The Sounds of English

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Spoken vs. Written English

- English is not a "phonetically regular language": there is a gap between spoken and written language, i.e. a lack of one-to-one correspondence of sound and orthographic symbol.
- There are 26 letters in the written alphabet for about 40 sounds.

Mandatory readings

You can find all the contents of the lessons on English Phonetics and Phonology in *Introducing English Language*, Sections A1-B1.

Further readings

If you need to read more on the topic, you can read Section D1. Section C1 contains some activities. On p. 121 you will find an amusing poem by Scottish poet Robert Burns “Ode to a Haggis”. You can listen to a reading of the poem here: [http://youtu.be/DeLpWE6xScA](http://youtu.be/DeLpWE6xScA)

Further readings

If you could not attend the lessons, reading the following chapters might be useful:
- Crystal, D., *Cambridge Encyclopaedia of the English Language*, Chapter 17, p. 236-255.
- English Language. Description, Variation and Context, Section I, Chapters on Phonetics, Segmental and Suprasegmental Phonology.

The IPA

The problem of not always having the same correspondence between sounds and letters led a group of linguists to devise a special alphabet in which one symbol always represented the same sound.

The *International Phonetic Alphabet* (IPA), a set of internationally agreed symbols for representing speech sounds. Such representations are called *phonetic transcriptions*.

Ex.: Phonetic transcriptions in dictionary entries.

...
The study of English pronunciation

Speech sounds can be analysed on the basis of:

- their physical properties, i.e. from the physical point of view
- their function as part of an abstract language system, i.e. from a phonological point of view
- PHONETICS concerns the concrete characteristics (articulatory, acoustic, auditory) of the sounds used in the language
- PHONOLOGY concerns how sounds function in a systemic way in a particular language.

Phonology

- Whereas phonetics is chiefly concerned with the production of individual speech sounds, phonology is concerned with segments, that is sounds grouped together in syllables and words; contrasts in sounds which make differences of meaning within a language.
- The phonemic unit of analysis is the phoneme, i.e. the smallest unit with no meaning but with a potentially distinctive function of the words of a language. It is an abstract element of a given language system.
- In phonemic transcriptions we use slant brackets / /.
- Phonology may be classified as:

1. Segmental Phonology
   The study of the way speech sounds are systematically organized in a specific language.

2. Suprasegmental Phonology
   The study of sound contrasts that extend over segments, i.e. over phonemes (stress and intonation).

Phonetics

- Phonetics is the study of the way speakers produce, transmit and receive speech sounds.
- The phonetic unit of analysis is the phone, a concrete sound produced in speech. In phonetic transcription, we use square brackets [ ].
- There are three main branches of Phonetics:

1. Articulatory Phonetics
   studies the way speech sounds are produced by the speaker's articulatory organs

2. Auditory Phonetics
   studies the way sounds are perceived by the hearer through auditory organs

Phonemes and Allophones 1

- Phoneme is an abstract concept, an idealized or stylized version of the sound in question, it is not ‘real’

Phonemes

- They make up the sound system of a language on the abstract level

Allophones

- They are the sounds speakers actually produce
- They are different ways of pronouncing the same phoneme in different contexts

Consonantal phonemes

- In initial position, we may have 22 consonantal phonemes capable of contrastive function.
- In medial position, we may also have /s/ as in
  - /læt/ /leːt/[
  - /læt/ /leːt/[
  - /læt/ /leːt/[
- In final position, we may have /ŋ/ as in
  - /læt/ /leːt/
  - /læt/ /leːt/

English has thus 24 phonemes

Minimal Pairs

Pairs of words which are different in respect of only one sound segment, but differ in meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Phonemes</th>
<th>English Allophones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/p/</td>
<td>/b/</td>
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<td>/t/</td>
<td>/d/</td>
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<tr>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>/g/</td>
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<td>/s/</td>
<td>/z/</td>
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<tr>
<td>/ʃ/</td>
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Segmental Phonology

- Sounds of a language = a set of distinct segments, i.e. phonemes.
- Speakers of a language know which segments contrast.
- When segments contrast, they are in opposition or distinctive of different words.
- e.g. /k/ vs. /g/
- Minimal Pairs

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- /p, b, t, d, k, g, s, z, ʃ, ʒ/ vs. /k, g/ phonemes in opposition
The English phoneme /s/ has three distinct allophones:

- [z] table, top
- [s] stop, cat
- [θ] kitten

The English phoneme /k/ has two distinct allophones:

- [k] bull (clear)
- [ɛ] bull (dark)

Types of transcriptions

- We write phonetic symbols in slant brackets in order to distinguish sounds from letters.
- Two types of transcription:
  1. Broad transcription
     The symbols in slant brackets, i.e. / /, represent the underlying phonemes but do not give any detailed information about how these phonemes are actually realised.
  2. Narrow transcription
     Use of additional symbols and special markings, i.e. diacritics, in order to indicate allophones, within square brackets [], e.g. /θ/ ⟹ [θ]

To sum up...

**PHONETICS**

- studies all possible sounds that the vocal apparatus can make
- deals with a concrete level of analysis
- its units of analysis are phones and allophones
- its phonetic transcription is into []

**PHONOLOGY**

- studies only those contrasts in sounds that make differences of meaning within a language system
- deals with an abstract level of analysis
- its units of analysis are phonemes
- its phonemic transcription is into / /

Producing sounds

- We use air not only to breathe, but also to speak
- It is possible to produce sounds breathing in as well as breathing out
  - The most common method in the languages of the world.
  - All English sounds are usually produced with air being pushed out from the lungs through the mouth and nose → *pulmonic egressive airstream mechanism*
- Sound is air vibration
  - When we speak, air is pushed out from our mouth or nose and the neutral surrounding air pressure is disturbed, producing sound waves.
  - Speech sounds are shaped in the *vocal tract*.**

The vocal tract

Articulators

The oral cavity contains the following articulators:

- Lips
- Tongue → composed of tip, blade, front, centre, back, root
- Teeth
- Alveolar ridge → between the top front teeth and the hard palate
- Hard palate, also called ‘roof of the mouth’
- Soft palate or velum
- Uvula, i.e. the end of the velum
- Glottis, i.e. the opening between the vocal folds/cords
Important criteria to describe consonants

1. Place of Articulation
2. Manner of Articulation
3. Voicing

1. Place of Articulation
- BILABIAL: lips
  - [b] baby
  - [m] meet
  - [p] pet
  - [w] watch
- LABIO-DENTAL: upper front teeth against the lower lip
  - [f] log
  - [v] vet
- DENTAL: tongue between upper and lower front teeth
  - [θ] thing
  - [ð] then
  - [ð] then
  - [r] red
- PALATO-ALVEOLAR: tip of the tongue in contact with the alveolar ridge, while the front of the tongue is raised towards the hard palate
  - [t] talk
  - [l] look
  - [k] keep
- PALATAL: tongue against the hard palate
  - [j] goal
  - [ʃ] she
  - [ʒ] sze
- VELAR: the back of the tongue against the velum
  - [g] go
  - [k] keep
  - [ŋ] ring
- GLOTTAL: when the airstream is obstructed at the glottis
  - [h] hot

Za
Zc
Zb
Zs
Zr
Zg

Examples per type

- BILABIAL
  - [b] baby
  - [m] meet
  - [p] pet
  - [w] watch
- LABIO-DENTAL
  - [f] log
  - [v] vet
- DENTAL
  - [θ] thing
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  - [ʃ] she
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  - [g] go
  - [k] keep
  - [ŋ] ring
- GLOTTAL
  - [h] hot

Syllables (1)

- Vowels and consonants usually combine into larger units, i.e. syllables.
- A syllable consists of a vowel which acts as the nucleus or center or peak of the syllable.
  - e.g. i, eye
- Many syllables have one or more consonants preceding the nucleus. This part of the syllable is called the onset.
  - e.g. mp, bee
- Consonants may also follow the nucleus, and this part is called the syllable coda.
  - e.g. auf, gee

The case of syllabic consonants

English Consonant Chart

Syllabic Consonants

- Assumption: A vowel is an obligatory element in a syllable.
- Exceptions: In words of two or more syllables, when a nasal, i.e. /m/ or /n/, or an approximant, i.e. /w/ or /j/, functions as the peak of the syllable in place of a vowel.

This happens when the unstressed vowel in the syllable becomes so reduced that it effectively disappears, leaving the coda to function alone as the peak.

- Syllabic consonants
  - e.g. button > [bʌt] + [ʌn] → [bʌtn] or [bʌtn]
- Syllabic /r/
  - e.g. eaten > [ɛtn]
  - Syllabic /l/
  - e.g. heaven, often

Use of the diacritic to indicate the syllabic consonant
Words can be:
- monosyllabic → one syllable, structure CV\(\rightarrow\) e.g. car, star, love, I, am
- disyllabic → two syllables, consonant is preceded and succeeded by a vowel VC\(\rightarrow\) topic, accredit, sunny
disyllabic → more than two syllables
- e.g. enemy, luxury, misunderstanding

It is important to look for the pronunciation behind a word’s spelling. e.g. all is VC (not VCC) fox is CVCC (not CVC)

**The distribution of consonants (1)**
- Consonants can occur in three different positions:
  - word-initial → at the beginning of a word (CV)
  - word-medial → between vowels in a word of two syllables (VCV)
  - word-final → at the end of a word (VC)

**PLOSIVES**
- /p/ → 2p /pet/ 2p /pat/ eng /kap/
- /b/ → 2b /bet/ 2b /bat/ eng /kab/
- /t/ → 2t /tep/ 2t /tam/ eng /kat/
- /d/ → 2d /det/ 2d /dat/ eng /kad/
- /k/ → 2k /ket/ 2k /kat/ stick /strik/
- /g/ → 2g /get/ 2g /gat/ foog /fog/

**FRICATIVES**
- /f/ → 2f /fet/ 2f /fat/
- /v/ → 2v /vet/ 2v /vat/
- /\(\theta\)/ → 2\(\theta\) /\(\theta\)et/ 2\(\theta\) /\(\theta\)at/
- /\(\phi\)/ → 2\(\phi\) /\(\phi\)et/ 2\(\phi\) /\(\phi\)at/
- /z/ → 2z /zet/ 2z /zet/
- /\(\partial\)/ → 2\(\partial\) /\(\partial\)et/ 2\(\partial\) /\(\partial\)et/
- /\(\gamma\)/ → 2\(\gamma\) /\(\gamma\)at/ 2\(\gamma\) /\(\gamma\)at/
- /\(\lambda\)/ → 2\(\lambda\) /\(\lambda\)at/ 2\(\lambda\) /\(\lambda\)at/

**NASALS**
- /m/ → 2m /mit/ 2m /mat/
- /n/ → 2n /net/ 2n /nat/
- /\(\eta\)/ → 2\(\eta\) /\(\eta\)et/ 2\(\eta\) /\(\eta\)at/ stick /strik/
- /\(\epsilon\)/ → 2\(\epsilon\) /\(\epsilon\)et/ 2\(\epsilon\) /\(\epsilon\)at/
- /\(\zeta\)/ → 2\(\zeta\) /\(\zeta\)et/ 2\(\zeta\) /\(\zeta\)at/

**AFFRICATES**
- /\(\chi\)/ → 2\(\chi\) /\(\chi\)et/ 2\(\chi\) /\(\chi\)et/ butcher /butər/ church /k\(\chi\)ə/!
- /\(\delta\)/ → 2\(\delta\) /\(\delta\)am/ 2\(\delta\) /\(\delta\)am/ apple /\(\delta\)pl/!

**APPROXIMANTS**
- /\(\rho\)/ → 2\(\rho\) /\(\rho\)am/ 2\(\rho\) /\(\rho\)am/
- /\(\lambda\)/ → 2\(\lambda\) /\(\lambda\)am/ 2\(\lambda\) /\(\lambda\)am/

**The distribution of consonants (2)**

**The distribution of consonants (3)**

**The distribution of consonants (4)**

**Consonant clusters (1)**

**CLUSTER**
- a succession of two or more contiguous consonants in a word, as the st- cluster of strap.

- Consonant cluster /\(\theta\)st/ is omitted
- When word-initial /\(\theta\)st/ is omitted
  - pseudo /\(\theta\)si\(\lambda\)nd\(\lambda)/
  - psalm /\(\lambda\)\(\lambda\)/
  - psychology /sək\(\lambda\)ksb\(\lambda\)dʒi/!
- When in word medial or word-final position, both sounds are pronounced:
  - /\(\theta\)st/ /\(\theta\)st/
  - corpus /\(\rho\)\(\rho\)/
  - lips /\(\rho\)\(\rho\)/
Consonant clusters (2)
- Consonant cluster 'kn':
  - When word-initial, /k/ is omitted:
    - know /nau/
    - knee /nu/.
    - knife /nai/.
    - height /nai/.
    - knowledge /mnaidy/.
- Consonant cluster 'gn':
  - When word-initial and word-final, /g/ is omitted:
    - gnome /noum/.
    - reign /rein/.
  - When in medial position, both sounds are pronounced:
    - pregnant /pregnant/.

Criteria for describing English Vowels
1. Openness of the mouth and height of the tongue
2. Area of the mouth (front, central and back)
3. Shape of the lips (rounded and unrounded)
4. Length or duration (long and short vowels)

The Cardinal Vowel Diagram
- The Cardinal Vowel Diagram includes the so-called primary vowels. These are the vowels that are most familiar to the speakers of most European languages. It was devised to provide a set of reference points for the articulation of vowels. Cardinal vowels are indicated with a C preceding the phonetic symbol. They are positional reference points, rather than actual phonemes.

Cardinal Vowels
- /i/ represents the highest point at the front of the mouth.
- /u/ is the highest point at the back of the mouth.
- /a/ is the lowest point at the front of the mouth.
- /A/ is the lowest point at the back of the mouth.

English Vowels
- From a phonetic point of view, vowels are articulated with an open configuration of the vocal tract and involve the vibration of the vocal folds.
- From a phonological point of view, vowels usually occupy the middle of a syllable, i.e. the nucleus.
- English has:
  - 7 short vowels
  - 5 long vowels
  - 8 diphthongs
  - 5 triphthongs
- For the phonetic description of vowels, articulation reference is made to tongue position, i.e. openness, height and area of the mouth, length and shapes of the lips.

Monothongs
- A monothong is a "pure vowel".
- When spoken in isolation, the position of the mouth remains unchanged.

- English has 12 monothongs, which can be described in relation to cardinal vowels and on the basis of length:
  - 7 short vowels and 5 long vowels.
Diphthongs

- Diphthongs are sounds which consist of a movement or glide from one vowel to another.
- They have the feature of length.
- The first part of a diphthong is much longer and stronger than the second part. As the glide to the second part happens, the loudness of the sound decreases.
- English has 8 diphthongs, which are classified in terms of the tongue height of the finishing vowel position.

![Diphthongs Diagram](image)

**Centring (3)**
- towards /a/ → beard, beer
- /e/ → pair, air
- /oa/ → tour, poor

**Closing (5)**
- towards /o/ (3)
- /ai/ → baby, paid, bay
- /au/ → nice, buy
- /ou/ → voice, boy
- /au/ → home, no, toe
- /au/ → house, now

Triphthongs

- A triphthong is a glide from one vowel to another and then to a third, all produced rapidly and without interruption.
- Triphthongs are formed by adding a vowel glide, i.e., towards /a/, to the closing diphthong’s.

- /ei/ + /a/ → /eai/ player
- /ai/ + /e/ → /aie/ fire, liar, desire
- /au/ + /a/ → /aoo/ royal
- /oa/ + /a/ → /oaia/ lower
- /oa/ + /e/ → /oan/ lower, power, hour

Exercise...

- Choose the right vowel sound:
  - first → 1. /a/ 2. /e/ 3. /ae/
  - phone → 1. /e/ 2. /o/ 3. /a/
  - fawn → 1. /o/ 2. /a/ 3. /u/
  - tart → 1. /a/ 2. /e/ 3. /a/
  - face → 1. /a/ 2. /e/ 3. /ae/
  - sure → 1. /u/ 2. /e/ 3. /ur/
  - shower → 1. /a/ 2. /er/ 3. /or/
  - bought → 1. /a/ 2. /er/ 3. /or/
  - cup → 1. /a/ 2. /e/ 3. /u/
  - laid → 1. /a/ 2. /e/ 3. /a/
  - barn → 1. /a/ 2. /e/ 3. /a/
  - above → 1. /a/ 2. /e/ 3. /a/
  - piece → 1. /a/ 2. /e/ 3. /a/
  - ghost → 1. /a/ 2. /e/ 3. /a/
Morpho(pho)nology

- Morpho-phonology is the analysis of the phonological aspects of morphemes.

Some special rules of pronunciation include:

- Past Tense Formation of regular verbs
  - If the stem ends in a sibilant, i.e. slipped, beaches
    - 1st Person Present Tense: went
    - Past Tense: went
    - Past Participle: written

- Plural Formations of regular forms
  - 2nd Person Present Tense: you've
    - Past Tense: you've
    - Past Participle: you've

- Saxon Genitive
  - 3rd Person Present Tense: Matt's
    - Past Tense: Matt's
    - Past Participle: Matt's

Exercise...

- Endings: /d/, /t/ or /id/:
  - helped /d/ /t/ /id/
  - hated /d/ /t/ /id/
  - cried /d/ /t/ /id/
  - gained /d/ /t/ /id/
  - killed /d/ /t/ /id/
  - sorted /d/ /t/ /id/
  - turned /d/ /t/ /id/
  - needed /d/ /t/ /id/
  - pushed /d/ /t/ /id/
  - arrived /d/ /t/ /id/
  - slipped /d/ /t/ /id/

Past Tense Formation

1. If the stem ends in /l/ or /d/:
   - {-ed} > /id/
     - wanted, needed, required, waited, painted

2. If the stem ends in any voiceless sound, i.e. vowels and voiceless consonants except /d/:
   - {-ed} > /d/
     - plucked, stuck, carried, played, judged, lived

3. If the stem ends in any voiced consonant apart from /l/:
   - {-ed} > /l/
     - wept, mapped, finished, stopped, wedged, reached

Plural, 3rd Person Sing. and Saxon Genitive

- If the stem ends in a sibilant, i.e. /s/, /z/, /ss/, /g/, or an affricate, i.e. /sh/ or /jg/:
  - {-es} > /es/
    - bridges,:s, eggs, digests,:s, judges, Charlie's

- If the stem ends in any non-sibilant and non-affricate voiced sound, i.e. vowels and voiced consonants:
  - {-ed} > /ed/
    - dogs, pens, booked, friendly, wages, play, July's, Richard's

- If the stem ends in any non-sibilant voiceless sound, i.e. voiceless consonants:
  - {-ed} > /t/ or /id/:

Exercise...

- Endings: /s/, /z/ or /l/:
  - caps /s/ /z/ /l/
  - snakes /s/ /z/ /l/
  - glasses /s/ /z/ /l/
  - beds /s/ /z/ /l/
  - mice /s/ /z/ /l/
  - beaches /s/ /z/ /l/
  - bikes /s/ /z/ /l/
  - caves /s/ /z/ /l/
  - faces /s/ /z/ /l/
  - villages /s/ /z/ /l/
  - lives /s/ /z/ /l/
  - cornflakes /s/ /z/ /l/
  - items /s/ /z/ /l/
  - pens /s/ /z/ /l/
  - roses /s/ /z/ /l/
  - socks /s/ /z/ /l/
  - pears /s/ /z/ /l/
  - biscuits /s/ /z/ /l/
  - knees /s/ /z/ /l/
  - cats /s/ /z/ /l/
  - dreams /s/ /z/ /l/
  - matches /s/ /z/ /l/
  - sports /s/ /z/ /l/
  - languages /s/ /z/ /l/
  - tomatoes /s/ /z/ /l/
  - Max's /s/ /z/ /l/

Connected speech

When we write, we leave spaces between words.

When we speak, we run sounds and words together.

Phonemes vary when in contact with adjacent phonemes from other words.

These variations are the result of connected speech.

- Segments affect each other within individual words, and this influence also operates across word boundaries.
- Three different processes that may characterize connected speech:
  - Assimilation
  - Emission
  - Linking
1. Assimilation

Assimilation is the process by which two adjacent sounds influence the articulation of one another so that they become more alike or identical.

- Assimilation involves the Final Consonant (Cf) and the Initial Consonant (Ci) of two adjacent words:
  
  ![Diagram](image)

- These consonants influence each other in different ways, so that we can distinguish three different types of assimilation:
  
  - **Anticipatory Assimilation**: Cf changes to become like Ci in some way.
    
    ![Diagram](image)
    
    - /k/ becomes /g/ before a velar consonant
    - /s/ becomes /j/ before a velar consonant
    - /t/ becomes /d/ before a velar consonant

  - **Perseverative Assimilation**: Ci influences Cf
    
    ![Diagram](image)
    
    - /k/ becomes /s/ before a bilabial consonant
    - /s/ becomes /z/ before a bilabial consonant
    - /t/ becomes /n/ at the end of a word

  - **Coalescence**: Cf and Ci influence each other reciprocally and may merge into a single consonant.
    
    ![Diagram](image)
    
    - /s/ merges with /r/ in words like "sir" and "tray"

2. Elision

- Elision entails the omission of sounds, syllables or words in connected speech.

- In connected speech, we sometimes link words together.

- The phoneme /q/ cannot occur in syllable-final position in RP, but when word's spelling suggests a final /q/, and a word beginning with a vowel follows, the usual pronunciation for RP speakers is to pronounce /q/.

- Contrast:
  
  - here > [hər] with here are > [hər ə]
  - four > [fər] with four eggs > [fər əɡz]

3. Linking r

- In connected speech, we sometimes link words together.

- The phoneme /r/ cannot occur in syllable-final position in RP, but when word's spelling suggests a final /r/, and a word beginning with a vowel follows, the usual pronunciation for RP speakers is to pronounce /r/.

- Compare:
  
  - there > [ðə] with there are > [ðə ə]
  - four > [fər] with four eggs > [fər əɡz]
Prosodic features
- It goes beyond the individual speech sound.
- It studies other aspects of speech which affect the way that syllables, words, and strings of words are uttered.

Prosodic features are able to convey non-verbal meanings. English is a stress language, i.e. stress is an important part of the spoken identity of an English word.

Word Stress
- Stress is the means by which we give one syllable greater prominence than another.
- The prominence is usually due to an increase in pitch, but also pitch and length may contribute to the overall impression of prominence.
- Pitch is a perceptual characteristics of speech and is closely related to the frequency of vibration of the vocal cords and to the musical notion of low- and rise-pitched notes.
- The placement of stress within words depends on:
  - whether the word is morphologically simple or not, i.e. compound word or word with one or more affixes
  - grammatical category
  - number and structure of syllables
- Stress is graphically marked by a vertical stroke placed on the top-left side of the stressed syllable:

Suprasegmental phonology
- It goes beyond the individual speech sound.
- It studies other aspects of speech which affect the way that syllables, words, and strings of words are uttered.

Prosodic features
- Pitch
- Intonation
- Voice quality
- Volume
- Tempo

Types of stress (1)
- Mono-syllabic words have only a primary stress.
- In polysyllabic words, a secondary stress may also be found besides the primary one, and it is marked by a stroke placed on the bottom left side of the stressed syllable.

Types of stress (2)
1. Semantic: it brings about a change in meaning:
   - blackbird /'blækbrɪd/ vs. black bird
   - digress /'dɪɡrɛs/ vs. dig ree ss
   - greenhouse /'ɡrɛnhaʊs/ vs. green house

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Stress in two-syllable words
- Two syllable Verbs:
  - if the second syllable contains a long vowel or a diphthong:
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Complex word stress (1)

Some regularities:
- Stress is placed on the **last syllable** before the nominal suffix -**by**:
  - violinist
- Stress is placed on the **last syllable** before the adjectival suffix -**ic**:
  - economy
- All abstract nouns ending in -**ion** are stressed on the syllable preceding the suffix:
  - introduction, translation, suggestion
- Stress falls before nominal and adjectival -**am**:
  - grammarian, librarian
- Stress is placed on the **last syllable** before the suffix -**ive**:
  - interactive, reflective

Complex word stress (2)

Stress does not change when the following suffixes are added to words:
- **able** → remarkable, reliable
- **ar** → reader, interpreter
- **ess** → lesson, treasurer
- hood → childhood, likelihood
- **ing** → contributing
- **ish** → childish
- **ion** → nationalism
- **ful** → useful
- **ness** → happiness
- **less** →powerless
- **ly** → officially
- **man** → gentleman
- **ment** → department
- **new** → happiness
- **or** → director
- **some** → handsome
- **ship** → scholarship

Compounds

- A compound is a word made of two words, both of which can exist independently in English.
  - **General rule:**
    - If the **first part** of the compound is **adjectival**, the stress goes on the **second** element:
      - loudspeaker
    - If the **first element** is a **noun**, the stress goes on the **first element**:
      - typewriter, sunrise

Examples of weak forms

- **General rule:**
  - **AND** → an
  - **BLIT** → bit
  - **THAN** → than
  - **OF** → of

- **Strong forms** tend to occur at the **end** of the sentence.

Cats are what I'm fond of.