

Teaching English Intonation with Discourse Approach

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1. Introduction

EFL (English as a foreign language) teaching/learning for communicative use has been drawing increasing attention at formal educational institutions in the last decade in Japan, where storing grammatical knowledge and acquiring reading and translating skills have long been extremely emphasised.

One obvious sign of this is that in 1989 the Ministry of Education began to require senior high schools to give students courses inoral communication' (Taniguchi 1998:17): this is the first time for the Ministry to refer to a communicative course in English. In 1999 they revised the guidelines to focus more on developing L2 communicative ability (Ministry of Education 1999:3-5) as shown in Appendix A.

Thus, educators and students are now eager to train in spoken phases of English and have a keen interest in improving their speaking ability, wishing to gain communicative skills. Alongside this tendency, they are beginning to feel the importance of intonation and seriously hope to acquire native-like competence of it. However, it seems that they are unaware of the close relationship between communication and intonation. Hence, they tend to teach/learn intonation to show off how well they can mimic sounds of L2 by uttering lists of words or reading aloud written texts. This unfavourable situation seems to be caused because EFL teachers/learners living outside English-speaking countries cannot see the linkage between spoken communication and uses of intonation. In this paper I aim to investigate how we can teach intonation for communicative use inside classrooms in non-English-speaking countries.

1.1 Aim of the research

To examine intonation in EFL teaching I will review the treatment of intonation in a coursebook, *Cambridge English for Schools 4ⁱ* (Littlejohn and Hicks 1998c, the title is abbreviated to CES4 hereafter), which I have used to teach my students, in comparison with discourse intonation. I will examine components and features of the discourse intonation system in detail in section 2. I will also look into *Pronunciation for Advanced Learners* (Brazil 1994a,b, the title is abbreviated to PALE hereafter) and *Pronunciation Tasks* (Hewings 1993a,b), which mainly deal with intonation. Through the investigation I will clarify my thesis that discourse intonation can be effective approach in EFL teaching.

1.2 Intended Students

My students to whom I refer in this paper are Japanese native speakers aged 18 to 20, who study at a junior college (a higher two-year educational institution). They have learned English for 6 -7 years under formal instruction and their English skills are estimated as being at a lower-intermediate level.

1.3 CES4

CES4 is a communicative coursebook that aims at lower-intermediate students. The course consists of a total of 32 units and 5 of them provide practice for intonation in the sections called 'Say it clearly!'. There are one or two target sentences for intonation practice in the student's book. Most of these target sentences are extracted from the texts for listening and reading comprehension activities in the same unit. Further exercises of the same kind are provided in the workbook. Considering the fact that the authors have provided so few sections for intonation practice and presented most of the exercises in the workbook, it can be said that CES4 places little emphasis on intonation.

As for the pronunciation teaching, the authors (1998e:148) say:

...good pronunciation is something which takes time to build up as there are many factors involved. Students need to hear a lot of English before they can develop a "feel" for the sounds of English.

Hence, it seems that the authors think students at this level should be more encouraged to assimilate the sounds of English inside themselves rather than to be trained analytically and systematically in this area as the discourse intonation approach does. I will investigate such analytic and systematic features of discourse intonation in section 2.

2. Discourse intonation approach

In this section I will discuss discourse intonation approach in detail.

2.1 Definition of intonation

There are various definitions about intonation. Cauldwell and Allen (1997:12) present general agreement of it by summing up the essentials stated by several experts as follows:

- (a) the form of intonation centres on pitch and variation on pitch.
- (b) there exists a system in intonation.
- (c) intonation has meaning, although the nature of that meaning is in dispute.

2.2 Intonation in EFL teaching

There are also various views concerning what is central to the function of intonation. Among them there are three views which can be useful in EFL teaching. The two traditional ways view intonation in terms of grammatical function and attitude/emotion; thus they are called the grammatical approach and the attitudinal approach (McCarthy 1991:106-109). Nonetheless, each has its own problems and I will examine

them in section 3 by taking examples from CES4. The third one has started to draw attention comparatively recently and is called the interactive approach, which views intonation in conjunction with its interactive role in discourse (McCarthy 1991:109). This label refers to the same approach as what Brazil termed discourse intonation (1978,1980 and 1985) as we will see in the next section. This approach seems to be currently the most convincing of the explanations among the three (McCarthy 1991:109).

2.3 Definition of discourse intonation

The discourse intonation approach was developed by David Brazil (1978,1980 and 1985). He studied intonation from the viewpoint of, and in relation to, spoken interaction exclusively. He investigated 'how intonation affects the communicative value of an English utterance' (1995:ix), how intonation functions and what meanings it bears in spoken interaction. Cauldwell and Allen (1997:10) summarise two important points in Brazil's theory:

First, Brazil sees speech as a purpose-driven activity in which speakers and hearers co-operate to reach 'target states' of shared understanding. The conditions governing spoken interaction ... mean that in their move towards that target state, speakers build their message bit by bit, in tone units. ... A second point of importance is that it is not speakers alone who use intonation. Brazil emphasises the interactive nature of spoken communication. Intonation signals play a key role in listening as well as speaking, as they signal a speaker's assumptions and intentions with regard to the shared ground between speaker and hearer.

2.3.1 Systems and choices in discourse intonation

Discourse intonation consists of four systems containing a total of thirteen choices, which can be summarised in the table below:

System	Choices
Prominence	prominent/non-prominent syllables (2)
Tone	rise-fall, fall, level, rise, fall-rise (5)
Key	high, mid, low (3)
Termination	high, mid, low (3) (Brazil 1995:vii)

In addition to the thirteen choices, there is a fundamental component called a tone unit in discourse intonation.

2.3.2 Meanings and functions of the 13 choices

Bradford (1998) compactly summarises the meanings and functions of the basic components of Brazil's intonation system as shown in the table below. Her simple

TONE UNIT

There is a division of natural speech which corresponds to the speaker's organisation of what is said into units of information. Each tone unit has a single pitch movement. There is no direct relationship between the tone unit and any grammatical discourse unit.

PROMINENT SYLLABLE

The tone unit will have, as a minimum requirement, one prominent syllable. It may have two, but very rarely more. The distribution of prominence is relative to the communicative value of the word (sometimes the syllable) at that point in the developing discourse. Thus, by assigning a prominent syllable to it, the speaker marks it as significant.

ONSET

The first prominent syllable of a tone unit.

TONIC SYLLABLE

The tonic syllable is the minimum element, the defining characteristic of the tone unit. It is the place where the major pitch movement begins, and marks the focal point of the message.

TONES

The pitch movement that begins at a tone syllable is called a tone. There are two broad classes of tones: those which finally fall (proclaiming), and which finally rise (referring). This binary system represents the main meaning contrast, each of the tones having a particular communicative value.

KEY

This system operates between successive tone units, and involves the varying of the pitch level beginning at the onset, compared to the preceding units. For any speaker there is a 'normal' pitch level, easily perceived by interlocutors, which Brazil calls 'mid'. The rising of this level is called High Key, the lowering of it Low Key.

(pp.9-10)

As for the key and termination, the former is the choice associated with the onset/ first prominent syllable and the latter is that associated with the tonic/last syllable (Brazil 1995:11).

2.4 Discourse intonation for EFL learners

Let us see how the theory and system of discourse intonation can contribute to EFL learning.

2.4.1 Intonation acquisition in L1 and L2

We have heard discouraging opinions such as the one by Roach (1991:135) concerning the difficulty in acquiring L2 intonation, stressing that L2 learners should follow the close process of L1 intonation acquisition². Nonetheless, since L1 acquisition highly depends on L1 intuition, adapting an artificial process of L1 intonation acquisition seems to be impossible after childhood.

Bradford (1998:2) tells about the relationship between native speaker's intuition and intonation patterns:

In speech of native speakers intonation is planned at a deeply subconscious level, the units and contours being mapped out in the speaker's mind before he/she decides which words he/she will use. Native speakers respond intuitively to the intonation used by other native speakers. Foreign learners may need to discuss this seemingly complex phenomenon, and we must, therefore, find some way of enabling the learner to capture the fleeting moment and analyse it.

The discourse approach enables EFL learners to obtain the L2 intonation system by teaching them how to take an analytic attitude towards phenomenon of intonation.

2.4.2 Discourse intonation and PALE

Criticising conventional opinions such as that of Roach (1991), Brazil states that simple exposure to L2 is not enough and without some experience in listening systematically to the sounds of speech, and without a consequent awareness of what to listen for, much of what learners hear tends to wash over them and have little effect upon what they do themselves (1994a:2).

To enable EFL students to listen systematically and grasp analytically how intonation sounds and works, Brazil presents a coursebook PALE (1994a,b) based on his discourse approach. He gives pseudo-real conversations and monologues, both of which seem to be created on the basis of the data he had collected, in the settings of spoken interactions. Thus each text can preserve authenticity and naturalness enough to be used for a discourse intonation approach, yet contain well-organised facets as a coursebook for foreign learners.

In section 3, I will discuss the merits of taking a discourse intonation approach in EFL teaching.

3. Merits of teaching discourse intonation

In this section I will argue about the merits of teaching discourse intonation in comparison with grammatical and attitudinal intonation approaches by taking examples from CES4 (1998c,d,e).

3.1 Manageability

As Hewings and Cauldwell point out (Brazil 1995:vii), the most advantageous point of discourse intonation approach over grammatical and attitudinal ones is its manageability. Since it is composed of a total of 13 choices, students can manage to memorise it in a certain period of training time to utilise it in both natural settings and classroom spoken activities.

3.2 Problems with grammatical and attitudinal approaches

Grammatical and attitudinal intonation approaches have been widely used in EFL teaching; nevertheless each has its own problems. The former focuses on a sentence's grammatical pattern and structure alone, though there are no one-to-one relationships between sentence-type and tone of intonation. (McCarthy 1991:107, Bradford 1998:9). Compared to the total of 13 choices in discourse intonation in attitudinal approaches students need to know a large number of attitudinal meanings conveyed in intonation (Hewings and Cauldwell 1995:vii). McCarthy criticises the latter approach by pointing out that attaching attitudinal/emotive labels to each tone is enormously messy and fruitless because almost any emotion can be accompanied by any tone contour as displaying a particular attitude or emotion (1991:107).

3.3 Grammatical intonation approach in CES4

Unit 3 of CES4 (1998c) provides intonation practice on yes/no questions. The target sentences presented in the student's book are extracted from a dialogue for listening and reading comprehension activities. However, the target sentences and the same type of exercises in the workbook are presented as isolated sentences without contexts.

3.3.1 Yes/no question

The target sentence in the intonation practice part in the student's book is

(1) Can you tell us about it? (1998c:13)

The authors instruct students that the intonation of yes/no questions usually goes up at the end (*ibid.*), putting an arrow from 'a' of *about* to 't' of *it* as I do with the dotted line just above the sentence. Namely, they instruct students to pronounce (1) using rising tone. Several similar sentence patterns are provided in the workbook and each is pronounced using rising tone on the audiotape. However, when we listen to the conversation version from which (1) is extracted, (1) is pronounced using falling tone.

3.3.2 Pseudo-real conversation

This conversation is an interview about racing pigeons between an interviewer and a man named Mick whose sport is racing pigeons, as shown in Appendix B. This dialogue is created and recorded as if the interview was done in a natural setting; thus we can see it as a pseudo-real conversation.

3.3.3 Falling tone in yes/no question

I put the number 2 to the sentence extracted from the conversation to distinguish it from the decontextualised one previously numbered 1.

(2) Can you tell us about it? (Littlejohn and Hicks 1998e:29)

Listening to the conversation on the audiotape, (2) is pronounced

(2a) // ↘ can you tell us aBOUT IT // ?³

The falling tone is used in the conversation. According to the tone choice of discourse intonation (Brazil 1994a:43), the speaker of (2), here the interviewer, uses the falling tone because she has got no advance knowledge about racing pigeons and everything Mick is going to tell will be new to both her and those who will hear/read the interview afterwards.

Suppose (2) is pronounced using rising tone as the authors instruct. (2) with rising tone sounds as if the interviewer has got a certain degree of knowledge about racing pigeons, and is going to control the whole interview by giving questions to Mick to check whether her understanding about racing pigeons is right or not. Moreover, choice of rising tone in (2) could be interpreted that the interviewer is stressing that she is to control the conversation as the dominant speaker (Brazil 1995:56) by using the tone at the very first question. In fact in the conversation it appears that the interviewer chooses to talk to Mick in a non-dominant-like manner (Brazil 1994a:56) for several reasons. One is that she rather wants to leave the flow and the content of the interview up to him because she does not have enough knowledge about racing pigeons to control the talk. Secondly, she refrains from taking a dominant role in order to make him talk as freely as possible, which eventually creates the friendly atmosphere we can hear throughout the interview.

3.3.4 Fall-rise tone in yes/no question

Another yes/no question in the same conversation is pronounced using fall-rise tone by the interviewer.

(3) But aren't all pigeons the same? (Littlejohn and Hicks 1998e:30)

(3a) // \ ↗ but AREN't all pigeons the SAME // ?

(3) is spoken in response to Mick's comment 'pigeons can be trained to fly back to where they live'. (ibid.) Thus, the fall-rise tone in (3) is used to 'make sure' (Brazil 1994a:43) whether her assumption that not all pigeons can fly back to where they live is right.

Through investigating (1) and (2), we have seen that there seems to be differences in tones when a sentence is spoken either in context or without a context. (3) clarifies that tone choice depends on the context. It ought to be emphasised that intonation matters only in spoken interaction; in other words, intonation plays no role in an isolated sentence which can affect nobody/nothing in reality. Hence, it can be said that a grammatical approach using isolated sentences does not fit in with real uses of intonation, while a discourse approach agrees more with the natural phenomenon of intonation.

3.4 Attitudinal approach in CES4

Let us look into the intonation practice in unit 28 of CES4 (1998c), where the authors instruct about intonation with an attitudinal approach concerning whether a speaker

utters a sentence enthusiastically or unenthusiastically. The intonation practice in this unit is to figure out whether each utterance is pronounced enthusiastically or unenthusiastically on the audiotape.

The following is the target sentence extracted from the text for reading and listening comprehension activities, which is supposed to be done prior to the intonation practice.

(4) We do so many different experiments. (Littlejohn and Hicks 1998c:113)

They put an arrow, which indicates to go up from *we* to the beginning of *many* and go down from the same point to the end, as I do with the dotted line, explaining that the speaker of (4) utters it with the voice going down from high to low because she is enthusiastic about what she is talking about. (ibid.)

3.4.1 Attitude/emotion and context

The text from which (4) is extracted is created as a school newspaper article written by a student reporter named Rita. She interviews a doctor about her experiment on sleep. In Rita's report what the doctor says to her is written in direct narration. So in the audiotape the descriptive part is spoken by a woman as Rita, while what the doctor said is spoken by another woman as the doctor. To continue the same type of practice as (4), the authors provide a short conversation composed of six pairs of questions and answers, which is based on Rita's report but not the conversation between her and the doctor.

Even though Rita's report and the short conversation are seemingly contextualised, as shown in Appendixes C and D respectively, one fatal point is that it is impossible to see the reason inside the texts why each speaker needs to be so enthusiastic. Looking through Rita's report, what the doctor tells her is rather a commonplace matter that many of us have already known about. In fact it seems funny to hear the doctor speaking about her experiment so enthusiastically. The doctor would explain more calmly about her current experiment and some well-known facts concerning it to Rita as a novice in this field in a natural setting similar to this. If the authors dare make the doctor speak enthusiastically, they need to interweave up-to-date facts about sleep into the texts. Likewise, the conversation in the workbook also appears to be too common to talk enthusiastically. There is almost no necessity to speak enthusiastically in terms of the context for the given topic of experiment on sleep.

3.4.2 Intonation and context

McCarthy says that it seems almost any emotion can be accompanied by any tone (1991:107), hence coursebook writers ought to interweave the necessity of speaking enthusiastically into the contexts if they dare instruct intonation according to an emotional/attitudinal approach. It is assumed that how people express attitudes and emotion is a complex combination of vocal cues, intonation, lexis, non-verbal behaviour and contextual factor. (McCarthy 1991:108), and Brazil stresses that every

aspect of pronunciation is related to the communicative context (1994b:4). Intonation plays a vital role in pronunciation; therefore, contexts should receive the primary focus in teaching/learning intonation.

Grammatical and attitudinal approaches do not explain or fit with real uses and functions of intonation because they ignore contextual factors. Discourse intonation emphasises communicative contexts and the interactive nature of spoken communication, and regards that intonation is central to spoken interaction (Cauldwell and Allen 1997:10). Thus, it can be said that the discourse intonation approach is far more convincing in EFL teaching/learning than grammatical and attitudinal ones.

4. Discourse intonation and lower-intermediate students

In this section I will discuss the problems in teaching discourse intonation to lower-intermediate students, and also some devices to utilise the approach for those at this level.

In my teaching to small groups of lower-intermediate students, I tried using unit 1 of PALE (1994a) and *Pronunciation Tasks* (Hewings 1993a, henceforth PT), part 6 of which is based on discourse intonation, as books mainly dealing with intonation alongside *Cambridge English for Schools 3* (Littlejohn and Hicks, 1998a, henceforth CES3) and 4 as our main coursebook⁴.

4.1 Learning with PALE

As for PALE, we took a longer time than we should have to go through part 1 of unit 1, largely due to the fact that the book's level was much higher than the students' ability at that time. Yet they were so concentrated on my explanation about the three basic components of discourse intonation, tone unit, prominent and tonic syllables, that they did fairly well with the exercises in part 1 of unit 1 of PALE.

On finishing the part, I tested how much they had understood those three basic components by having them mark tone unit boundaries, prominent and tonic syllables on a monologue from unit 28 of CES3⁵. They had already done most of the unit; thus they understood the background of the text without additional explanation. The speaker of the monologue reads it slower than they do in PALE. The students did almost perfectly with the test.

A little later on, we did a role play practice, in which each student had a role and read aloud her part. Although I asked them to remember and utilise the three components of discourse intonation, they only read it aloud in their own ways disregarding the instructions in PALE.

4.2 Learning with PT

Next, I used part 6 of PT to teach discourse intonation to another small group of lower-intermediate learners. This time we proceeded more quickly than the group with PALE because the exercises in PT were simple for them since the book aims at pre-

intermediate students. In part 6 of PT the author refers to three types of tones, falling, fall-rise and rising, as well as tone unit, prominent and tonic syllables.

One thing made clear in learning with PT is that the lower-intermediate students already have acquired unfavourable and awkward intonation so firmly that they have a lot of difficulty to reproduce patterns just as the speakers in the audiotape do, even when the sentences are so short. This problem occurred in many sentence patterns and rather significant frequency appeared when pronouncing yes/no questions. I will discuss this issue further in section 4.4, yet here I could mention that remedying intonation can be as hard as starting it from scratch. Then the second group also turned to CES4 and did a role play. This group did not utilise what they learned in PT either despite my telling them to do so. Thus, the two cases show that lower-intermediate students can relatively soon come to utilise the discourse intonation system as hearers, but have a lot of difficulty to use it as speakers.

4.2.2 Problem with PT

One reason why part 6 of PT did not work well may be that each short conversation and exercise in it lacks enough context needed in spoken interactions, although the author designs the exercises in relation to discourse intonation. We need to keep in mind Brazil's observation (1994b:4):

The emphasis is not upon pronouncing words, or even sentences. It is rather upon speaking language which is *carrying a message*, and doing so in some situation in which that message matters to both speaker and listener.

It seems that too short a conversation cannot fulfil the function of carrying a message enough to affect both speaker and listener even as a practice in a coursebook.

4.2.3 Students' understanding about theory

Hewings says to teachers that students do not necessarily need explanations of the background of the intonation exercises (1993b:63). He appears to have thought that explanations about discourse intonation should be beyond pre-intermediate learners' ability, worrying that it would end up confusing them rather than facilitating their command of intonation. Nevertheless, I would say from experience with my lower-intermediate students that when students are adults and young-adults at the levels of intermediate or higher, they could well understand the basis of Brazil's theory in simplified description like the one by Bradford (op.cit), which I presented in section 2.3.2. My students found it helpful to be told the background information to proceed with intonation practice based on Brazil's theory. It sometimes happens among adult learners at formal institutions that their understanding about basic English linguistics is better than their current skills of general English, especially aural-oral ones. Thus, it can be said that whether to explain a fundamental theory of a practice to students should depend on their intellectual capacity in a wider sense, not only their L2 skills.

4.3 When to start discourse intonation

It seems too early to start teaching discourse intonation to pre-intermediate learners because their skills and knowledge have not achieved the level where meaningful interactions can be produced and interpreted. Yet, it would seem to be too late to wait till they have reached an advanced level, even though Brazil tells us that those who have achieved an advanced level in written English are suitable to start using PALE (1994a:1). As I will examine in section 4.4 Japanese lower-intermediate EFL learners seem to have acquired seriously awkward intonation. Starting discourse intonation teaching may work well at intermediate level to both build a proper L2 intonation system and remedy awkwardness of students' existing intonation.

4.4 Difficult intonation pattern

Let us examine why Japanese EFL learners at a lower-intermediate level find it so difficult to pronounce short yes/no questions, using examples from PT:

(5)A: Do you want some grapes?

B: No, thanks. I don't like them.

(6)C: Does Pat know the answer?

D: I'll ask her. (Hewings 1993a:62)

Both (5) and (6) are pronounced using falling tone. As for (5), it ought to be falling tone to find out if B wants some grapes because we can see A does not know if B likes grapes or not till she hears B's answer. However, it seems both falling tone and fall-rise tone are possible in (6), judging from D's reply, because C can either find out new information about Pat by asking D, or check if her expectation of Pat's knowing the answer is right by questioning D. The vagueness of (6) might have happened because of the conversation's shortness and lack of sufficient context.

(5)and (6) are pronounced on the audiotape as

(5a) // ↘ do you want some GRAPES // ?

(6a) // ↘ does PAT know the ANswer // ?

The following are my students' pronunciations:

(5s) // ↘ do YOU WANT // ↗ some GRAPES // ?

(6s) // ↘ does PAT KNOW // ↗ the anSWER // ?

Two problems are revealed here. For one thing, they pronounce yes/no questions always using rising tone regardless of its function: finding out or making sure (Brazil 1994a:43). This is largely due to the grammatical intonation approach, which is much more frequently taken in Japan than attitudinal and discourse ones. In (6s) to make a rising tone at the end of the sentence, my students cannot help but put stress on the second syllable of answer and this is caused partly by their ignorance of stress and syllabification. Generally EFL teachers in Japan seldom teach pronunciation symbols and syllables, so students often do not know about them well even after several years of learning.

Another problem is that they have such a strong tendency to pronounce a sentence in accordance with grammatical structure. They divide each sentence into two

tone units while each should be pronounced as a single unit as in native speaker's utterances. Each of the first tone units of (5s) and (6s) is a clause in the interrogative mood composed of an auxiliary verb, a subject and a main verb (Sinclair 1990:196) and each of the second units is a direct object (Spears 1991:56). As for the first tone units, they seem to pronounce each clause of the interrogative mood to emphasise that they are uttering an interrogative; thus they put prominent and tonic syllables on subjects and main verbs. As for the second tone units, they seem to stress what are affected by the action indicated by the main verbs.

My students toiled to correct their pronunciation and some could still not pronounce intonation patterns like (5a) and (6a) after attempting to do so many times. This problem is caused mainly by the tradition of Japanese EFL teaching that puts much more weight on grammar than on any other aspects, while pronunciation has received the least consideration. This case seems to suggest to us that the discourse intonation approach should be given to intermediate students too in order not to make their problems irremediable, since intonation generally becomes quite hard to correct and remedy after spending years of learning.

4.5 Intonation for communicative use

One reason why pronunciation teaching has been regarded poorly in Japan can be that educators and teachers have not considered the phase of spoken communication in L2 learning enough. Many of them and even many students are seemingly interested in obtaining good pronunciation but only to pronounce sentences for demonstration, not to speak to interact with others.

The discourse intonation approach can raise students awareness about spoken interaction. Brazil (1994a:3) emphasises the communicative aspect of intonation as he refers to that feature in PALE as follows:

it [PALE] makes its first objective an increased awareness of how the intonation system of English is used. This can only be done if we assume that language is being used to communicate, for intonation is the means whereby we organise our language into patterns that fit the present communicative need.

Teachers ought to bear this point in mind in teaching intonation and also try hard to make it understood by their students.

4.6 Appropriate texts for intermediate learners

Finally let us think of what will be appropriate texts for intermediate students to learn discourse intonation.

It seems fairly effective to select pseudo-real conversations from a main coursebook like the interview about racing pigeons in unit 3 of CES4. By using texts with which students have been through as listening and reading comprehension activities, they can be familiar with contexts of interaction as well as vocabulary and grammatical aspect of the texts, as Brazil suggests (1994b:4). Thus they can concentrate on matters of intonation alone while listening to the audiotape.

Conversation style is better because students can hear how a spoken interaction proceeds. The quality of accompanying audiotapes is so vital that a teacher needs to examine both the text itself and the quality of the recording before using it for discourse intonation teaching. Communicative coursebooks often provide pseudo-real conversations, not in all the units but in many of them as CES4 does.

5 Conclusion

My lower-intermediate students showed great interest in grasping intonation analytically using discourse intonation system. It seemed to give them clues to follow a long conversation smoothly by letting them listen to the message tone unit by tone unit and grasp the essence of the talk from the prominence of the tone unit. Thus, discourse intonation surely contributes to effective training of intermediate students to become competent listeners.

What we have to think about next is how we can utilise the discourse intonation system to train students to become competent speakers. I suppose these problems could be solved by teaching them some basis of the theory of communicative use of intonation and devising effective activities in which they participate in real/pseudo-real spoken interaction using discourse intonation system, in order to make them realise that communication means exchanging messages with each other in a co-operative manner to enable each participant to reach shared understanding. Through this kind of practice we may enable students to understand only in such interactive contexts can intonation play its own significant role.

Notes

1. CES 4 consists of a student's book, a workbook, a teacher's book and a set of two audiotapes.
2. Roach (1991:135) considers that a foreign learner can acquire L2 intonation only by following the same process as a child does with its L1 intonation. Unless s/he is wholly exposed to an English-speaking environment and regularly converses with native speakers, s/he cannot obtain good competence in intonation.
3. Henceforth, in transcribing intonation patterns I use the symbols presented by Brazil (1994a,b): the tone unit boundary is indicated by two slashes '//', prominent syllables by capital letters, tonic syllables by capital letters with underline, falling tone by '\', fall-rise tone by '\↗', and rising tone by '↗'.
4. We were in the middle of advancing from levels 3 to 4 at that time.
5. To make the monologue suitable for my purpose, I retyped all the words in lower case letters and omitted all the punctuation marks in it. The original monologue and the retyped version are provided in Appendix E and F respectively.

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APPENDIX A: excerpt from the revised guidelines by the ministry of education (1999) I Basic policy on the revision

- (i) Foreign language teaching further emphasises developing students' communicative ability in practice from the viewpoint of enabling students to cooperate with people all over the world and to have cultural exchanges among nations briskly. For this aim, it is necessary to develop students' attitudes to briskly communicate with others and broaden their outlook on life and understand and respect different cultures through foreign language learning.
- (ii) Aiming to develop students' communicative ability in practice, the teacher should attempt to give lessons focusing on the real uses of the target language.
- (iii) Foreign language should be treated as a compulsory subject at junior and senior high schools from the standpoint regarding every student's need to acquire basic and practical ability to communicate using foreign language enough to have everyday conversation and exchange simple information to go along with the progress of current internationalisation. For this reason, English should be treated as a compulsory subject at junior high schools since the language is widely used as a communicative tool throughout the world.

II Specific items to be revised

At senior high schools

In teaching the target language connecting organically the four aspects of language activities (reading, writing, listening and speaking) based on the course at junior high school, the following are to be improved from the viewpoint of further filling the teaching which meets individual students' need, as well as developing communicative ability in practice.

- (i) The English courses consist of 'Oral communication I', 'Oral communication II', 'English I', 'English II', 'Reading' and 'Writing'.
- (ii) 'Oral communication I' is organised by emphasising spoken communication such as 'listening' and 'speaking', based on the course at junior high school. In this course activities such as simple role play, speech, discussion and exercises which can be the basis of these activities should be included to enable students to present their own opinions putting information and ideas in order and develop their ability to discuss and express themselves in English.
- (iii) 'Oral communication II' is organised to further develop communicative activities in spoken English such as 'listening' and 'speaking' based on 'Oral communication I'.
- (iv) 'English I' is aimed to further study items learned at junior high school and connect collectively and organically the four aspects of language learning, i.e., 'listening', 'speaking', 'reading' and 'writing', with communicative activities.

- (v) 'English II' is based on 'English I' to aim to further teach communicative activities.
- (vi) 'Reading' is aimed to develop students' ability in written communication such as reading English texts to quickly and properly grasp the information and writer's intention to suit various occasions and purposes.
- (vii) 'Writing' is aimed to develop student's ability in written communication such as conveying information and their own ideas properly by writing English texts to suite various occasions and purposes.
- (viii) Language activities, language materials, lesson materials and devices for teaching should be revised regarding each subject's aim, following the similar concepts at junior high school.
- (ix) Students must take 'Oral communication II' after completing 'Oral communication I', 'English II' after 'English I'. 'Reading' and 'Writing' should be taken after they complete 'Oral English I' or 'English I'.
- (x) As for other foreign languages besides English, the language course's organisation, content and teaching method should be flexibly treated, and the language should be encouraged to be learned with regard to local needs and each school's situation.

(from Ministry of Education *Guidelines for English/Foreign Language at Senior High Schools* 1999, pp.3-5) (trans. mine.)

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEWER: Mick, you have an unusual hobby. Can you tell us about it?

MICK: Yes, right. We race pigeons.

I: How do you do that?

M: Well, we take the pigeon a long way away from its home and then we see how long it takes for it to fly back. You know, pigeons can be trained to fly back to where they live.

I: But aren't all pigeons the same?

M: Oh no, no! You have to train them.

I: Train them?

M: Yes, that's right. First we take them a short way from home and let them fly back. We start with perhaps just a distance of 10 or 15 kilometres and then gradually increase it. Then we have competitions.

I: And how far do they fly in competitions?

M: Well, there are different competitions. National competitions can be about 800 kilometres but there are also international competitions of one and a half thousand kilometres or more.

I: One and a half thousand kilometres! That's a long way.

M: Yes, that's right. We have to be careful to give them the right feed, to maintain their energy and not make them fat. We also have to make sure that their wings and feathers are in a good condition.

I: This all sounds very complicated.

M: It is. It's a science as well as a hobby!

I: One last question, Mick. How long does it take a pigeon to fly one and a half thousand kilometres?

M: Well, that would take about two days. They usually fly at about 70 or 80 kilometres an hour, although some birds can fly at over 140 kilometres an hour.

I: That's fascinating, Mick.

(from Littlejohn and Hicks *Cambridge English for Schools Teacher's Book 4* 1998, pp.29-30)

APPENDIX C

Approximately one third of our life is spent asleep but when I started to think about sleep, I realised that my mind was completely blank. All I knew was that all creatures go to sleep at some point in 24 hours. To find out more, I went to spend a weekend with Dr Hernandez, director of the local Sleep Laboratory. I took a long list of questions to ask her.

First of all, I wanted to know why we sleep. Dr Hernandez said:

"Well, years ago we didn't really know, but recent science has shown that people who don't sleep enough soon get ill and often die." So it seems that when we sleep our bodies are being "repaired". She went on to say that a lot of natural chemicals come into our blood while we sleep and these can help cure minor illnesses such as colds.

I wondered if our bodies experience any other changes while sleep. Dr Hernandez replied:

"In some stages of sleep the heart rate and our breathing slow down but in other stages the opposite happens - the heart rate increases and our breathing becomes quite rapid. During the night our body temperature drops by one or two degrees too."

In the laboratory there were six volunteers fast asleep with wires attached to their heads. The wires were connected to a monitor. The monitor was measuring the brain's electrical activity and showed which of the four stages of sleep the volunteer were in.

I wanted to know what happened in the different stages. Dr Hernandez explained:

"After we have slept through the four stages - which takes about 40 minutes - we then go backwards through the stages again, four, three, two, one. Stage four is the deepest sleep. Each stage is deeper than the one before. Look now at the volunteer's eyes. Those rapid eye movements (REM) are telling us that they are dreaming. If we wake them up now they'll remember their dreams quite clearly."

Then it was my turn to be a volunteer. I started to listen to some instructions and ... yawn ... yawn ...

(from Littlejohn and Hicks *Cambridge English for Schools Student's Book 4* 1998, p.113)

APPENDIX D

1 A: So, it was a good holiday job?

B: Well, it was very interesting.

2 A: What was the food like?

B: Oh, I hadn't had that kind of food before.

3 A: So what did you have to do in the sleep lab?

B: Well, we had to try and do different kinds of puzzles.

4 A: You did puzzles all the time?

B: Yes, and sometimes we had discussions.

5 A: Didn't you get tired?

B: It was incredible after 48 hours without sleep.

6 A: Did you have to do anything else?

B: Oh, yes, lots of things.

(from Littlejohn and Hicks *Cambridge English for Schools Workbook 4* 1998, p.76)

APPENDIX E

Thank you for coming to visit. It's nice to know that so many people are still interested in me. I am pretty old now - nearly 5,000 years old.

I've had an interesting life but it hasn't always been easy. In the beginning I was a small circle and I was made of wood. In the winters, when there was a lot of snow and ice, my wood broke. Then people brought big stones from far away and made these big circles. That was much better.

But then there were wars, and soldiers started to climb and fight all over me. When the soldiers went away, farmers used to come in the night and take some of my small stones to build houses and walls for their fields.

A lot of people used to come here for picnics and they liked to climb on me and write their names on some of my stones. You can see the graffiti. They wrote some of the names with knives. That was very painful!

About fifty years ago, some men came and build a road right next to me. Then more and more cars and heavy lorries and coaches came - not 100 metres from some of my best stones! A lot of my stones started to fall off! I began to feel very old. The air became very dirty from the traffic fumes and my stones became very dirty. Some of them were almost black!

But now, I feel a bit stronger. Some people have come to try to repair me and look

after me. They have a fence all around me to keep me safe. I feel more protected now and I will last a few more years. It's been nice talking to you. Enjoy your visit.

(from Littlejohn and Hicks *Cambridge English for Schools Teacher's Book 3* 1998, p.106)

APPENDIX F

In this text all words are typed in lower case letter and all the punctuation marks are omitted to be used to mark tone unit boundaries and prominent and tonic syllables.

// thank you for coming to visit it's nice to know that so many people are still interested in me i am pretty old now nearly 5,000 years old i've had an interesting life but it hasn't always been easy in the beginning i was a small circle and i was made of wood in the winters when there was a lot of snow and ice my wood broke then people brought big stones from far away and made these big circles that was much better but then there were wars and soldiers started to climb and fight all over me when the soldiers went away farmers used to come in the night and take some of my small stones to build houses and walls for their fields a lot of people used to come here for picnics and they liked to climb on me and write their names on some of my stones you can see the graffiti they wrote some of the names with knives that was very painful about fifty years ago some men came and build a road right next to me then more and more cars and heavy lorries and coaches came not 100 metres from some of my best stones a lot of my stones started to fall off i began to feel very old the air became very dirty from the traffic fumes and my stones became very dirty some of them were almost black but now i feel a bit stronger some people have come to try to repair me and look after me they have a fence all around me to keep me safe i feel more protected now and i will last a few more years it's been nice talking to you enjoy your visit //

(from Littlejohn and Hicks *Cambridge English for Schools Teacher's Book 3* 1998, p.106)

[2000年10月25日 受付]