

Stress

- It's the relative prominence given to a syllable.

In phonetic transcription indicated by a vertical line (stress mark) preceding the stressed syllable.

Money ['mʌni]

Word stress

- Words with more than one syllable carry an **accent** or **stress** on one syllable.
 - Diacritic indicates suprasegmental features
 - ['] indicates main stress
- Protest (n) /'prəʊtest/ to protest (v) /prə'test/
 - Photography /fə'tɒgrəfi/
 - photographer /fə'tɒgrəfər/
 - photographic /,fəʊtə'græfɪk/
- [,] secondary stress

Main types of stress patterns

- 2-syllable words with primary stress on the first syllable – Type strong + weak

money ['mʌni], river ['rɪvə]

- 2-syllable words with primary stress on the first syllable and a full vowel on the second –Type strong+strong

background ['bækgraʊnd], pillow ['pɪləʊ]

- 2-syllable words with primary stress on the second syllable – Type weak+strong

result [rɪ'zʌlt], connect [kə'nekt]

Main types of stress patterns

- 2-syllable words with a full vowel on the first syllable and primary stress on the second syllable – Type strong+strong.

although [ɔ:l'ðəʊ], myself [maɪ'self]

- 3-syllable words with primary stress on the first syllable – Type strong+weak+weak.

family ['fæməli], manager ['mænɪdʒə]

- 3-syllable words with primary stress on the first syllable, and a full vowel on the third syllable – Type strong+weak+strong.

telephone ['telɪfəʊn], summertime ['sʌmətaɪm]

Main types of stress patterns

- 3-syllable words with primary stress on the first syllable, and a full vowel on the second – Type strong+strong+weak.

newspaper ['nju:zpeɪpə], grandmother ['grænməðə]

- 3-syllable words with primary stress on the second syllable – type weak+strong+weak.

remember [rɪ'membə], agreement [ə'grɪ:mənt]

- 3-syllable words with full vowel on the first syllable and primary stress on the second syllable – Type strong+strong+weak

sensation [sen'seɪʃn], transparent [træns'pærənt]

- 3-syllable words with a full vowel on the first syllable and primary stress on the third syllable – Type strong+weak+strong.

afternoon [ˌɑ:ftə'nu:n], understand [ˌʌndə'stænd]

Vocalic length

- Vowel length is a characteristic of stressed syllables
 - Unstressed syllables have shorter vowels (often reduced to /ə/)
- In connected speech we focus on stressed syllables rushing the less important ones
- In polysyllabic words with /r/ in unstressed the syllable preceding /r/ disappears /'dɪkʃənəri/ → /'dɪkʃənri/

Stress patterns

- Italian is a syllable-timed language (syllables with similar length, articulated at regular intervals, basic unit of rhythm)
- English is a stress-timed language (the time of an utterance depends on the number of stressed syllables, rather than the total number)

Stress patterns⁰⁹

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Hickory, Dickory, Dock
The mouse ran up the clock
The clock stuck one
The mouse ran down,
Hickory, Dickory, Dock.

Stress patterns¹⁰

- 1, 2 and 4 are single tone groups (single rhythm)

1. What are we having for dinner tonight?

2. She's my high school geography teacher.

3. If it's fine in the morning, we can go for a walk.

4. The crangler isn't nithing very ferdily today.

Rhythmic shift in stress

- A shift in stress happens (without changing meaning, e.g. protest) when a lexical item acting as adjective precedes a noun in order to avoid two stressed syllables occurring in close succession:
 - He's an OVER-paid exECutive
 - Most exECutives are over-PAID
- **Stress-timed rhythm** prevails over normal rules of word stress

Strong and weak forms ¹⁴

- Listen to the following sentences and underline stressed syllables

1. I'm not going to tell you to do your homework again.
2. I want to go to the disco, but Mum says ¹³ I can't.
3. She was nithing with the crangler at a manterist's.
4. Where did you say you were going?

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- Unstressed words tend to be function words
- Content words contain a stressed syllable
- As weak syllables in words are reduced to the schwa, vowels in function words are reduced to a neutral sound (strong → weak form)

Strong and weak forms

- a

Weak Form	Strong Form	Normal Script
ən	æn	an
ənd	ænd	and
wə	wɜ:	were
məst	mʌst	must
hi or hi	hi:	he
bi:n	bi:n	been
ə	ɑ:	are
ðə ¹⁵	ðeə	there

Sentence stress

- As in polysyllabic words we find primary and secondary stress, in sentences some words have stronger stress than others (usually those providing new or important information)

Sentence stress¹⁹

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Mum, are you in the kitchen?

Can I have some crisps, Mum, please?

Do the cranglers nithe ferdily when they're at ralk?

- Circle the content words
- Underline which of the content word carries the main stress

Contrastive stress

- Sometimes we emphasise one word rather than another in order to make intended meaning clear.

Contrastive stress²¹

- Sometimes we emphasise one word rather than another in order to make intended meaning clear. This may be applied to function words too

Sally: DID you go to Jenny's party, then? (When Polly last saw Sally, she wasn't sure whether she would go or not.)

Polly: Yeah. But I wish I HADN'T. I DON'T want to talk about it.

Sally: Ah! You've just GOT to tell me what happened. (The stress emphasises Sally's impatience to know what happened.)

Polly: Oh, alRIGHT. Well, SHE was dancing and smooching with HIM all night. AND I heard him give her his mobile number. (They both know who *she* and *him* refer to. *She* is not a friend. The *and* emphasises the hopelessness of the situation.)

Sally: Who did YOU dance with? (Trying to take her friend's mind off *she* and *him*?)

Polly: John AND David AND Peter. But none of them asked for MY number! (No comment needed.)

Pitch and intonation

- **Intonation** is the variation of voice **pitch** in connected speech.
- **Tonality** refers to the segmentation of longer stretches of connected speech into shorter meaningful chunks
- An **intonation phrase** is an utterance with its intonation pattern (**tone**) and a nucleus (punctuation roughly reflects the segmentation in chunks).
- The **nucleus** is the syllable receiving the greatest prominence and carrying intonation movement (usually the last prominent lexical word in an intonation phrase)

Pitch and intonation

- Intonation plays an important role in grammar and discourse, influencing the meaning of large stretches of speech.
- A tone may be rising or falling, or a combination of these
 - ↗ rising → questions and incomplete clauses
 - ↘ falling → statements
 - ↘↗ fall-rise → uncertainty and doubt
 - ↗↘ rise-fall → surprise and admiration, or strong emotions

Pitch and intonation

- Main functions of intonation are:
- Attitudinal (feeling and attitudes; other prosodic and paralinguistic features)
- Grammatical (segmentation in meaningful units)
I ↘ 'fed her / ↗ 'dog 'biscuits
I 'fed her ↗ 'dog / ↘ 'biscuits
- Accentual (stress on nucleus indicating focus of information)
- Discourse (connected to accentual): end-focus for new information. Foregrounding can take place also through intonation

Pitch and intonation

- Pitch and intonation may be difficult to acquire in a foreign language (Italians seem to have a narrower pitch range than British speakers)

Recap 1

- Difference between phonetics and phonology;
- Consonants: the way and place they are produced, + voiced/voiceless;
 - 3 plosives (/p/ /b/, /t/ /d/ /k/ /g/);
 - 5 fricatives (/f/ /v/, /θ/ /ð/, /s/ /z/, /ʃ/ /ʒ/, /h/)
 - 1 affricate (/dʒ/ /tʃ/)
 - 3 nasals (/m/ /n/ /ŋ/)
 - 1 liquid/lateral (/l/)
 - 1 approximants (/r/)
- Semivowels/approximants: /w/ & /j/
- Vowels: their position open/close front/central/back
 - 7 short vowels (/ɪ/ /ʊ/ /ə/ /e/ /æ/ /ʌ/ /ɒ/)
 - 5 long vowels (/i:/ /u:/ /ɜ:/ /ɑ:/ /ɔ:/)
 - 8 diphthongs
 - 3 centring /eə/ /ɪə/ /ʊə/
 - 5 closing /aʊ/ /əʊ/; /eɪ/ /aɪ/ /ɔɪ/

Recap 2

- Stress-timed language
- Non-rhotic language
- Assimilation
- Coalescence
- Accent
- Minimal pair.