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Discussion Section:

Boylston Hall, Room 335  
Section 1: Thursdays 3:00–4:00  
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## Discussion Section 9

December 2, 2021

### Metrics and Poetics

- (1) Verbal arts are typically phonologically regulated: meter, rhyme, alliteration, etc.
  - a. These typically follow the same elements of natural phonology
  - b. Meters are based on feet and syllable structure and weight
  - c. Rhyme is based on rime classes, while alliteration is based on onset classes
- (2) Metrics often rely on resyllabification: syllables are ‘recreated’ across word boundaries; if possible the end of a word will be reinterpreted as the onset of the following word.
  - a. As individual words: then | or|der | your | meal
  - b. Resyllabified: the|n or|der | your | meal

Common in English poetry is Iambic Pentameter.

- (3) When discussing poetic metrics, we distinguish Strong/Weak from Stressed/Unstressed
  - a. Strong and Weak refer to the positions in the poetic structure
  - b. Stressed and Unstressed refers to the syllables that take up positions in the poetic structure.
- (4) Iambic Pentameter structure:
  - a. (W S) (W S) (W S) (W S) (W S)
  - b. stress can be placed in either strong or weak positions:
    - (i) Lapses (unstressed-unstressed) are okay  
Shall Í compáre [thee to a] súmmer’ s dáy?
    - (ii) Clashes (stressed-stressed) are okay  
To the [wíde wórld] and áll her fáding swéets
  - c. What is the restriction? W cannot contain a stress maximum: stress between two unstressed syllables without pause
  - d. Inversion: when a foot (W S) has stress-unstressed pronunciation  
[Brúshing] with hásty stéps the déws away
- (5) Other licenses with Iambic Pentameter:
  - a. Feminine ending: final foot has an extra unstressed syllable at the end  
Give nót a wíndy níght a rái[ný mórrów]

- b. W-Resolution: an S position can be occupied by two syllables if the first is a stressed light (no coda) syllable  
Ty[ránni]cal pówer: if hé eváde us thére. (OKAY) -BUT-  
\*I[dénti]cal pówer: if hé eváde us thére. (BAD)
  - c. F-Resolution: two function words can occupy a single W position  
Thus do they, sír: they táke the flów [o' the] Níle
- (6) Quantitative meter: meter which relies on syllable weight rather than 'Strong' and 'Weak' positions.
- a. Greek/Latin dactylic hexameter: 6 feet, the first five are either dactyls (HLL) or spondees (HH)  
(Arma vi)(rumque ca)(nō, Trō)(jae qui) (prīmus a)(b ōrīs)
  - b. Some languages have mora-based poetry: Haiku: 5-7-5 morae, not syllables  
o.ri.hi.me-ni / sui.san shi.ta.ri / yo.bai.bo.shi
- (7) a. Rhyme tends to target correspondence of rime of last stressed syllable and following material:  
wínter / prínter / \*fálter  
detáin / arráign
- b. Alliteration tends to target the onset of the first stressed syllable only  
prínter / práwn  
appárent / póny

## Naturalness and Markedness in Rules

- (8) General a posteriori determiners of naturalness in rules
- a. Typologically frequent:  
We see final devoicing a lot more often than initial devoicing, but both exist.
  - b. Easy to learn via universal grammar:  
English speakers learn High tone spreading more easily than Low tone spreading:  
Glenn 2012
- (9) General a priori determiners of naturalness in rules
- a. Forms of assimilation: structural change features are the same/similar to the context features  

$$V \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} - & \text{BACK} \end{bmatrix} / \begin{bmatrix} - & \text{BACK} \end{bmatrix} C_0\_ \text{ is more natural than}$$

$$V \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} - & \text{BACK} \end{bmatrix} / \begin{bmatrix} - & \text{LOW} \end{bmatrix} C_0\_$$
  - b. Rule naturalness tends to moved towards unmarkedness: if features tend to co-occur, there is more likely to be a rule that makes instances of one always include instances of another.  $\begin{bmatrix} - & \text{CONT} \\ - & \text{SON} \end{bmatrix}$  segments tend to be  $\begin{bmatrix} - & \text{VOI} \end{bmatrix}$  (unmarked combination), so:
 
$$\begin{bmatrix} - & \text{CONT} \\ - & \text{SON} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} - & \text{VOI} \end{bmatrix} \text{ is more natural than}$$

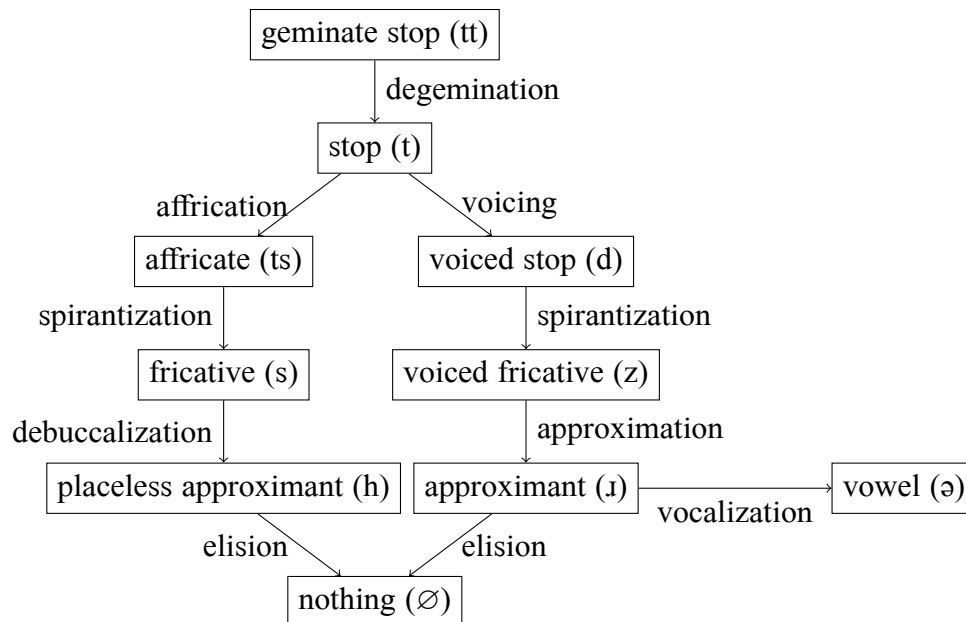
$$\begin{bmatrix} - & \text{CONT} \\ - & \text{SON} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} + & \text{VOI} \end{bmatrix}$$

- c. Caveat: these all depend on context: voicing from vowels is more likely to influence stops

$$\begin{bmatrix} - & \text{CONT} \\ - & \text{SON} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow [- \text{ VOI}] \text{ is natural but}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} - & \text{CONT} \\ - & \text{SON} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow [+ \text{ VOI}] / \text{V\_V is natural too.}$$

Lenition: a family of processes which ‘weaken’ a sound.



## Some extra notes

	CV	CVC	CVN	CVV
(10) Language A	Light			Heavy
Language B	Light		Heavy	
Language C	Light	Heavy		

- (11) The input of a phonological rule is the Underlying Representation (UR) of a word, which is composed of morphemes.

- a. cats: /kæt-z/ > [k<sup>h</sup>æts]

Here the input already has all of the pieces together /kæt/ and /z/, there is no rule that says ‘add z to make plural’ in the phonological component of our grammar, and so we don’t have to worry about that.

- b. Rules apply to segments or natural classes, not to morphemes.

BAD: [ipi] → [ipe] / \_\_ [- HI]

GOOD: [i] → [e] / \_\_ [- HI]

This allows us to make generalizations about the entire language, not just a single portion of it (with a specific morpheme).