



# Unit 7a

## Syllables & Rhythm (2):

### morphophonology and stress

Print version of the  
*Phonetics with Listening Practice (British)*  
presentation given on  
19 nivôse de l'année CCXXXII du calendrier républicain  
(09 January 2024)

Robert Spence, English Department, Saarland University

7a.1

<English Phonetics: Unit 7a:>  
/ˈɪŋ.gɪʃ/ /fəˈnet.ɪks/ /ˈjuː.n.ɪt/ /ˈsev.n/ /ˈeɪ/  
[ˈɪŋ.gɪʃ.fəˈner.əks.jʊːn.ət.ˈsev.nˈaɪ] (AusE, broad)

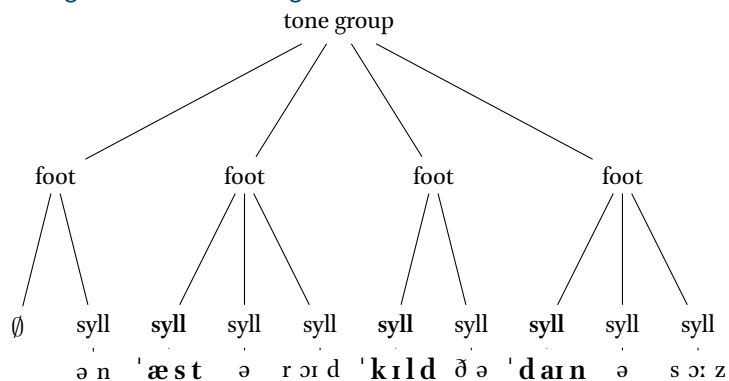
<Syllables & Rhythm (2)>  
/ˈsɪl.əb.əl.z/ /ən/ /ˈrɪð.əm/ /tuː/  
[ˈsɪl.əb.əl.z.ən.ˈrɪð.əm. | ˈtuː] (AusE, broad)

/ˌmɔːf.əv.fəv.ˈnɒl.ədʒ.i/ /ənd/ /ˈstres/  
[ˌmɔːf.əv.fəˈnɒl.ədʒ.i ən ˈstɹɪes] (AusE, broad)

7a.2

## 1 A phonological rank scale for English

A phonological rank scale for English



(Context: 'What happened 65 million years ago?')

tone group → foot → syllable → phoneme

This is the most minimalistic description of English phonological units that actually works.

7a.3

## 2 Morphophonology (1): the phonology of flexional morphology

### Flexional morphophonology: plural and/or genitive

- The regular plural morpheme (typical spelling: <s>) is realized phonologically in three different ways:
  - /s/ after a voiceless consonant (but see below), e.g.  
<cats> /kæts/
  - /z/ after a voiced consonant (but see below) or a vowel/diphthong, e.g.  
<dogs> /dɒgz/  
<mares> /meəz/
  - /ɪz/ after a 'sibilant' (/s z ʒ ʒ tʃ dʒ/), e.g.  
<horses> /hɔ:s.ɪz/
- The same applies to the <'s> genitive of nouns, and to the third person singular present indicative of verbs <walks> /s/, <hugs> /z/, <teaches> /ɪz/.
- Could we perhaps interpret these facts in terms of ELISION and ASSIMILATION?
- Note: the American and Australian pronunciation of the plural morpheme after a sibilant is more like [əz] than [ɪz].
- Note:
  - <Governors-General> (plural)
  - <Governor-General's> (genitive singular).

7a.4

### Flexional morphophonology: past tense

- The regular past tense morpheme (typical spelling: <ed>) is realized phonologically in three different ways:
  - /t/ after a voiceless consonant (but see below), e.g.  
<faced> /feɪst/
  - /d/ after a voiced consonant (but see below) or a vowel/diphthong, e.g.  
<fazed> /feɪzd/  
<laid> /leɪd/
  - /ɪd/ after /t/ or /d/  
<fated> /'feɪtɪd/ <faded> /'feɪdɪd/
- The following remarks refer to the spelling conventions for libretti (e.g. Handel's *Messiah*) written a few centuries ago; these often contain past tense endings that have to be pronounced /ɪd/ for purely metrical reasons:
  - In earlier forms of English, <ed> and <'d> were used to spell /ɪd/ and /d/ (or /t/) respectively.
  - In today's English, <èd> and <ed> are used instead.
  - "His work was soon in rehearsal  
Because he always usèd Purcell" (Flanders and Swann).

7a.5

## 3 Morphophonology (2): the phonology of derivational morphology (1)

### Morphophonology (2): the phonology of derivational morphology (1)

Here are two of the most important ways in which words in English can be 'derived' from simpler words via the use of affixes:

- The Anglo-Saxon way:  
fear → 'fearless → 'fearlessness
- The French-Latin-Greek way:  
'grammar → gram'matical → grammati'cality

It is even possible to mix the two strategies:

- A mixture:  
'grammar → gram'matical → gram'maticalness

Note what happens to the position of the stress!

7a.6

### Morphophonology (2): the phonology of derivational morphology (2)

Here is another way in which one word can be 'derived' from another in English – this time by a change in the stress pattern alone, without any change to the structure of the word as a sequence of morphemes:

- in'sult (verb) → 'insult (noun)
- con'vert (verb) → 'convert (noun)

and even

- in'vite (verb) → 'invite (noun)

7a.7

### Morphophonology (2): the phonology of derivational morphology (3)

Note:

(adjective)	(verb)
<separate>	<separate>
/'sepərət/	/'sepərəɪt/

(adjective)	
or	
(noun)	(verb)
<degenerate>	<degenerate>
/di'dʒenərət/	/di'dʒenərəɪt/

7a.8

### Word Stress Patterns from Sauer's *Drillbook* (1)

Monday ballet famous  
'mʌndeɪ 'bæleɪ 'feɪməs

cigar hotel prefer  
sɪ'gɑː hæʊ'tel prɪ'fɜː

violin Chinese canteen  
vaɪə'lm tʃaɪ'niːz kæn'tiːn

energy Catholic communist Arabic  
'enədʒɪ 'kæθə'lik 'kɒmjʊnɪst 'ærəbɪk

suspicious strategic Arabian  
sə'spɪʃəs strə'tiːdʒɪk ə'reɪbjən

cigarette engineer refugee  
sɪgə'ret ˌendʒɪ'nɪə ˌrefju'dʒiː

7a.9

### Word Stress Patterns from Sauer's *Drillbook* (2)

admirable comfortably personally  
'ædmərəbəl 'kʌmfətəbəlɪ 'pɜːsənəli

philosophy ridiculous catastrophe  
fɪ'lɒsəfi rɪ'dɪkjələs kə'tæstrəfi

scientific disproportion politician  
ˌsaɪən'tɪfɪk ˌdɪsprə'pɔːʃn ˌpɒlɪ'tɪʃn

Protestantism criticizable  
'prɒtəstəntɪzəm 'krɪtɪsəɪzəbl

Catholicism considerable particularly  
kə'θɒlɪsɪzəm kən'sɪdərəbl pə'tɪkjələli

aristocracy mathematical possibility  
ˌærɪ'stɒkrəsi ˌmæθə'mætɪkl ˌpɒsə'bɪləti

7a.10

#### Word Stress Patterns from Sauer's *Drillbook* (3)

pasteurization characteristic  
ˌpɑːstjʊərəɪ'zeɪʃn ˌkærəktə'rɪstɪk

pronunciation consideration  
prəˌnʌnsɪ'eɪʃn kənˌsɪdə'reɪʃn

transformationally photographically  
ˌtrænsfə'meɪʃənəli ˌfəʊtə'græfɪkəli

nationalization characterization  
ˌnæʃənəlaɪ'zeɪʃn ˌkærəktəraɪ'zeɪʃn

inferiority bacteriologist  
ɪnˌfɪəri'ɒrɪti bæk'tɪəri'ɒlədʒɪst

Note: Sauer transcribes a slightly old-fashioned form of RP in a slightly old-fashioned way.

7a.11

## 4 Further reading, additional exercises, homework, whatever ...

### Further reading, additional exercises, homework, whatever ... (1)

- See Eckert and Barry, pages 239 to 243 – scans of these pages are in last week's folder:  
[http://www.spence.saar.de/courses/phoneticswithlistening/unit07\\_20232](http://www.spence.saar.de/courses/phoneticswithlistening/unit07_20232)
- Pay particular attention to those cases where there is a systematic difference between English and German!
- We can only skim the surface of lexical stress. Although it is important, especially from a contrastive point of view ("English is different from German!"), many of the examples given in Eckert and Barry on pages 197 to 212 are specific to one variety of British English and/or antiquated  
[http://www.spence.saar.de/courses/phoneticswithlistening/unit07\\_20232](http://www.spence.saar.de/courses/phoneticswithlistening/unit07_20232)

7a.12

### Further reading, additional exercises, homework, whatever ... (2)

- We will examine some of these issues from a different perspective in Unit 9. If you want to take a peek in advance, check Halliday 1970 §5.3 pp44-47:  
[http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/Halliday1970/The\\_Book/2192\\_001.pdf](http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/Halliday1970/The_Book/2192_001.pdf)  
[http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/Halliday1970/Halliday1970\\_45/](http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/Halliday1970/Halliday1970_45/)

[http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/Halliday1970/Halliday1970\\_45/](http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/Halliday1970/Halliday1970_45/)  
[http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/Halliday1970/Halliday1970\\_46/](http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/Halliday1970/Halliday1970_46/)  
[http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/Halliday1970/Halliday1970\\_47-49/](http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/Halliday1970/Halliday1970_47-49/)

7a.13

#### Further reading, additional exercises, homework, whatever ... (3)

- There are more exercises in Sauer:

§33 pp104-109

[http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/pronunciation/pronunciation\\_25-33.pdf](http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/pronunciation/pronunciation_25-33.pdf)

[http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/pronunciation/pronunciation\\_25-33.mp3](http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/pronunciation/pronunciation_25-33.mp3)

7a.14