

- 6 Some vowels are protected: they remain more or less constant wherever they occur. Others are unprotected: the sound a speaker actually makes can vary considerably from one occasion to another. The most common pronunciation of unprotected vowels is something like /ə/ or /ɪ/, but the reduction to these sounds comes about as a result of speakers not being very concerned about what sound they make: /ə/ and /ɪ/ are not, therefore, to be thought of as targets in the sense that other vowels are.
- 7 All words of more than one syllable have at least one protected vowel.
- 8 Monosyllables which are content words have protected vowels; those which are function words have unprotected vowels.

Listening for meaning

Both the chairperson's style of speech and the special procedures of the occasion may obscure the meaning for some students. The activity of sorting out the essential information conveyed in the speech will allow any problems of understanding to be dealt with before proceeding to pronunciation matters.

ANSWERS

The next meeting will be the Annual General Meeting (AGM). It will be necessary to elect a new secretary to replace Jane Parks, who is moving to Glasgow.

There will also be elections for some new committee members.

The society is getting into debt, so it will be necessary to increase subscriptions.

This evening's speaker is Dr Agnes Thomson.

She is a graduate of the university where the meeting is taking place.

She has an MA and a PhD from Harvard and has lectured at Hyderabad.

Her speciality is the work of Wittgenstein.

Tonight she is speaking on Wittgenstein and Feminism.

Listening to intonation

It may be necessary to discuss the role of chairperson, and also some of the conventions and vocabulary of this kind of event, before proceeding with this unit. Students will need to see that the chairperson's speech is not ordinary relaxed conversation. They may

need help to recognise the uncolloquial nature of much of it: to see, for instance, that the speaker is using set phrases like 'good evening one and all' and 'a good and spirited attendance' rather self-consciously and with mildly humorous intent. If something of the sense that the speech is a bit mannered and contrived is appreciated it will reinforce the point made in Task 5.1.

The part of the speech that is repeated on the cassette sounds like this:

// → ER // ↗ good Evening // → ER // ↗ good EVening to one and ALL // → WELcome // → TO // → OUR // ↗ FEBruary MEEting // → ERM // → and WELcome // → of COURSE to our // ↗ to our REGular // → MEMbers // → and a TTENders // → and SEveral FAces er // → i can SEE out there // → NOT // ↗ TOO familiar to ME //

5.1

The hesitations and the use of level tones are here associated with the speaker's preoccupation with his choice of words and with the organisation of his language in general: he is feeling his way forward and, from time to time, needs a moment to prepare what he is going to say next.

ANSWERS

2a // ↘ beFORE // ↗ i introduce tonight's SPEAker // → there's ER // ↘ ONE // ↗ important reMINder //

3a // ↘ NEXT month's // ↗ MEEting // → will BE // → OUR // ↘ ANNual GENeral meeting //

4a // → AND er // ↗ on that oCCAsion // → we're HOPing for // → a GOOD // → and SPIrited // ↗ a TTENdance //

It is worth stressing the similarity between the planning problems of a native speaker who is using a kind of English that differs from his or her 'normal speech' and those of the non-native speaker. Obviously, neither hesitation nor level tone needs to be taught! It should, however, be reassuring to the learner to understand that his or her own speech will almost certainly exhibit these features at least as frequently as does that of the native speaker, and for very similar

reasons. It is not helpful to set oneself impossibly high standards of 'fluency'.

5.2

The frequent use of rising tones remains a conspicuous feature of these extracts after they have been 'tidied up'. This needs to be explained. Firstly, virtually everything the chairperson says and does is part of the taken-for-granted routine of such meetings, so very little of it is proclaimed: one or other of the referring tones is appropriate. The next question is 'Which one?'

The chairperson takes part in the event as someone who has 'control of the conversation' in a rather obvious way. This provides us with a situation within which the special meaning of the rising tone can be appreciated. Students can be asked to suggest other events in which the understood rules of the game make one speaker dominant (e.g. the classroom lesson, the formal interview, etc.). It may be necessary to point out that 'dominance' here has none of the undesirable connotations of 'bossiness' that sometimes attach to the word.

ANSWERS

- 1a // ↗ JANE PARKS // → has SERVED us // ↘ MARvellously for //
→ i THINK it's about // ↘ THREE
YEARS // ↗ NOW //
- 2a // → she's LEAVING // → to TAKE up a post // ↗ in GLASgow //
↗ we wish her WELL //
- 3a // ↘ unFORTunately // ↗ toDAY // → our aTTENDance // → i can
SEE is // ↘ NOT as good // ↗ as Usual //
- 4a // ↗ JUST a few WORDS // → aBOUT // ↗ her BACKground //
- 5a // ↗ she's REcently reTURNED // ↗ TO US // → FROM a YEAR //
↘ in INdia //

5.3

This task is introduced here to show how dominant speakers can avoid using the rising tone when circumstances make this desirable. It is probably better not to go into greater detail than that provided in the explanation following the task. →

ANSWERS

// ✓ ALso // ↘ and THis is rather // ↗ a SAD note // ✓ er the TREASurer // ✓ TELLS me // ✓ that we must SERiously consider // → INcreasing // ↘ subSCRIPtions //

To try to explain, tone unit by tone unit, why one or other of the referring tones is used would require an immensely complicated account of the relationships between speaker and listener, and this would certainly not help the learner. The essential point is that, although either will often do equally well, there are some circumstances – to be dealt with later – when one is preferable to the other.

5.4 *three examples of dominant speakers*
Ask students to account for their choice of Intonation. Provide a context. Decide who the speaker is.

ANSWERS

- 1 // ↗ now you KNOW where the Office is // ↗ WHat i want you to DO // ↗ is to GO to the Office // ↘ and FIND SUsan // ↗ and ASK SUsan // ↘ for the KEY // ↘ to my ROOM // ↗ when you've GOT the KEY // ↗ GO to my ROOM // ↘ and LOOK in the CUPboard // ↗ and IN THERE // ↗ you'll find a ROUND TIN // ↘ with another KEY in it //
- 2 // ↗ THIS PERson i know // ↘ had JUST been SHOpping // → AND // ↗ she'd JUST FINished // → AND // ↗ she was LOAded up with PARcels // ↗ and STUFF she'd BOUght // → AND // ↗ EVERYTHING // → AND // ↗ she was GOing back to her CAR // ↗ IN the CAR park // → and she was GOing a CROSS // ↘ to where she'd LEFt it // ↗ and she SAW SOMEone // ↘ SITting // ↘ in the PASsenger seat // ↘ of her CAR //
- 3 // ↗ you COME out of the CAR park // ↘ and turn RIght // ↗ and AFTer you've gone a little WAY // ↘ you'll COME to a ROUNdabout // ↗ go ROUNd the ROUNdabout // ↘ and take the

SEcond EXit // ↗ NOT the FIRST // ↘ because THAT will take you into TOWN // ↗ take the SEcond EXit // ↗ and conTINue along THERE // ↗ for about a MILE //

Students will probably notice that, although the referring tones are predominantly of the rising kind in these three examples, the alternative fall-rise occurs from time to time. This kind of substitution may happen when they repeat them, though not necessarily in the same places. They should come to see that, provided the dominant stance is generally maintained, the occasional lapse into the more relaxed, non-dominant mode is allowable and sometimes desirable.

Time spent on this task, giving attention to prominence as well as to tone, will provide valuable revision and reinforcement of ground covered in earlier units.

5.5

This task gives further practice in perceiving and producing rising and fall-rise tones in contrasting situations.

ANSWERS

- 1 // ↗ our SPEAKER for this EVening // ↘ is doctor AGnes THOMson //
// ↗ toNIGHT'S SPEAKER's // ↘ AGnes THOMson //
- 2 // ↗ she TOOK her MAStEr's degree // ↗ and her DOctorate //
↘ at HARvard //
// ↗ she GOT her MAStEr's // ↗ and DOctorate // ↘ in the STATES //
- 3 // ↗ she's WELL KNOWN // ↘ for her WORK on WITTgenstein //
// ↗ she MADE her NAME // ↘ with some WORK on WITTgenstein //

The recorded versions of (4) and (5) are as follows:

- 4 // ↘ LADies and GENTlemen // ↗ our SPEAKER for this EVening //
↘ is doctor AGnes THOMson // ↗ she TOOK her MAStEr's

- degree // ↗ and her DOCTORATE // ↘ at HARVARD // ↗ and she's
WELL KNOWN // ↘ for her work on WITTGENSTEIN //
- 5A: // ↗ the MEETINGS // ↘ are PRETTY GOOD usually //
- B: // ↘ PERHAPS i should come ALONG some time //
- A: // ↗ well to NIGHT's speaker // ↘ is AGNES THOMSON //
- B: // ↗ i SEEM to have // ↘ HEARD of // ↗ HER // ↗ is SHE
BRITISH //
- A: // ↗ i THINK so // ↗ but she got her MASTER'S // ↗ and her
DOCTORATE // ↘ in the STATES //
- B: // ↘ WHAT does she TALK about //
- A: // ↗ well she MADE her NAME // ↘ with some WORK she did
on WITTGENSTEIN //

5.6

This task reactivates material already worked on in Unit 2 and requires that students see it from a different point of view. The possibility of there sometimes being conflicting views as to who is supposed to be in charge – as, for instance, in the case of a television interview – could well be raised here. The transcript of the conversation is as follows:

Mandy: // ↗ now LET me see if i've got it RIGHT // ↗ i need the
RIGHT hand LANE //

David: // ↗ YES // ↗ RIGHT hand LANE //

Mandy: // ↗ YES //

David: // ↗ BY the SHELL SERVICE station //

Mandy: // ↗ YES //

David: // ↗ COLLEGE LANE //

Mandy: // ↗ YES // ↗ PAST the TECHNICAL college //

David: // ↗ PAST the TECHNICAL college // ↗ PAST the PRIMARY
school //

Mandy: // ↗ YES //