

**Phonetic resources for agreeing and disagreeing in second assessments.**

Richard Ogden

*Department of Language & Linguistic Science, University of York*

*YORK YO10 5DD, England*

*rao1@york.ac.uk, <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/lang/research/Phonetics/index.html>*

C	I'm going to Holland .h for my (.) .h holiday in Easter,=
P	=ah EXcellent=whereabouts in Holland?= =Amsterdam and I just do not wanna go
C	↑WHY.
P	1→ I just don't wanna go=it's gonna be (.) boring I think, 2→ no, it's gonna be really [good. ]
C	[↑it <u>is</u> ]n't, I'm tranna trade my (0.5) my ticket for my friend's cuckoo clock
P	hahahahahahahahahahah

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Assessments in the Conversation Analytic literature (Pomerantz 1984, Heritage 2002, Heritage & Raymond 2002)

Table 1. Linguistic resources for (dis-)agreement, Pomerantz (1984)

Agreement type	Linguistic form	Example
strong agreement	upgraded assessment term	<i>hot</i> → <i>boiling</i>
	modifier	<i>not bad</i> → <i>not bad at all</i>
'same' assessment	repeat of assessment term	<i>nice</i> → <i>nice</i>
	partial repeat but no assessment term	<i>that's nice</i> → <i>yes it is</i>

'downgraded' assessment	scaled-down or weakened assessment	<i>really nice</i> → <i>nice</i>
strong disagreement	antonym	<i>boring</i> → <i>really good</i>

Preferred turns (e.g. agreement)

- gap between first pair part and second pair part minimised
- agreement takes up whole turn
- agreement is indexed soon

Dispreferred turns (e.g. disagreement)

- disagreement delayed:
  - no immediately forthcoming talk
  - repair initiation
  - devices for delay, e.g. *well*, *uh*, etc.
- common format: [agree + disagree]; [agree] component done with 'same' or 'downgraded' assessment

### 1.2 Aims of this paper

- to explore the contribution made to meaning made by the systematic deployment of phonetic resources—alongside other levels of linguistic analysis—in assessment sequences.
- to consider the relationship between the action promoted by a turn at talk and its phonetic design.

## 2 Data

A collection of c.80 extracts from several sources amounting to approximately 40 hours of naturally-occurring talk:

- the CallHome corpus
- a corpus of material collected by students
- Night Owls, a radio phone-in show from Tyneside
- the Holt corpus
- collections of data known as “NB”, “SBL” and “Rahman”

In the data fragments, 2→ has an overt assessment term, e.g.:

A     1→     DP + {verb, copula} + assessment term  
B     2→     DP + {verb, copula} + assessment term

A     1→     I like sitting in the window.  
B     2→     Oh I hate it

This excludes very common pairs, e.g. (GTS : 4 : 15):

A 1→ he's terrific!  
 B 2→ he is.

Phonetic analysis concentrates on relation of 2→ to 1→.

### 3 Strong agreement

#### 3.1 Overall shape

- 2→ is a lexical upgrade of 1→
- Gap between 1→ and 2→ minimal.

#### 3.2 Data fragments

##### Fragment (1) smc/00.0907.german castle

B and there was one day when I had like work to do and stuff so  
 I said "right this is what you're doing todahahay"  
 showed them like in the guide book where it was  
 sent them off on their own=  
 A ="listen it's just south of here" [hehe  
 B [hehe .mmh  
 A "and if you take highway duh"  
 B 1→ it's supposed to be really really pretty;  
 A 2→ oh it's supposed to be g:orgeous.  
 crowds are supposed to be pretty  
 bad [°in the summer°]  
 B [yeah really] bad cos it's like one hundred percent  
 touristy

##### Fragment (2) nrb/01.irishman

K 1→ °I find that gu#y#, (.) really funny #no:w#,°=  
 J =°that Iris[h one°  
 K [f↑Irish guyf  
 J 2→ ↑he's ↑hila:riou[s  
 K [because I thought he was really (.) scary and  
 really like .hh ehm sort of set in his ways and  
 J [yeah ]  
 K [he's just in]terested isn't he he's like .h "well I was  
 r:reading about this"  
 and I'm like "((\* \* \*  
 [ \* \* \* \* ))"  
 J [but he's quite interested]  
 K yeah  
 J he is a bit frightening though I mean that black nail polish  
 K horrendous quite scary isn't

##### Fragment (3) Callhome 4610 290

B I'm in the Hamptons  
 A Eah  
 B E [I'm  
 A [which one

(0.5)  
 B ehm  
 (0.3)  
 B actually I'm in Amagansett [which is] between Bridgehampton=  
 [(click) ]  
 B =and Easthampton I guess  
 A 1→ it sounds enormously po[sh]  
 B [pt]  
 A 2→ it'[s ] it's superposh here I am going from Santa Fe to =  
 [(click)]  
 B = the Hamptons my summer is just filled with luxury  
 A s[ounds wonderful]  
 B [.hh ha ha] ha  
 A how's Helena

### 3.3 Phonetic characteristics

Overall, the phonetic characteristics of 2→ as compared to 1→ include (cf. Curl 2002):

- an increase in loudness
- an expanded pitch span
- pitch higher in the speaker's range
- slower tempo
- closer, tenser articulations (closer to 'hyper-speech' than 'hypo-speech')

Table 2. Pitch span (semitones) of Fragments 1-3:

	Fragment 1	Fragment 2	Fragment 3
1→	5.7	3.7	4.5
2→	7.3	7.9	5.2

Impressionistic records of the assessment pair in Fragment 1:

1→ ʔs:ɸʒs tʰ βɪ rɪ:rɪ rɪrɪ pɪeʔni

2→ e itspɔstə βɪk<sup>1</sup> g:wɔ:dʒɪs

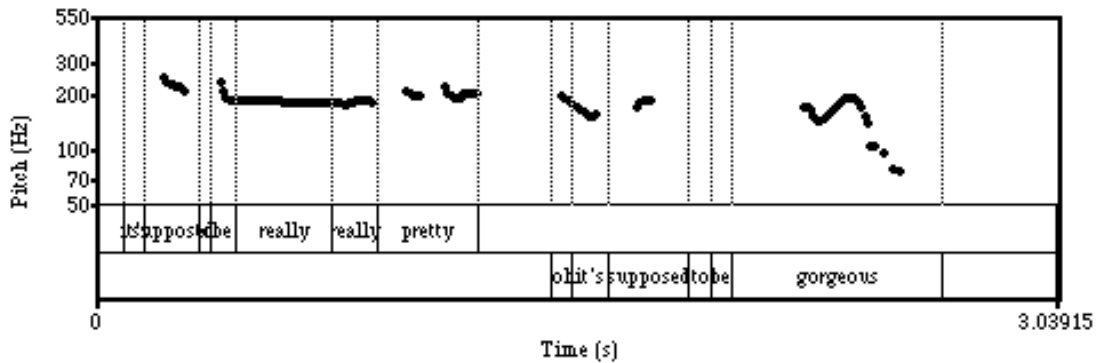


Figure 1. F0 traces of 1→ and 2→ in Fragment 1.

## 4 Overt (strong) disagreement

2→ is used by the speaker to disagree, but also to present again a stance already proposed or implied by that speaker (marked 0→ in the transcripts) earlier in the talk. 1→ presents a stance which contrasts with, or contradicts, 0→.

### 1.1 Overall shape:

- 2→ uses an antonym of 1→, or some assessment term which overtly refutes 1→
- 2→ is often prefaced by *no*
- 2→ repeats a stance adopted earlier by the same speaker (here marked as 0→)
- 2→ comes in soon—not delayed—and therefore has the format of a turn promoting a preferred action (cf. Goodwin, Goodwin & Yaeger-Dror 2002)

### 1.2 Data fragments

#### Fragment (4) smc/00.0090.diet coke

A [it's OK]  
 B [it's horri]ble  
 (0.7)  
 A well I mean it's not like fabulous  
 (0.3)  
 A 0→ much prefer diet coke  
 (0.5)  
 B 1→ >no- well you see< ↑diet coke's exa(ha)ctly the same  
 1→ disgusting yeu#:agh:##  
 A 2→ no ↑diet coke is better.  
 `s- I don't like aspartame  
 B ((quiet giggle))  
 A °and diet coke has nutrasweet°

#### Fragment (5) njc/00.restaurant

M we always end up in the window though which I normally don't  
 like but they've got really thick net curtains there  
 °>so people can't see in<°  
 0→ I hate people that- seeing you eat  
 W 1→ ↑oh I like sit[ting in the window,]  
 M 2→ [ f#oh# I h:]Ate itf  
 (0.7)  
 W °↑oh n[o:,° ]  
 M [#I always] feel like# some sort of performing chimp'f  
 (1.0)  
 M (\* \* \*) I always seem to spill my dinner down my front that's  
 not good to be on public display

#### Fragment (6) Nightowls amsterdam.0036.boring

C I'm going to Holland .h for my (.) .h holiday in Easter,=

P 0→ =ah EXcellent=whereabouts in Holland?=  
 C =Amsterdam and I just do not wanna go  
 P ↑WHY.  
 C 1→ I just don't wanna go=it's gonna be (.) boring I think,  
 P 2→ no, it's gonna be really [good. ]  
 C [↑it is]n't, I'm tranna trade my  
 (0.5) my ticket for my friend's cuckoo clock  
 P hahahahahahahahahahah

### 1.3 Phonetic characteristics

- ‘Upgraded’ phonetic patterns, very similar to those for strong agreement.
- 2→ typically has a very wide pitch span, over an octave

Table 3. Pitch span (semitones) of Fragments 4-6:

	Fragment 4	Fragment 5	Fragment 6
1→	13.6	13.4	5.7
2→	17.8	17.9	18.5

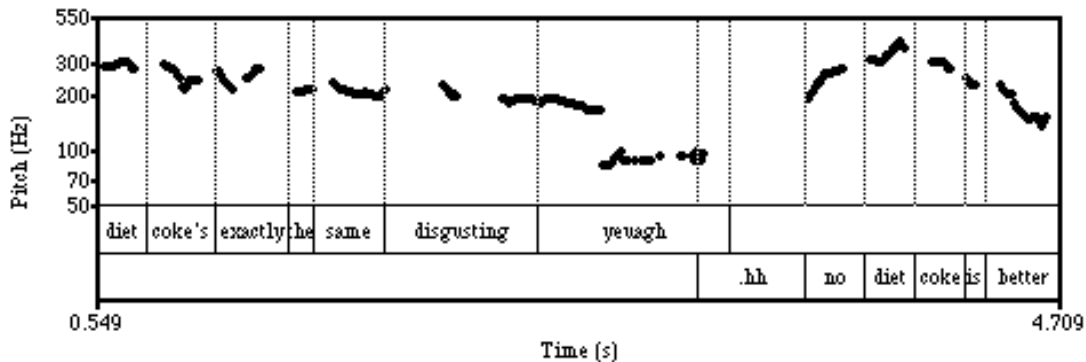


Figure 2. F0 traces of 1→ and 2→ in Fragment 4.

## 5 Weak agreement + disagreement

### 5.1 Overall shape:

- 2→ is a lexical downgrade of 1→, or a ‘same’ assessment
- 2→ is followed by a contrasting assessment (marked 3→) by the same speaker, giving rise to the format [agree + disagree]
- 2→ is often delayed with respect to transition relevance at the end of 1→

## 5.2 Data fragments

### Fragment (7) smc/00.0425.househunting

B they came back and stuff and it's just like .h  
you haven't got time, to search for a #house#;  
A yeah [you can't]  
B [and they're there ] I mean I came  
[back here in the middle of Aug#u#st,]  
A [you can't do that from ] thousands of miles  
aw#ay#.  
B and you need at least one person who's willing to do it all,  
to sort out, to find some#where#,  
A 1→ and it's (.) a lot °of effort#t°=  
B 2→ °it is quite a lot of hassle°,  
3→ unless you like cos sometimes it's just luck(y) isn't it you  
just like walk in and find someone who who's got a house for  
the right number of people

### Fragment (8) gw/00.washing machine

H? °'ts crap°  
E they should just put a slot machine in that- that bloo[dy  
H [↑mm  
(0.6)  
H stupid  
(2.0)  
E [I mean why]  
H 1→ [but it's ] better than tokens #though#;  
(0.4)  
E 2→ yes it is better than token[s,  
H [cos like you always went to the  
porter and he said "oh we've got none" like went back two days  
later and he still had none  
E 3→ .mt we-uhm (1.0) my card always says bad card all the time

### Fragment (9) nrb/01.reluctant lover

J he wouldn't stop asking her out  
he used to ring her like three times a day and she'd go "no:  
no:" .h or she'd say yes and not turn up  
and then she just completely fell for him  
K ! a:[h: that's love]ly=  
J [ °together° ]  
K 1→ =she's- she's- she's really nice in't [she  
J 2→ [ >she is n#i#ce, =<  
3→ =.h I do find that she just says stuff just for the sake of  
fsaying stu(h)uff thoughf  
K [yeah  
[yeah  
J [even when she's not got that much to say

### 5.3 Phonetic characteristics

- 2→ is generally quieter than 1→
- 2→ is generally faster than 1→
- the pitch span of 2→ is narrow, usually compressed relative to 1→
- 2→ often has fall-rise intonation followed by a contrasting assessment
- 2→ is generally lower in the speaker's range

Table 4. Pitch span (semitones) of the assessments in Fragments (7)-(9)

	Fragment 7	Fragment 8	Fragment 9
1→	6.0	6.5	5.1
2→	3.6	4.7	4.6

Impressionistic records of the assessment pair in Fragment 7:

1→ ʔãĩĩʔsʔəl::atʔəvɛfəʔtʔ

2→ ɪzzkwæəlpfhaslʏ

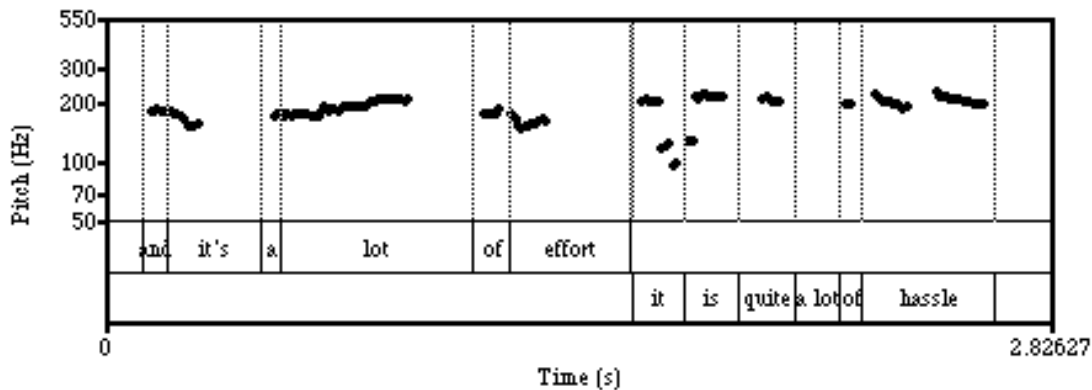


Figure 3. F0 traces of 1→ and 2→ in Fragment (7)

## 6 Some more complex cases

### 6.1 Lexical and phonetic patterns

2→ is a fitted, type-conforming response to the interrogative at 1→ (Raymond, 2000; Heritage & Raymond 2002). Lexical upgrade of 1→, and comes in soon. Part of a turn with the [agree + disagree] format, and has phonetic properties like those described under Section 5: narrower pitch span (1→ 8 st, 2→ 6 st), lower in the speaker's range, quieter and faster.



### Fragment (10) Holt U88.1.10 pay

S That's alright I just wanted to make sure: (.) whether  
you'd p'hh gone back or no[t.h  
F [Yes I did. No[I got that=  
S [.hhhhhhh.p  
F =thanks 'n I, I've also heard about th'of course about  
the cash [in toda:[y.[]  
S 1→ [gYes::. Yes isn't that good at l:ong  
1→ la:[st. [((sniff))  
F 2→ [That[s u-very good news. B't'v cour[se it (0.3)  
S [khhhhhhh  
F 3→ we'll haf to pay out a lot a'that I[guess  
[.hhhhh ihYe:s but  
at least it'll bring us int'th'black hhh.hhh in the  
middle of Ma:y whi:ch is just the time when we should  
be[.kmhhh[hhh.glp.tk]lp  
F [(0.5) [ih Y e : s]But buh[but (.) do we owe: I mean=  
S [u h h h h h h  
F =ih- we haven' paid any of the (Almans) 'n people like  
that yet I[(take it)  
S [eeYES we paid some of them-

#### 1.2 Agreement as a dispreferred action

2→ conveys agreement with 1→ with an assessment which upgrades the epistemic authority to assess (*sounds* → *was*). It conveys a dispreferred action, because in agreeing with 1→ and upgrading the terms of agreement, it conveys a complaint about the co-participant's behaviour. It is delayed (see G's orientation to this, *doesn't it*), and has a narrower pitch span than 1→ (1→ 10 st, 2→ 6.7 st).

### Fragment (11) jdc/00.0383 finger fudge

G [ ehm ]  
W [°fickle°] finger of fate  
(0.5)  
G pardon?  
W fickle finger of fate  
G fickle finger of fudge is just e[nough ]  
W [fickle] finger of fudge  
G to give your kids a treat  
1→ a finger of fudge? that sounds rude,  
(1.0)  
G °doesn't it°  
W 2→ it was rude  
G but yeah  
W well I hea- [it tastes really ]  
G [I mean it is rude]  
W .he  
G I dunno  
°coming back to resonant frequencies°

## 7 Conclusions

- There is a close relationship between the action which a turn promotes, its sequential placement, and its linguistic (including lexical, syntactic and phonetic) design.
- The phonetic properties described here are broadly speaking ‘paralinguistic’, and can be referred to categories of interaction and sequence organisation.
- Emphasis on syntagmatic relations: sequential organisation; lexical, syntactic and phonetic format of one turn in relation to the immediately prior turn.
- In order to understand how phonetic practices are used to convey ‘agreement’ and ‘disagreement’, turns at talk are understood as part of a social process (Schegloff 1991).

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