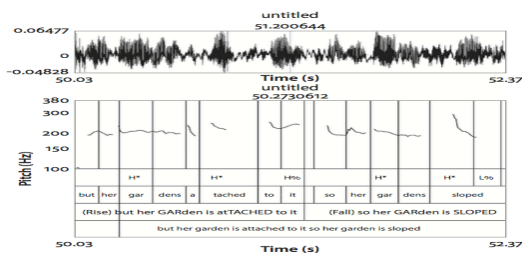

Given and New: The interaction of prosody, word order and semantics

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Previous studies indicate that in English speakers signal the informational status of referents through a combination of intonation, word order and lexical realisation. I argue here for a non-binary view of information structure with referents being (1) hearer and discourse new, (2) discourse new but hearer given and (3) hearer and discourse given. In the data examined, evidence was found to substantiate a relationship between referential distance and lexical realisation, but not between referential distance and accenting. For instance, in the figure below, the speaker choose to make *garden* prominent despite its mention in the previous tone unit.



Accents signal speakers' projection of the importance of a referent but the exact informational meaning signalled by the referent depends on a combination of a number of interacting factors of which accenting is only one.

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