

The Phonetics of English Pronunciation

Session 10

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Word-stress patterns so far

- German compounds generally have the main stress on the left-most elements:

'Fröschen,gasse

This is often also the case in English, but there are some easily remembered word-classes that are different - i.e. the main stress is on the right:

,Bayswater 'Road and 'Tottenham ,Court 'Road

- Generally: all **road names** belong to this category:
 - *,Bearwood 'Road, ,Euston 'Road, etc.*
 - *,Cromptons 'Avenue, ,Ridley 'Avenue, etc.*
 - *,Pheasant 'Close, ,Bedwin 'Close, etc.*
- With one important exception:
'Oxford ,Street, 'Regents ,Street, 'High ,Street, etc.

Stress patterns: Named Buildings

- Named buildings and monuments also have ,xx'xx:
*,Buckingham 'Palace, ,Albert 'Hall, ,National 'Gallery,
,Westminster 'Abbey, ,Stone'henge, ,Marble 'Arch, ,Euston
'Station, ,Covent 'Garden, etc.*
- And remember, with *three* elements: 'xx,xx'xx
'Tottenham ,Court 'Road, etc.
- Exception: 'xx *Mu,seum*:
*'Science Mu,seum, National 'History Mu,seum, The Vic,toria
and 'Albert Mu,seum, etc.*

Stress patterns: Bodies of Water

- Seas and lakes, etc. have ,xx'xx:
the ,North 'Sea (compare: 'Nord,see), *the ,English 'Channel*
(compare: 'Ärmelka,nal), *,Loch 'Ness*, *,Lake 'Michigan*,
Ni,agara 'Falls, etc.
- And compare:
the At'lantic but: *the At,lantic 'Ocean*
the Pa'cific but: *the Pa,cific 'Ocean*

Stress patterns: Adj. + Noun

- Adjective + Noun: Same in English and German:
,red 'hair – ,rote 'Haare, ,blue 'sky – ,blauer 'Himmel
- But Adj. + Noun **compounds** are (unfortunately) variable:
 - Some contrast with the German 'xx,xx pattern:
,short 'story – 'Kurzge,schichte
,civil 'war – 'Bürger,krieg
 - But many English Adj. + Noun compounds are 'xx,xx:
'black,bird, 'blue,print, 'short,bread, 'dark,room, etc.
- The first category is clearly problematical for German speakers. *They just have to be learned!*
- And there are pitfalls (because German has exceptions too):
the 'White ,House – das ,Weiße 'Haus (not a compound), etc.

Stress patterns: Other pitfalls

- Unfortunately, a number of English 'xx,xx noun compounds have become German words. . . and have changed to a non-German pattern!

English

German

<i>'make-,up</i>	<i>,Make-'up</i>	<i>/,me:k'ʔap/</i>
<i>'know-,how</i>	<i>,Know-'how</i>	<i>/,no:'haʊ/</i>
<i>'come,back</i>	<i>,Come'back</i>	<i>/,kam'bæk/</i>
<i>'check,in</i>	<i>,Check-'in</i>	<i>/,tʃɛk'ʔɪn/</i>
<i>'count,down</i>	<i>,Count'down</i>	<i>/,kaʊnt'daʊn/</i>
<i>'pull,over</i>	<i>,Pull'over</i>	<i>/,pʊ'lo:və/</i>
<i>'lay,out</i>	<i>,Lay'out</i>	<i>/,le:'ʔaʊt/</i>

- But not all the loans necessarily change:
'work,out – *'Work,out* */'vœək,ʔaʊt/*

Stress patterns: Adj. + Past Participle

- Compounds comprising an Adjective + Past participle usually differ from German (in the way we have come to expect):
,over'paid – 'überbe,zahlt
- This is a very common form of adjectival compound:
,short-'sighted, ,blue-'blooded, ,thick-'skinned, ,long-'haired, ,fine-'tuned, ,thin-'waisted, etc.
- The same pattern applies even if the word before the participle is not an adjective:
Noun + PP: *,lily-'livered, ,gold-'plated, ,felt-'tipped, etc.*
Adverb + PP: *,well-be'haved, etc.* As always, there are exceptions (Noun + PP): *'flood,lit, etc.*

Stress patterns: Stress shift!

- Adjectives can be used both **predicatively**:

he's ,over'paid

and **attributively**:

He's an 'over,paid 'manager

The stress pattern has *shifted* to avoid having two stresses too close together.

- This **stress shift** takes place whenever a ,xx'xx adjective is used attributively:

,lily-'livered → 'lily-,livered 'coward

,well-be'haved → 'well-be,haved 'child

,gold-'plated → 'gold-,plated 'watch

,felt-'tipped → 'felt-,tipped 'pen

- Not really a problem: a similar stress shift occurs in German:
Die Ausstellung war ,gut be'sucht. – Eine 'gut be,suchte 'Ausstellung

Stress patterns: Phrasal verbs

- Phrasal verbs have a ,xx'xx pattern:
He was tired but he ,kept 'on and didn't ,give 'up.
- There are great many phrasal verbs; here's a sample:
,cover 'up, ,point 'out, ,pull 'out, ,pile 'up, ,close 'down, ,shut 'up, ,shut 'down, ,pull 'down, ,turn 'over, etc.
- Some word sequences can operate as phrasal verbs or as verb + (unstressed) preposition, e.g.:

<i>run + down</i>	<i>He ,ran the others 'down.</i>	= phrasal verb
vs.	<i>He 'ran down the 'hill.</i>	= verb + prep.
<i>turn + in</i>	<i>The thief ,turned himself 'in.</i>	= phrasal verb
vs.	<i>Beethoven 'turned in his 'grave.</i>	= verb + prep.

Stress patterns: Adjectives from Phrasal verbs

- Phrasal verbs: *to ,wear 'out* *to ,tire 'out*
Adj.: *,worn 'out* *,tired 'out*
“She was feeling *,worn 'out* *,tired 'out.*”
(But remember stress-shift!: *Her 'worn-,out 'shoes*)
- Other examples:
to ,run 'down → *to feel ,run 'down*
to ,chill 'out → *to be ,chilled 'out*
- Some adjectives are similar but have no corresponding phrasal verb: “She was feeling completely *,fed-'up.*”

Stress patterns: Conclusions

- Stress causes *stress*!
- There are some regular sources of interference, which we have dealt with. . . and which you need to learn and remember.
- There is no escaping the need to learn and, as with other aspects of pronunciation, to *overlearn* the stress patterns of the words you learn.

Otherwise, they will not be correct when you are busy thinking what to say (rather than how to say it!)

- The stress-shift phenomena are probably not as bad as you think. The same thing happens in German.

Transcription exercise (1)

Last Sunday, Susan and Peter went to an old-fashioned
la:z'sʌndi 'su:zɪən 'pi:tə 'went' tuːwən'əʊld ,fæʃnd

garden-party in the gardens of the town hall.
'gɑ:dɪ ,pɑ:tɪjɪ ŋ ðə 'gɑ:dɪnzəv ðə ,taʊn 'hɔ:l

It was a disaster and nearly caused them to break up.
ɪt wəzə di'zɑ:stə'ən'niəli 'kɔ:zɪ ðəm tə ,breɪk'ʌp

Transcription exercise (2)

The trouble was, Susan did not realise it was
ðə 'trʌbl̩ | 'wɒz ,su:zən 'dɪdnt 'rɪəlaɪzɪt wəz

going to be old-fashioned.
'gəʊɪŋ tə biː'ɒld 'fæʃnd

She expected something more hi-tec and trendy.
ʃiː'ɛkspektɪd 'sʌmθɪŋ 'mɔ: ,haɪ'tekən 'trendi

Transcription exercise (3)

After a show-down in the middle of the first speech –
'ɑ:ftə^rə 'ʃəʊ,daʊn_un_u ðə 'mɪd_ləv ðə 'fɜ:s_s'spi:tʃ –

by Lady somebody-or-other – she walked out on him.
baɪ 'leɪdi ,sʌmbədi^jə^r,ʌðə ʃi ,wɔ:kt_u'aʊt_uɒn_uɪm

Peter was totally fed-up, but I heard that they
'pi:tə wəz 'təʊtli_i ,fed_uʌp bət_u aɪ 'hɜ:d_u ðæt_u ðeɪ

made up again later.
,meɪd_u'ʌp_uəgen 'leɪtə