

# Theories of intonation

- **Historically: form based analysis**
- **England: 'impressionistic'.**
- **USA: instrumental**

- **More recently:**
- **Functional, discourse based approach.**
- **Role of intonation in natural communication**

● **More recently:**

● **Attempt to integrate impressionistic or auditory approaches to intonation with instrumental or acoustic approaches.**

# Approaches to intonation: Attitudinal

- O'Connor and Arnold (1961)
- Tone groups. A group of tones all conveying the same attitude on the part of the speaker

◎ **PROBLEM:**

◎ **REDUNDANCY**

◎ **Not one to one  
correspondence between  
tone group and specific  
meaning.**

◉ Insert picture from Chun here

## Grammatical approach

- Halliday: attempts to establish phonological categories in terms of meaningful grammatical contrasts.

● Choice of suprasegmentals is not only related to other grammatical choices (word order, use of verb tense or use of a negative morpheme).

◎ **BUT ALSO:**

◎ **Intonational choices  
constitute grammatical  
choices.**

◎ **E.g.: I'm GOing/ I'M going**

● **HALLIDAY RECOGNIZES**

● **5 significant tones**

# DISCOURSE INTONATION

- Brazil (1975)
- Concerned with function

◎ **Intonation**: 'a set of speaker options formulated without explicit reference to grammar (p.1-2)

- There is a small, finite number of functionally contrastive pitch configurations and each of these configurations has its own meaning.
- (not attitudinal or grammatical)

● **What is important for Brazil is the continuous assessment of discourse by the speaker**

**Choice of one  
intonation pattern over  
another to achieve  
cohesion and  
coherence in  
discourse**

⦿ i.e. the interactional  
significance of  
intonation.