Nonfinal Intonation

You have already learned about falling and rising intonation in ‘Final Intonation’ unit. This lesson introduces a new intonation pattern, the fall-rise. Fall-rise intonation has two important uses in English.

- It is used when speakers have reservations about what they are saying. So if a speaker says “I'd really enjoy going” with a fall-rise, it may sound like, “I'd really enjoy going, but I’m not sure I can”.

- The second use of fall-rise is to tell your listener that you are not finished speaking yet, that you have more to say. Learning to hear and say fall-rise will help you in your ability to speak and understand English.

WARMUP

Part 1. As you listen to each of the four phrases in the conversation, think about what is intended. Tell whether the phrase is

- a statement of fact about the speaker;
- an invitation to the listener;
- an apology for giving an unexpected response.

A: 1I’m hungry. 2Are you?

B: 3Well, not really….4I just ate an apple.

Discuss your choice for each phrase with the rest of the class
**Part 2.** Now listen to the conversation again, paying attention to the intonation of each phrase. There are three intonations in this dialogue, fall, rise, and a new one (other). Circle the intonation you hear for each line.

A: I’m hungry. 
  fall  rise  other

Are you? 
  fall  rise  other

B: Well, not really...
  fall  rise  other

I just ate an apple. 
  fall  rise  other
Nonfinal Intonation

- In ‘Final Intonation’ chapter, you learned about the fall and rise intonations. Another important intonation is the fall-rise.
- In the fall-rise, the melody falls incompletely (a short fall) after the pitch jump. It may also have a small rise at the end of the short fall.
- Unlike the “fall” intonation, which drops to a lower pitch and has a sense of completion, the “fall-rise” feels unfinished, as if there is more to be said.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Rise</th>
<th>Fall-rise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m</td>
<td>hungry.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well, not really</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Essentials A—Learning to hear fall-rise intonation

Exercise 1

Each word in the following pairs will be said with a Fall, Rise, or Fall-Rise intonation. Tell whether the two words in each pair have the same or different intonation. Circle same or different.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ready</th>
<th>ready</th>
<th>same</th>
<th>different</th>
<th>maybe</th>
<th>maybe</th>
<th>same</th>
<th>different</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hungry</td>
<td>hungry</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>different</td>
<td>almost</td>
<td>almost</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tired</td>
<td>tired</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>different</td>
<td>bored</td>
<td>bored</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>happy</td>
<td>happy</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>different</td>
<td>sure</td>
<td>sure</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>different</td>
<td>perhaps</td>
<td>perhaps</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soon</td>
<td>soon</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>different</td>
<td>excited</td>
<td>excited</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>different</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Exercise 2**  
Circle the intonation you hear for each word. In the first column choose either Fall or Fall-Rise. In the second column choose either Rise or Fall-Rise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Intonation 1</th>
<th>Intonation 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ready</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Fall-Rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hungry</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Fall-Rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tired</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Fall-Rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>happy</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Fall-Rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Fall-Rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soon</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Fall-Rise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exercise 3**  
Circle the intonation you hear for each word, Fall, Rise, or Fall-Rise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Intonation 1</th>
<th>Intonation 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ready</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hungry</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Fall-rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tired</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Fall-rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>happy</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Fall-rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Fall-rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soon</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Fall-rise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nonfinal Intonation

Exercise 4  Say each of the phrases with the intonations above the phrases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Rise</th>
<th>Fall-rise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m hungry.</td>
<td>Difficult?</td>
<td>Sort of . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I thought so too.</td>
<td>Like it?</td>
<td>Well, not really . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s too sweet.</td>
<td>Are you?</td>
<td>It’s OK . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sure.</td>
<td>Can you help me?</td>
<td>Not now . . .</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How about later?

I just ate an apple.

Exercise 5  Pairs. Read each of the following conversations with the appropriate intonation from EXERCISE 4.

Conversation 1

A: I’m hungry. Are you? A: Difficult?
B: Well, not really . . . I just ate an apple. B: Sort of . . . Can you help me?
A: Not now . . . How about later?
B: Sure

Conversation 2

X: Like it?
Y: It’s OK . . . but it’s too sweet.
X: I thought so too.
Expressing uncertainty

Fall-rise is used to express uncertainty. One writer said of the fall-rise, “There’s a but about it.” This means that if you used fall-rise with a positive statement, you send a message that you are uncertain. For example, if you use a fall-rise to say

I’d really like to go

Your listener will understand you to mean

I’d really like to go, (but I can’t)

If you say the same thing with a falling intonation, your listener will hear

I’d really like to go (and I mean it)

Exercise 6 Say the expressions with fall-rise intonation to express uncertainty.

1. I’d love to help
6. That looks interesting.
2. That sounds like fun.
7. I have some time to do that.
3. I think I could come
8. I’m sure that’s fine.
4. The movie was pretty good
9. That’s a nice car.
5. I think 4:00 is a good time
10. I’ll be home soon.

Exercise 7 Fill in a but statement that could be implied by fall-rise intonation for each positive sentence. Then say the sentences aloud with fall-rise intonation on the first thought group and falling intonation on the second.

1. I’d love to help, but I’m not sure I can.
2. That sounds like fun, but ___________________.
3. I think I could come, but ___________________.

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4. The movie was pretty good, but ________________.
5. I think 4:00 is a good time but ________________.
6. That looks interesting, time but ________________.
7. I have some time to do that, time but ________________.
8. I’m sure that’s fine, but ________________.
9. That’s a nice car, but ________________.
10. I’ll be home soon, but ________________.
Nonfinal Intonation

Exercise 8  

*Branching dialogue. Pairs.* Have a conversation using the dialogue. You see only your sentences. Your partner sees only his/her sentences. Student 1 starts the dialogue. Student 2 chooses either of the two responses. Student 1 chooses the response that makes the most sense. Continue. The best responses depend on the use of fall-rise and fall intonation. Switch roles.

**STUDENT 1**

Jess: I have to move next weekend. Do you have time to help me?

Jun:

Jess: It sounds like you’re already busy. Could you come on Saturday?

Jun:

Jess: Well, if there’s a better time, we can change it (fall-rise).

If there’s a better time, we could change it (fall)

Jun:

Jess: OK. We can start at 9. I’ll have coffee ready.

It will have to be OK, I guess.

Jun:
Exercise 8  Branching dialogue. Pairs. Have a conversation using the dialogue. You see only your sentences. Your partner sees only his/her sentences. Student 1 starts the dialogue. Student 2 chooses either of the two responses. Student 1 chooses the response that makes the most sense. Continue. The best responses depend on the use of fall-rise and fall intonation. Switch roles.

STUDENT 2

Jess: I have to move next weekend. Do you have time to help me?

Jun: Hmmm. I’d love to (fall-rise)

    Hmmm. I’d love to (fall).

Jess:

Jun: Another friend asked me to be available this weekend. He didn’t tell me when.

That should be OK (fall-rise)

Jess:

Jun: I’ll see what I can do. I hope that’s OK.

    Actually, it would be better to do it earlier on Saturday.

Jess:

Jun: So I’ll see you around 9.

    Sorry. I’ll do my best, but I just can’t promise.

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Exercise 9  Role-play. Pairs. In your role play, remember to use intonation to signal uncertainty (fall-rise) and certainty (fall) in your responses, depending on what you want to communicate. Remember also to signal refusals with appropriate positive language such “I’d really like to” or “That sounds like it’s important”, etc.

STUDENT 1 ROLE CARDS

Role Play 1:  Read your information and think about what you might say to start. **Student 1** starts this role-play.

**Role-play 1: Student 1 (start role play)**

Your car has broken down and can’t be fixed for several days. You need to get to a doctor’s appointment tomorrow and need a ride, or even better to borrow someone else’s car. You ask your friend because you know he/she has a new car.

Role Play 2:  Read your information and think about what you might say to start. **Student 2** starts this role-play.

**Role-play 2: Student 1**

You have a big test tomorrow in a class you are having trouble with. You need to study a lot, and you are supposed to meet a classmate to study together. You were planning on just taking some food with you because you don’t have time to relax and eat a full meal.
Exercise 9  Role-play. Pairs. In your role-play, remember to use intonation to signal uncertainty (fall-rise) and certainty (fall) in your responses, depending on what you want to communicate. Remember also to signal refusals with appropriate positive language such “I’d really like to” or “That sounds like it’s important”, etc.

STUDENT 2 ROLE CARDS

Role Play 1: Read your information and think about what you might say to start. **Student 1** starts this role-play.

Role-play 1: Student 2

You are really busy all day tomorrow with classes and important meetings. You can’t take any new appointments. You won’t let anyone drive your new car because you’re afraid it might get damaged.

Role Play 2: Read your information and think about what you might say to start. **Student 2** starts this role-play.

Student 2 (start role play)

You want to go out to eat to celebrate a good grade on a test. You’re even willing to pay for your friend. You know your friend has a test tomorrow, and is pretty anxious because it’s a hard class. But you really want to have company when you go out.
OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Record the expressions in Exercise 4 with their intonations. Then practice each short conversation in Exercise 5 until you can say them with their correct intonations. Then read and record each short conversation in Exercise 5.

Exercise 4

<table>
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<td>Can you help me?</td>
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How about later?

I just ate an apple.

Exercise 5

Conversation 1

A: I’m hungry. Are you?
B: Well, not really . . . I just ate an apple.

Conversation 2

X: Like it?
Y: It’s OK . . . but it’s too sweet.
X: I thought so too.

A: Difficult?
B: Sort of . . . Can you help me?
A: Not now . . . How about later?
B: Sure

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