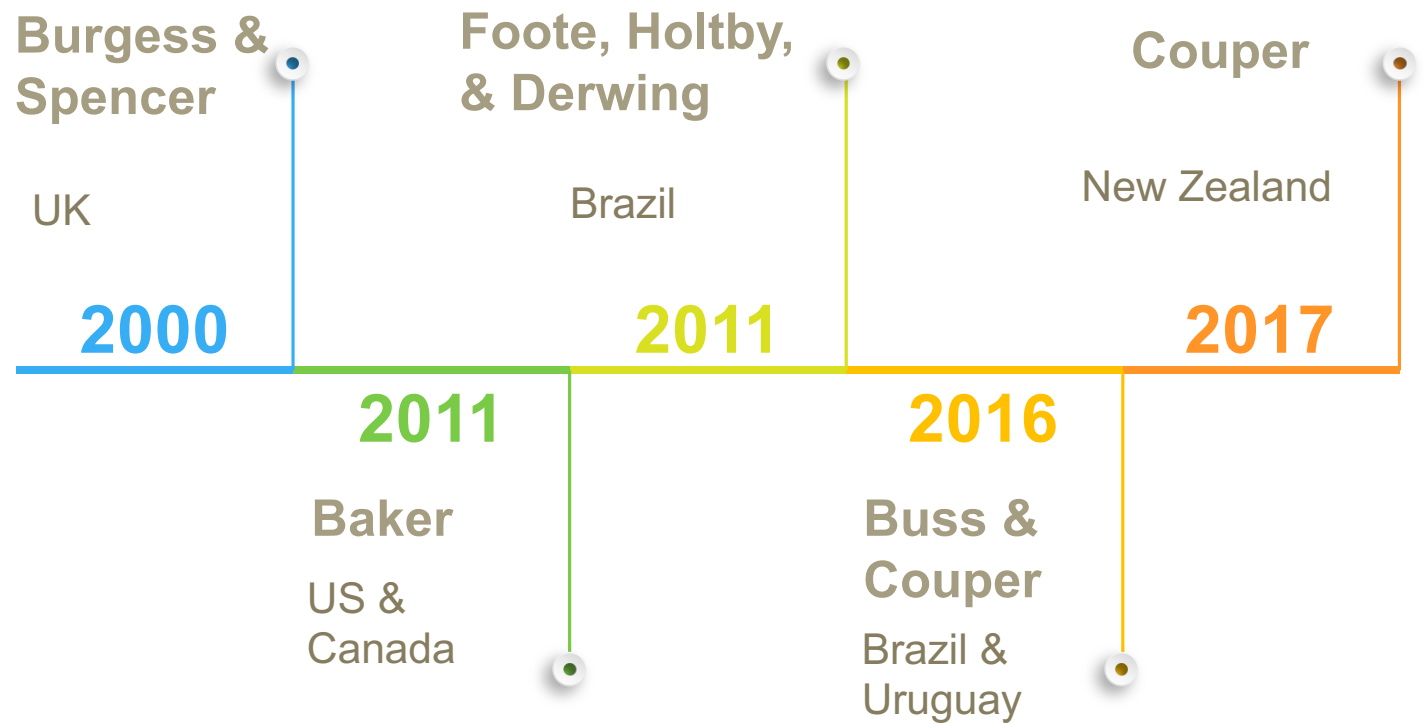
Di Liu

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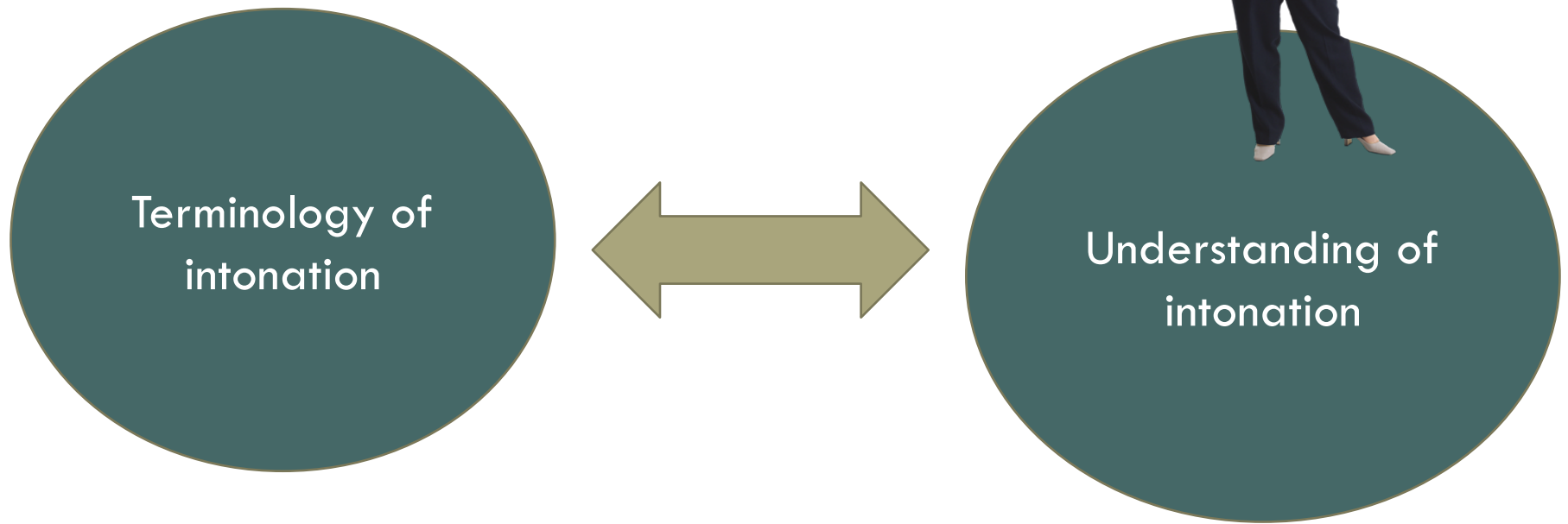
McGregor, A., Zielinski, B., Meyers, C., & Reed, M. (2016). An exploration of teaching intonation using a TED talk. In J. Levis & K. LeVelle (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 7th Annual Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching Conference, Oct. 2015* (pp. 143-157). Ames, IA: Iowa State University.

McGregor, A., Reed, M., Liu, B., Meyers, C., & Zielinski, B. (in preparation). *The impact of intonation terminology on teacher cognition and classroom practices.*

TEACHING INTONATION IS PROBLEMATIC...



LANGUAGE & KNOWLEDGE INTERFACE





PRESENTATION AIM...

The System of English Intonation

1. What is it, exactly?
2. How does it work?
3. Why am I still confused?



Every path to a new understanding
begins in confusion...

Mason Cooley

quizzify

DEFINITION OF INTONATION

“...how the pitch of the voice rises and falls, and how speakers use this pitch variation to convey linguistic and pragmatic meaning” (Wells, 2006, p. 1)

TERMINOLOGY

Pitch of the voice

Rise and falls (ups & downs)

Pitch variation



TERM: PITCH

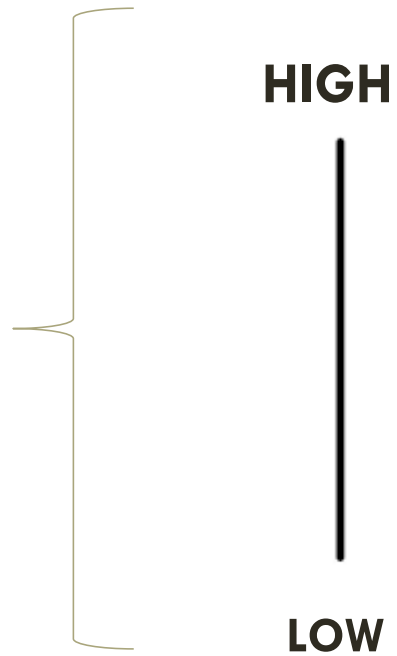
HIGH



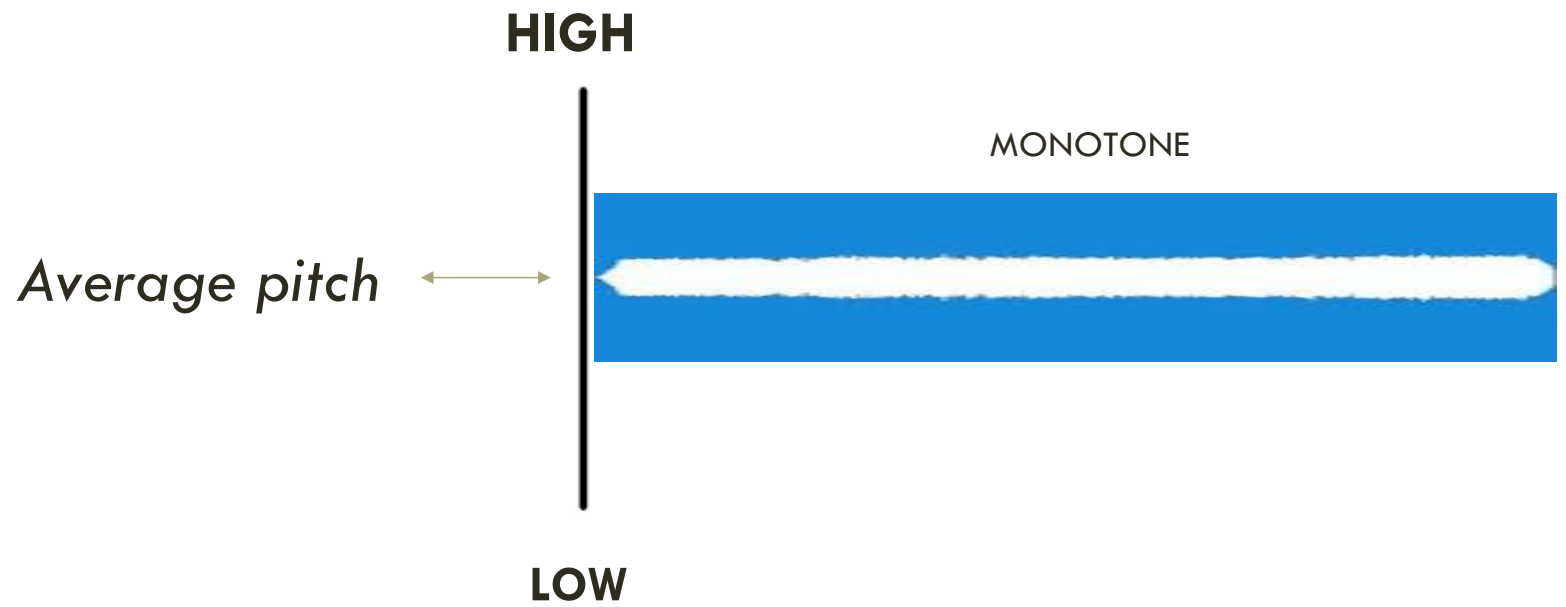
LOW

TERM: PITCH RANGE

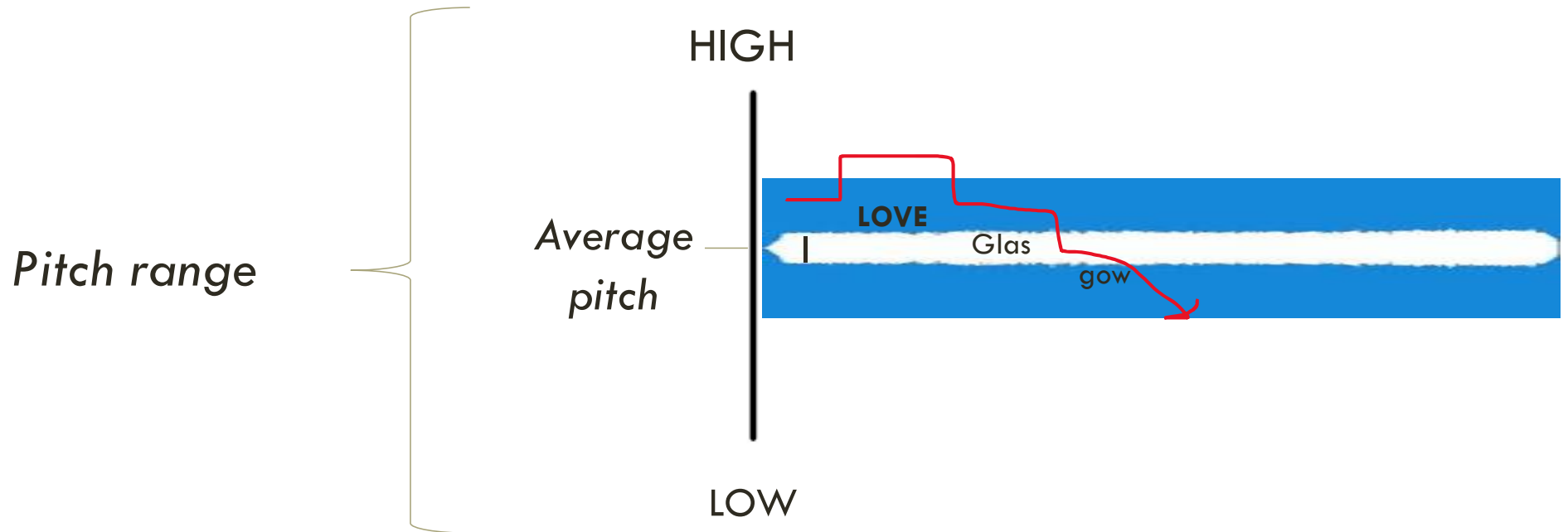
Pitch range



TERM: AVERAGE PITCH



TERM: PITCH VARIATION



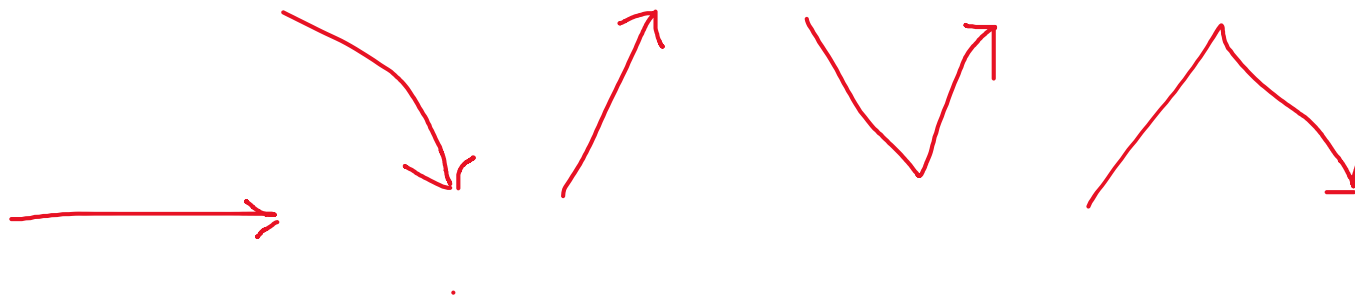
DEFINITION CONFUSION: INTONATION IS...

Unit of Analysis

TERM	NARROW Definition	BROAD Definition
Intonation	<p><i>Pitch patterns on a <u>syllable</u> (rise, fall, fall-rise, rise-fall) that encode meaning</i></p> <p>OR</p> <p><i>A pitch pattern across a <u>unit of speech</u> (question, statement..)</i></p>	<p><i>The <u>system that encodes meaning in English; made up of subsystems</u></i></p>

DEFINITION OF INTONATION: NARROW

Potential pitch
movements
on a syllable that
encode meaning

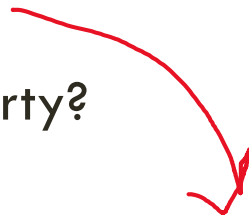


Hi

DEFINITION OF INTONATION: NARROW

Patterns of pitch
movement
on a unit of speech
that encode meaning

When's the party?



Are you going?



DEFINITION OF INTONATION: BROAD

The system that
encodes meaning in
English that is
made up of
subsystems

Gemma: Alison! How are you?

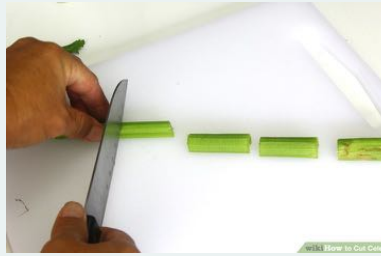
Alison: Great! I'm so happy to be here.
How are you?

Gemma: Things are going really well.



Definition: BROAD

The subsystems of intonation



1. Parsing



2. Prominence



3. Pitch Contour

1. PARSING (SEGMENTATION)

Words

Phrases

Simple sentences

Clauses

Paragraph



1. PARSING (SEGMENTATION)

Gemma: | Alison! | How ARE you? |

Alison: | Great! | I'm SO happy to be here. |
How are YOU? |

Gemma: | Things are going REALLY well. |

Breaks up
speech into
"sound bites"



1. PARSING (SEGMENTATION)



	PARSING
HOW (Characteristics)	<p>Pause; pause length matters (longer for period, shorter for comma); boundary tones</p> <p>Typically 1-7 syllables; (12-15 for advanced level)</p>

1. PARSING TERMINOLOGY

Pedagogical	chunks, pause thought groups speech unit, word groups, message unit
Scientific	intonational phrase, parsing intonation unit breath units, tone group
Approach-Specific	tonality tone unit pauses



2. PROMINENCE (HIGHLIGHTING)

Phrase-level stress

Sentence-level stress



2. PROMINENCE (HIGHLIGHTING)

Gemma: Alison! How ARE you?

Alison: Great! I'm SO happy to be here.
How are YOU?

Gemma: Things are going REALLY well.

*Highlight
information/meaning*




2. PROMINENCE (HIGHLIGHTING)



	PROMINENCE
HOW (Characteristics)	<p><u>Production:</u> (How do you make it?) Pitch change, duration/length, intensity</p> <p><u>Placement:</u> (Where do you put it?) Content words Highlight target information/meaning</p>

2. PROMINENCE TERMINOLOGY

Pedagogical	stressed syllable primary sentence stress focus focus word nuclear stress	
Scientific	prominence nucleus	
Approach-Specific	tonicity prominent syllables	

3. PITCH CONTOUR (MOVEMENT)

Syllable

Phrase

Sentences



3. PITCH CONTOUR (MOVEMENT)

Pitch movement
across a unit of
speech



3. PITCH CONTOUR



	PITCH CONTOUR
HOW (Characteristics)	Movement of pitch within English pitch range; pitch movements across the target syllable, phrase, sentence

3. PITCH CONTOUR TERMINOLOGY

Pedagogical	intonation intonation patterns (statement question intonation) melody, music
Scientific	pitch (fundamental frequency) intonation contour pitch contour
Approach-Specific	tone tone choice





**KEEP
CALM
AND
DON'T
FREAK
OUT**

**Why am I still
confused?**



TERM CONFUSION....

Word stress...?



Stress in a word, right???

Wait, no, that is syllable stress, ...because you stress the syllable.

So word stress must be the word you stress in a sentence.
Ok, I got this.

Wait, isn't that primary stress?

No, primary stress is the main emphasis in a word...isn't it?

Wait, how is word stress related to intonation anyway?

TERM CLARITY: “STRESS”

Unit of Analysis

Word stress...?

Syllable stress

Primary stress



	WORD Level	SENTENCE Level
Terms for phenomena	lexical stress word stress syllable stress	prominence focus phrasal stress nuclear stress primary (sentence) stress

TERM CONFUSION: "STRESS"

Unit of analysis

word stress...?

Syllable stress

Primary stress



	WORD Level	SENTENCE Level
Terms for phenomena	lexical stress word stress syllable stress	prominence focus phrasal stress nuclear stress primary (sentence) stress



TERM CONFUSION: "STRESS"

Unit of Analysis

Word stress...?

Syllable stress

Primary stress



	WORD Level	SENTENCE Level
Terms for phenomena	lexical stress word stress <i>syllable stress</i>	prominence focus phrasal stress nuclear stress <i>primary (sentence) stress</i>
Terms for characteristics	<i>primary stress</i> secondary stress	Stress content words

TERM CLARITY: CHARACTERISTICS OF “STRESS”

Stress...?



	WORD Level	SENTENCE Level
Terms for phenomena	lexical stress word stress <i>syllable stress</i>	prominence focus phrasal stress nuclear stress <i>primary</i> (sentence) <i>stress</i>
Terms for production characteristics	Pitch change, duration, intensity	Pitch change, duration, intensity

TERM CONFUSION: RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PHENOMENA

Word stress &
intonation...?



Wait, how is “word stress” related to intonation anyway?

Word stress
&
Prominence
(sentence-level stress)

TERM CLARITY: WORD STRESS & PROMINENCE

Relationship among Phenomena

“Word stresses are potential prominences”
(Cauldwell, 2018, p. 225).

Word

Stress

Potential

Prominences

“Word stresses are potential prominences.”

“WORD stresses are poTENTIAL prominences.”

TERM CONFUSION....

Intonation vs.
rhythm



10/26/19 PronSoc Glasgow, Scotland



MCGREGOR, A.

TERM CONFUSION: INTONATION VS. RHYTHM

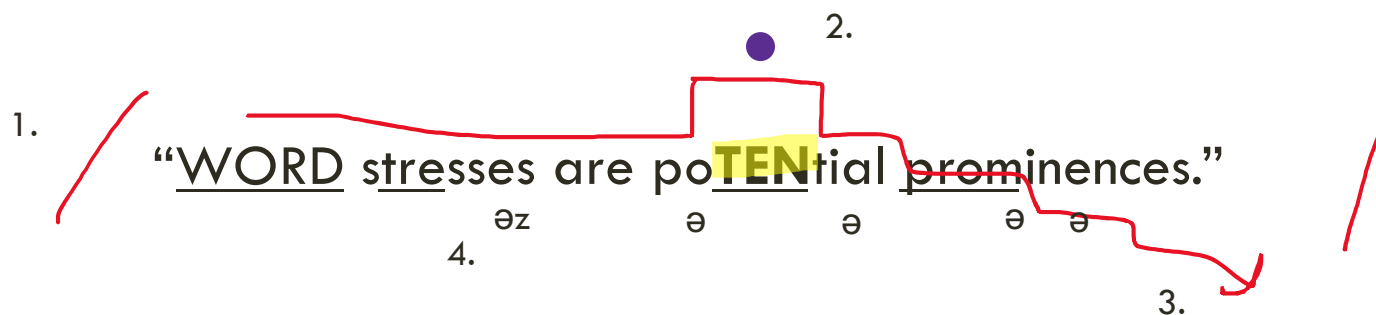
Unit of Analysis & Scope?

TERM	NARROW Definition	BROAD Definition
Rhythm	Timing (stressed/unstressed syllables)	The system of highlighting
Intonation	Pitch patterns on a syllable	The system of encoding meaning made of up subsystems

TERM CLARITY: INTONATION & RHYTHM

Relationship
among
Phenomena

“...rhythm is an inseparable part of intonation”
(Underhill, 2005, p. 76).





intonation

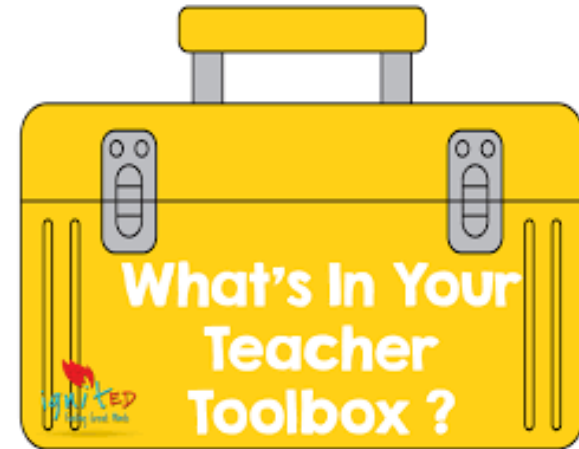
**When you think of “intonation,”
what comes to your mind?**

- ✓ What is it?
- ✓ How does it work?
- ✓ What am I still confused about?

intonation

“The more aware a teacher is of language and how it works, the better.”

Adapted from Wright & Bolitho (1993)



QUESTION & ANSWER

