Predicting Stress—some generalities

1. 90% of all two syllable nouns stress—on first syllable
   (oven, orchid, lampshade)

2. 60% of all two syllable verbs—on second syllable
   (begin, relate, consign)
   See noun/verb pairs (conflict/conflict; perfect/perfect insult/insult)
   Better: stress the root in most two syllable verbs, e.g.,
   straighten, pleasant, precise, inflict

3. In three syllable words, the stress usually falls on first or second syllable
   (instrument, calendar, vanilla, astonish)
Stress—more generalities

• 4. Compound nouns very regular—first syllable stressed (boat house, lighthouse, classroom)

• 5. Reverse stress pattern for noun clauses, e.g., he bought a white house. It was a blue bird (color, not species: bluebird).

• 6. Words with suffixes of Latin/Greek derivation = predictable pattern. For ity, ic, ical, and tion, stress is always on the syllable before the suffix: commune to community; economy to economic; electricity or electrical; populace to population.
Oral Intelligibility and the Spelling Link
What does Spelling have to do with teaching pronunciation?

• It impacts:
  1. Decoding
  2. Reading Comprehension
  3. Pronunciation Development through prediction
Characteristics of English spelling

- It’s alphabetic, i.e., letters correspond to sounds

- But it’s not purely phonetic as is Spanish or Italian i.e., one symbol corresponding to one sound

- English spelling does, however, show regularity

- English spelling caters to the reader over the speaker
Evidence of English Spelling’s Regularity

– I. English is highly visual, making new vocabulary easy to learn

A. Roots of words are always spelled the same

photograph vs. photographer

photoheliograph

Sign /sayn/ and signal /sɪɡnəl/ vs. sine /sayn/

English: execution, executioner

Spanish: ejecucion, verdugo
Rules and Regularity in English Spelling

• Use of **composite symbols** = combination of two or more letters, forming a single sound: (th, gh, ph, ck, le, ch, ng, tch, sh, qu, wh)

• th, gh, ch have major/minor sounds

• Position and surroundings of critical importance

  Ex.: gh can = /f/ but only at word endings

  Qu, wh = will never end a word

  ch = tch at end of words, varies at beginning
Spelling Rules to Live by

1. grammatical endings always spelled same (ed, ion, ing, al)

2. Homophones (e.g., sun/son; meet/meat) that have no semantic link will appear different, despite identical sounds. Would/wood, won/one

3. Inconsistencies = result of preserving semantic consistencies for reader
   • We have lots of homophones, but very few homographs (read/read)
4. 17 out of 19 consonants have regular one letter to one sound correspondence—
   – Twelve only one letter: sound correspondence (d, f, j, m, n, p, r, v, x, y, z, t)
   – Five with only One sound, though occasionally silent (b, h, k, l, w)
     bomb, honest, knee, could, two.
- Two exceptions:
  c  s
Spelling Rules to Live by

• 5. Doubled consonants keep their same sound value. . .
  (ebb, odd, ruff, egg, call, inn, stopping, purr, mass, putt, jazz, & tobacco,
  unless followed by e: accept

• 6. /th/ in function words always voiced.
  (the, this, that, those, these).
Spelling Rules to Live by

6. Some symbols (letters) used only to signal shift in sound value of other symbols, e.g., silent “e” Ex.: sine, cage, ice
Discovering Rules

A. When is c = /s/ or /k/?

- cell, certain, place, dance, city, cycle, policy
- cat, catch, cup, cry, coin, call, cake, could

Rule: /s/ when followed by i, e, y
/k/ when followed by everything else
Discovery Rules

B. Rules for Vowels in monosyllabic words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>sound 1</th>
<th>sound 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>/ey/ (hate)</td>
<td>/æ/ (hat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>/iy/ (Pete)</td>
<td>/ε/ (pet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>/ay/ (mine)</td>
<td>/ɪ/ (mitt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>/ow/ (note)</td>
<td>/a/ (not)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>/uw/ (cute)</td>
<td>/Λ/ (cut)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. If followed by single consonant, column 2
(hop, bat, bit, nut, kit, sit, set)

B. If followed by two consonants, column 2
(rest, past, must, cost, half, bulb)

C. If followed by consonant and then e, column 1
(cake, side, joke, mute, while)

D. If two vowels together, column 1: “when two vowels go walking, the first one does the talking” meat, bait, sweet
• C. How do readers know that single /a/ in relation is pronounced as /mate/? Or that e is /iy/ in repletion but /ɛ/ in depend? depletion, completion, inflation, debating, independence, repentance

Rule: count number of consonants following vowel, exclusive of suffix. If one consonant, column 1
• Ex. In “depletion” True for a, e, o, u

• Rule for “I”: Always short in syllable prior to suffixes having “i” in it: ion, ial, ious, ian, ia, iar, io, ior, ium, ius, iate, ient, iant, iary, iable

• If suffix does not begin with “I” then above rule follows: primacy, climate, confinement
Sources of NNS problems using our spelling system to pronounce words

1. If L1 also uses Roman alphabet, may often have different sound for symbol
   E.g., German “v” stands for /f/

2. NNS whose L1 doesn’t use Roman alphabet will have to adjust to spelling conventions
   E.g., In Japanese, symbol represents syllable, not single sound

3. Over generalization, particularly for Spanish, Italian speakers used to one to one correspondence
   E.g., Italian speakers may spell “cough” as “kof”

4. If NNS can’t hear sound, will misspell it.
   Ex. Japanese: “largers” for Rogers
   Spanish: “mass” for “math.”

Spelling can be a great diagnostic tool for identifying pronunciation problems
Some Spelling Teaching Activities

1. **Self-Discovery**
   - **Self-discovery of rules**
   - Ask students to read aloud two lists of words. When they recognize that there are two sounds for “c” ask them to discern the rule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List A</th>
<th>List B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cell</td>
<td>cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>certain</td>
<td>catch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td>cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dance</td>
<td>coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>cry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cycle</td>
<td>coin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cent</td>
<td>cake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decide</td>
<td>came</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cinema</td>
<td>cost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching ideas

• 2. Learning about one value sounds for composite consonants
• Read aloud words and ask students to write down how many sounds they hear for each word.

For example

Queen (3)    quit (3)    prolong (5)    ringlet (6)    mock (3)    black (3)    photograph (7)    whip (3)    when (_)    stretch (_)    wheat (3)    usher (_)    shop (3)    cash (3)

• Then, using a list of consonants, vowels, and composite consonants, ask them to match what letters stand for each sound.

E.g.      1  2  3  1  2  3  4  5  6  7
• Qu ee n    pr    o    l    o    ng
• M o ck    r    l    ng    l    e    t
• Bl a ck    ph    o    t    o    gr    a    ph
• Str e tch
• Wh ea t
• U sh er
• Sh o p
Teaching ideas

• 3. Learning about position constraints on English words

Look at a list of nonsense words and ask students which break the rules of spelling and thus could not be English words

Miqu lowh meewh whipson whaply whoy
Thock queep shasting plick ckall nequilt
Nooqu ctacho tchert fitch phit upsiph
Ling ngurt mang nong phatter

Miqu lowh meewh ckall nooqu ctacho, tchert, ngurt (variation—play scrabble)
Teaching Ideas

4. **Silent e rule**

Give following pairs for oral practice: cut/cute, pip/pipe, fin/fine, man/mane, etc.

Then, give them only one part of the pair, and ask them to produce the other member of the pair.

E.g., us/___, ___/hope, sin/___

us/use, hop/hope, sin/sine
Teaching Ideas

- 5. Discovering the rule of single vowel letters in polysyllabic words

- Using a list of words with vowel letters a, e, o, u in the stressed syllable have students read them and identify their “name” sound or “short” sound:

- Sample words: relation, collection, action, explosion, completion, discussion, confusion, option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>o</th>
<th>u</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name value</td>
<td>Relation</td>
<td></td>
<td>explosion</td>
<td>confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short value</td>
<td></td>
<td>collection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Ideas

Step two, for each word with single vowel in stressed syllable, have students mark the suffix and indicate the stress.

E.G., re LAT/ion ACT/ion OP/tion con FU/sion

• 6. **Play pronunciation bingo** (see pronunciation segmental handout)
Impact on teaching ESL

• Make sure learners can distinguish vowel letters from consonant letters
  Rest: CVCC
  Strong: CCCVCC

• Learners need to be able to identify affixes: prefixes and suffixes—as well as roots unreliability

• Learners must be aware of syllables and identify how many in a word (Another great activity: counting syllables)