9. Word stress – Part 2: Primary stress

Before you study this chapter, check whether you are familiar with the following terms: allophonic rules, auto-stressed ending, clear-L, compound, dark-L, Early Stress Requirement, function word, Iambic Secondary Stress, neutral suffix, non-neutral suffix, peak, prefix, pre-stressed, primary stress, prominence of the right edge, rhyme, secondary stress, self-stressed, stem, suffix, tapping, tertiary stress.

This chapter deals with primary stress assignment in underived verbs, nouns, and adjectives. Adverbs usually follow the rules for adjectives, and most of them are formed with a derivational suffix (e.g., *extréme – extrémely*), so they are not treated separately. The remaining word classes belong to the category of function words, which was discussed in Chapter 7.

Let us start with the differences between the English and the Hungarian stress system, some of which are also mentioned in Chapters 7 and 8 above. As opposed to Hungarian, where the first, i.e., leftmost, syllable is stressed in all words, primary stress can fall on virtually any of the syllables in English. What is more, according to the prominence of the right edge, English primary stress prefers the right edge of the word in the sense that in unsuffixed forms the strongest stress is not normally placed more than three syllables away from the end, irrespective of the length of the word.

Another basic difference between the two languages lies in the **information types determining stress placement**. On the one hand, Chapter 8 elaborated on the role of *morphology* in English – something unheard of in Hungarian with respect to stress placement. On the other hand, the *syntactic* class of the word also plays a role in English: function words behave

differently from non-function words, what is more, nouns and verbs are shown below to have established two distinct patterns. In addition, as has been suggested before, each regularity has a considerable number of exceptions – the stress pattern of these words has to be simply memorized since it is unpredictable: it is an idiosyncratic feature of the *lexical* item.

Even *phonology* makes a much more complex contribution to stress rules. While in Hungarian the only piece of phonological information required for stress placement is the position of the syllable (the first syllable in the word gets stressed automatically), in English not only is its position relevant but so is its structure. More specifically, the English stress system is **quantity-sensitive**: it is strongly influenced by the amount of material found in syllables. In this respect, there are two basic syllable types: **light** and **heavy syllables**. A syllable is light if it contains a short vowel and is not closed by a consonant; all the other possibilities (with a long vowel – a long monophthong or a diphthong – and/or with (a) final consonant(s)) make the syllable heavy. Crucially, the consonant(s) preceding the peak do(es) not count: a syllable like /tɪ/ is light in the same way as /trɪ/ or /strɪ/ or /ɪ/, while /ɪt/ is heavy even though altogether it consists of fewer elements than /strɪ/. Similarly, a syllable like /eɪ/ or /eɪt/ or /teɪ/ is characterized by one type of behaviour (it is heavy) as opposed to, say, /bre/. Therefore, we can state that although this phenomenon is traditionally referred to as **syllable weight**, in fact, it is only governed by the number of elements in and following the peak – the portion of the syllable that we call the rhyme (cf. Chapter 5) – that is, the name **rhyme weight** is more appropriate. A piece of warning is in order here: do not let spelling mislead you! The second syllable in *va<u>r</u>iety* or *ho<u>r</u>izon* is /raɪ/ and thus heavy, whereas the second syllable in *va<u>r</u>ious* or *ho<u>r</u>izontal* is /rɪ/ and consequently light.

Rhyme weight is relevant to stress placement in that in English, heavy syllables attract stress. E.g., the readers are invited to check for themselves that the words *a.ro.ma, e.nig.ma, al.ge.bra, in.du.stry* all consist of three syllables (divided by dots), out of which only one is heavy (underlined), and that one is primary-stressed. However, word-final consonants normally do not count: words like *a.ban.don,* GA *ten.der, pa.ren.tal, can.cel, de.ter.mine* contain two heavy syllables, but stress always falls on the non-final one – the word-final consonant is unable to make its syllable heavy. Such "invisible" segments are usually referred to as **extrametrical**, being outside the scope of meter, i.e., rhythm; in the rest of the chapter, we indicate extrametrical material by putting it in parentheses, e.g., *abando(n), tende(r), determi(ne)*. Notice that the *-e* at the end of *determine* is not a sound but a silent letter only: it does not really matter whether it is or is not included in the parentheses.

The status of final consonants is of great significance since, as it was mentioned in Chapter 8, the directionality of primary stress placement is right to left. That is, stress rules start scanning the syllables with the last one and proceed towards the beginning of the word, in such a way that primary stress is assigned to the first heavy syllable available, but not later than the second syllable from the end. If word-final consonants were visible to these stress rules, all words ending in at least one consonant sound would end in a heavy syllable and be primary stressed there – but this is not what we find: *abandon* and the like are stressed on the second-last syllable.

Now the time has come to formulate the **Main Stress Rule** (MSR) for verbs, nouns, and adjectives.[1] Let us start with **verbs**: in this case, the final consonant (if there is one) is extrametrical. If the remaining syllable is heavy,

[1] Bear in mind that primary stress assignment takes place within monomorphemic words – more complex word forms, including compounds, are stressed according to the effect of the two affix classes and the compound stress rule familiar from previous chapters.

it is stressed; if it is light, the preceding syllable is stressed. In a verb like *torment*, for example, there are two syllables: *tor.ment*. The final /t/ is extrametrical: *tor.men*(*t*). Thus we are left with *men* as the final syllable, which is heavy (it contains a short vowel plus a consonant), so it receives the primary stress: *tormént*. That is why final stress is usual in verbs ending with at least two consonants: *eléct, seléct, arrést, adópt, laménт,* etc. When a verb ends in a single consonant, the length of the preceding vowel decides: if it is long, as in *unite* /-naɪ(t)/*, erase* /-reɪ(z)/*, achieve* /-tʃiː(v)/, the final syllable is still heavy, and therefore stressed; otherwise the second-last syllable is stressed, e.g., *trável, fínish, ínjure, astónish, vómit, consíder.* Logically, if the verb ends in a vowel, there is nothing to be extrametrical, and the length of that vowel automatically determines the place of stress: in *cárry*, the final vowel is short and the second-last syllable carries the stress, but the last one does so in *applý*, the vowel in question being long /aɪ/. Notice that the second-last syllable is never checked for rhyme weight: it does not need to be because primary stress cannot move further to the left anyway (except for the Alternating Stress Rule, to be discussed below) – recall the prominence of the right edge. Therefore the same syllable is stressed in *a.stó.ni*(*sh*) and *con.sí.de*(*r*) although there is a heavy syllable (underlined) in the latter.[2]

There is one case when, predictably, the regularity described above does not apply, due to a morphological effect not yet mentioned: we need to take a detour here and discuss the role of **verbal prefixes** in stress assignment. Similarly to suffixes, these prefixes can be divided into two basic subtypes: neutral and non-neutral prefixes. **Neutral prefixes** never influence the place of stress in the stem – instead, they are (secondary or tertiary) stressed themselves. In fact, they attach to the stem so loosely that even the

[2] It goes without saying that, as the example words above are not longer than three syllables, primary stress placement satisfies the prominence of the left edge, too.

frequently occurring stress clash that they cause does not disturb their status, cf. *dèbúg, ùnplúg, upsét, òut-Hérod,* rèwínd, etc. In contrast, certain monosyllabic verbal prefixes are **non-neutral**: they resist primary stress and consequently, they systematically overwrite the results of the above mechanism. For instance, consider two verbs, *vomit* and *omit*. Segmentally, they minimally differ: the former contains an extra consonant at the beginning. In fact, since that consonant is a syllable-initial one it is not even expected to affect stress placement – recall that only syllable-final consonants are able to contribute to weight. Nevertheless, *vómit* has initial primary stress, which conforms to the MSR as introduced above, as opposed to *omít*, which has, rather surprisingly, final stress. The source of the difference in stressing cannot be phonological in nature since there is no relevant pronunciation difference between the two words on the segmental level. It follows, then, that morphology is to blame: while *vomit* consists of a single morpheme, *omit* can be analysed into a prefix, *o-* (also appearing in *oppose, oppress, occur*) and a stem, *-mit* (also appearing in *submit, remit, admit, permit, commit*), and in all such examples consistently it is the stem which carries primary stress rather than the prefix. Therefore we conclude that stems enjoy a priviledge over peripheral elements like prefixes: even if a monosyllabic stem is light (e.g., *mi*(*t*)), it is assigned primary stress since the monosyllabic prefix "throws back" the stress to it. Interestingly, very often this stress-resistance of a prefix does not have the chance to manifest itself because the stem is heavy, e.g., *províde, retúrn,* but the effect is visible in a host of other examples such as *omít, expél, commít, attách*, etc.

Sometimes a disyllabic prefix or two monosyllabic prefixes are attached to a monosyllabic stem. It should be self-evident that in such words primary stress falls on the stem, and the first syllable must be secondary stressed in accordance with the Early Stress Requirement, cf. ì*nter-véne,*

còntra-díct, rè-pre-sént, cò-rre-spónd, etc. It is crucial that in these examples the stem is monosyllabic: when the final syllable does not constitute the stem alone, as in *éx-ecute, ré-cognize, intér-rogate*, the prefix fuses with the stem totally and the so-called Alternating Stress Rule, to be introduced below, comes into effect.

Verbs, then, tend to be end-stressed when the last syllable is heavy (even without the final consonant), otherwise primary stress normally falls on the second-last syllable, except when it is a verbal prefix. As usual, the algorithm provided above ("the word-final consonant is extrametrical, the remaining last syllable is stressed if heavy, else the preceding syllable is stressed") suffers from its exceptions: sometimes a light final syllable is stressed, as in *caréss*, *posséss*, GA *haráss* (mind you, the final double <ss> stands for a short /s/, which is extrametrical!); at other times a long-vowelled final syllable fails to be assigned primary stress, e.g., *fóllow, hárrow, swállow, hállow.*

Now let us pay some attention to **nouns**. The nominal subclause of the MSR differs from the verbal one in the portion of the word which is usually extrametrical, that is, non-stressable. Namely, in nouns it is the whole final syllable that does not take part in the stress placement procedure, at least when it contains a short vowel. That is why disyllabic nouns are normally stressed on the second-last (=first) syllable (e.g., *táble, páttern, chílli, Lóndon, trúmpet, férry*, GA *míssile* /ˈmɪsl/, etc.), except for just a handful of words like *evént, hotél, Japán, succéss, Berlín*, etc. This is easily accounted for with reference to the extrametricality of the last syllable. In all other respects the MSR for nouns is the same as the MSR for verbs: do not consider the final syllable – if the remaining rightmost syllable is heavy, it is stressed; if it is light, the preceding syllable is stressed. That is why in longer

nouns the weight of the second-last syllable decides the fate of primary stress: in *a.ré*.(*na*) /əˈriːnə/, *a.ró*.(*ma*) /əˈrəʊmə/, *con.sén*.(*sus*), *hi.á*.(*tus*) /haɪˈeɪtəs/, *ho.rí*.(*zon*) /həˈraɪzn/, *sy.nóp*.(*sis*), *u.tén*.(*sil*), *ve.rán*.(*da*) it (underlined) is heavy and therefore stressed; in *A.mé.ri*.(*ca*), *a.ná.ly*.(*sis*) /əˈnælɪsɪs/, *á.ste*.(*risk*), *cí.ne*.(*ma*), *cu.rrí.cu*.(*lum*), *hy.pó.the*.(*sis*) /haɪˈpɒθəsɪs/, *já.ve*.(*lin*), *me.tró.po*.(*lis*) it is light and consequently the syllable to the left carries primary stress.

If the last syllable of a noun contains a long vowel, it is very often an auto-stressed ending and receives primary stress accordingly (see Chapter 8), e.g., *brocáde, millionáire, questionnáire, nominée, enginéer, voluntéer, kangaróo, machíne, Tennessée*. Otherwise such nouns fall into one of two categories: they follow either the verbal subclause of the MSR (e.g., GA *ballét*, *baróque, cigár,* GA *detáil, helló, Julý, políce, regíme, trombóne* – cf. *uníte, applý*), or the compound stress rule (RP *bállet*, RP *détail*, *féllow, ménu,* RP *míssile* /ˈmɪsaɪl/, *vénue* – cf. *bláckboard, ráinbow*).

However, nouns with long-vowelled final syllables do not present the only complication – perhaps all the possible exceptional configurations exist. First, a light second-last syllable is primary stressed in *va.ní.lla, spa.ghé.tti, um.bré.lla, Vi.é.nna, pro.fé.ssor; Di.á.na, pi.á.no*, and a handful of other words. (Keep in mind that consonant doubling in spelling does not indicate length in pronunciation!) Second, a heavy second-last syllable is skipped by the MSR in *chá.rac.ter, cá.len.dar, á.djec.tive, pá.ssen.ger*, etc. Finally, in some nouns primary stress exceptionally moves further away from the right edge: the fourth-last syllable is stressed in, e.g., *cémetery, cátegory,* RP *labóratory, céremony, ágriculture, télevision, hélicopter*, and the fifth-last in *véterinary.*

The difference between nouns and verbs becomes clearly noticeable in segmentally (nearly) identical **noun-verb pairs**. The usual state of affairs in such cases is the following: since in verbs only the final consonant is extrametrical, while in nouns it is the whole final syllable, it logically follows that primary stress will fall one syllable closer to the left edge in nouns. Thus *digest* the verb has primary stress on the (heavy) final syllable: *di.gés*(*t*), while *digest* the noun must have initial stress: *dí.*(*gest*). The same applies to *récord* (n) – *recórd* (v)*, ímport* (n) – *impórt* (v), *úpdate* (n) – *updáte* (v), *áccent* (n) – *accént* (v), *ségment* (n) – *segmént* (v), *súrvey* (n) – *survéy* (v), *tránsport* (n) – *transpórt* (v), *cóntrast* (n) – *contrást* (v), *désert* (n) – *desért* (v), *óbject* (n) – *objéct* (v), etc. Naturally, the stress resistance of verbal prefixes is only applicable to verbs but not to nouns, that is how word pairs like *rébel* (n) – *rebél* (v) or *pérmit* (n) – *permít* (v) emerge.

Nevertheless, in a few cases the noun and the verb in such pairs have the same stress pattern, either the noun copying the verbal stress pattern (as in *attáck, debáte, reséarch, surpríse,* GA *detáil,* etc.) or the verb copying that of the corresponding noun (as in *áccess, cómfort, cómment, cóntact,* RP *détail, ínterest, ínterview* (a compound noun exemplifying 103) etc.).

The third major word category, **adjectives** have not developed a third form of extrametricality but are divided between the nominal and the verbal patterns. On the one hand, derived adjectives (ending in, e.g., *-al, -ar, -ous, -ant, -ent*) behave like nouns and have an extrametrical final syllable: *fa.mí.li.(ar), fá.(mous), gé.ne.(rous), íg.no.(rant), pa.rén.(tal), pí.vo.(tal), vá.ri.(ous)*). These suffixes make the adjectives behave as nouns as far as stress rules go, inasmuch as it is nouns whose last syllable is not normally stressable. On the other hand, underived adjectives and adjectives ending in *-ic, -id, -it* usually behave like verbs: *a.frái(d), a.rách.ni(d), cér.tai(n), có.mmo(n), ex.plí.ci(t),*

ex.tré(me), Pla.tó.ni(c), púr.p(le), sin.cé(re) /sɪnˈsɪə(r)/*, su.pré(me)*. You may have noticed that the three endings belonging here have the same effect as if they were pre-stressed – in fact, some are listed as such in Chapter 8. After all, they are monosyllabic with a short vowel and an (extrametrical) single consonant: they inevitably make a light final syllable, so it naturally follows that the preceding syllable is stressed. Therefore, we are unable to distinguish between the two possible analyses: they are either taken as pre-stressed suffixes, or the adjectives which they produce are considered to behave as verbs as far as stress rules go, inasmuch as it is verbs whose final consonant is not normally visible in stress assignment. It is also noteworthy that a number of underived adjectives are so undeniably verbal in nature that they exhibit exactly the same stress pattern as the corresponding segmentally identical verbs, e.g., *corréct, compléte*, GA *abstráct.*

In sum, adjective-forming suffixes and endings fall into two categories: some of them, such as *-al, -ar, -ous*, etc., trigger the nominal subclause of the MSR, whereas others, like *-ic, -id, -it*, trigger the verbal subclause. What the two groups have in common is that they are non-neutral suffixes in the sense the term is introduced in the previous chapter: they *do* influence the way primary stress is placed in the word. Consequently, we can state that, in addition to auto-stressed and pre-stressed, we have identified a third class of non-neutral suffixes and endings, whose members fix the position of the main stress by simply launching the application of the MSR on the adjective. Some authors call them **integrated suffixes**.

At this point we are able to introduce the **Alternating Stress Rule**, which goes as follows: if the last syllable of a verb is stressable (i.e., heavy even without the final consonant), and the verb has more than two syllables, primary stress moves to the third-last syllable, and the stress of the final

syllable is reduced to tertiary. Examples include the verbs *mánifest, éxercise, hármonize, décorate, súpplement, cómplement, cómpliment, súbstitute, éxecute, récognize, invéstigate, elíminate, anníhilate, exággerate*, etc., all with a (0)103 stress pattern. The Alternating Stress Rule is an almost inviolable constraint on verbs (it only has a handful of exceptions like *contínue, contríbute, distríbute*), and it overwrites the result of the MSR, without respect for the prominence of the right edge. However, as mentioned above, in words containing a verbal prefix the Alternating Stress Rule can only apply if the final syllable of the verb is not a monosyllabic stem; otherwise the MSR produces the expected output with the primary stress at the end and a secondary stress at the beginning (according to the Early Stress Requirement). For example, there is no stress alternation in *ètrapóse* since it is composed of a verbal prefix (underlined) plus a monosyllabic stem, as opposed to, say, *díagnose*, where there is because of the absence of the verbal prefix. In *intérrogate*, for instance, we experience the effect of the Alternating Stress Rule as, although it contains a verbal prefix (underlined), the stem is disyllabic; whereas in *ìntervéne* the same prefix attaches to a monosyllabic stem and consequently the cooperation of the MSR and the Iambic Secondary Stress Rule takes place. The same features characterize *extrápolate* vs. *ètrapóse*.

Sometimes the Alternating Stress Rule is extended to word classes other than verbs, so certain three-syllable adjectives, such as *ábsolute, grándiose*, RP *óbsolete*, also undergo it. In addition, a number of adjectives and nouns simply copy the pronunciation of the corresponding verbs, thus they also appear to be subject to stress alternation, e.g., *súbstitute* (v/n), *éxercise* (v/n), *mánifest* (v/adj/n). Nouns with a long-vowelled final syllable belong here, too: they are claimed above to often behave like verbs – this is also true in the case of the Alternating Stress Rule. Nouns like *ávenue,*

Fáhrenheit, ánecdote, sácrifice, mínuscule, pédigree, Válentine, RP *stálactite/stálagmite* illustrate this.

To conclude the discussion of the three major word classes with respect to stressing, let us highlight a few additional pairs of remarkable segmentally nearly identical nouns, adjectives, and verbs. When the adjective in such a word pair is stressed as a verb, for example because it is underived, its stress pattern is the mirror image of the noun, as in *Áugust* (n) – *augúst* (adj), *cóntent* (n) – *contént* (adj), *mínute* (n) – minúte /maɪˈnjuːt/ (adj). In a few, exceptional examples the adjective receives nominal stress – then it is the mirror image of the verb, e.g., *presént* (v) – *présent* (adj/n), *perféct* (v) – *pérfect* (adj/n), *suspéct* (v) – *súspect* (adj/n). Certain endings characterize both nouns/adjectives and verbs, but somewhat differ in the two cases (e.g., *-ment*, *-ate*). *Complement*, for instance, is always primary stressed on the first syllable, however, the third vowel is a schwa in the noun (yielding 100) but unreduced /e/ in the verb (103). This is because the last syllable in nouns is not normally stressable (recall that it is extrametrical!); in contrast, in the verb that syllable is heavy (even without the final /t/) and such three-syllable verbs are expected to undergo the Alternating Stress Rule. Further examples: *cómpliment, dócument, súpplement*. Exactly the same happens in words ending in *-ate*: this suffix-like morpheme contains a full diphthong (/-eɪt/) when final in a verb but just a schwa (/-ət/) when final in an adjective, e.g., *delíberate* (v-adj), in a noun, e.g., *délegate* (v-n), *éstimate* (v-n), or both, e.g., *assóciate* (v-n/adj), *gráduate* (v-n/adj), *séparate* (v-n/adj).

With respect to the above discussion of the English MSR, it cannot be left unnoticed how intimately primary stress placement is connected to **syllabification**. When a consonant is situated between two vowels in a

morpheme, it is not at all indifferent whether it belongs to the syllable headed by the first one, making it a heavy syllable, or to the one headed by the second vowel, and being a syllable-initial consonant, it is incapable of influencing stress assignment. All the regular cases treated above suggest that it is the latter solution which is chosen, that is, in the intervocalic position syllable-initial consonants are created. Take the word *skeletal* for example. It is a derived adjective following the nominal pattern (see above), therefore the final syllable is expected to be extrametrical, the last "visible" syllable is checked for weight but only receives primary stress if it is heavy. If the syllable divisions were located as the dots indicate in *skel.et.al*, the underlined syllable would be classified as heavy and assigned primary stress: **skelétal*. Nevertheless, this adjective is stressed at the very beginning: *skéletal*, which can only be accounted for if we suppose that the syllabification is the following: *ske.le.tal*. The underlined syllable is light and consequently the preceding, first syllable is primary stressed. We conclude that single consonants are initial in the syllable whenever possible.

Moreover, two- or three-member consonant clusters get syllabified into the following syllable, too, on condition that they constitute a well-formed initial cluster. Compare two nouns, *algebra* and *agenda*, and concentrate on the consonants between the second and third vowels. The /br/ in the former is a possible initial cluster (cf. the Sonority Principle in Chapter 5) while the /nd/ in the latter is not – the two cases are predicted to be syllabified and therefore stressed differently: the final non-extrametrical syllable is light in *ál.ge*.(*bra*) but heavy in *a.gén*.(*da*). Examples like *sý.mme*.(*try*), RP *quá.dru*.(*ple*), *á.de*.(*quate*), illustrate that indeed as many consonants are syllabified as initial as possible. The fact that the underlined syllables are not stressed can only be due to their lightness; the fact that they are light can only be due to the absence of a closing consonant.

There is, however, a problematic case: word-medial *sC* sequences do not always appear to constitute syllable-initial clusters. While they do in *mí.ni.*(*ster*), *Mán.che.*(*ster*), *ín.du.*(*stry*), *ór.che.*(*stra*) quoted above, their members belong to separate syllables in *se.més.*(*ter*), *A.lás.*(*ka*), *a.spi.dís.*(*tra*). Recall from Chapter 5 that /s/ takes part in the construction of syllables in a special way in various respects, exhibiting far more combinatorial possibilities than any other consonant, one consequence of which is the curious fact that certain /s/+consonant clusters are found both at the beginning and the end of words (i.e., syllables). For instance, while /br/ is only possible initially and not finally (examples like *brim* exist, but **mibr* would be ill-formed), and /nd/ is only possible finally and not initially (*lend* vs. **ndel*), we see /st/ in both *stab* and *bast*, /sp/ in both *spill* and *lisp*, /sk/ in both *scut* and *tusk*. We can conclude therefore that /br/ is unambiguously syllable-initial, but the same does not hold true for, at least, /s/ plus voiceless plosive sequences, which is likely to have contributed to the ambivalent behaviour they exhibit word-medially with respect to stress placement.

It is crucial to see that when stress rules apply, syllabification seems to be always exhaustive and straightforward – significantly, there is no ambisyllabicity for stress rules. The /t/ in *skéletal* clearly belongs to the final (extrametrical) syllable, and so is the one in *vánity* or *héretic*, and the second /t/ (but perhaps the first one as well) in *compétitor*. The fact that allophonic rules like the ones introduced in Chapter 2 treat these consonants as ambisyllabic can only be decided *after* stress assignment has taken place simply because it hinges on the stressedness of the vowels: consonants followed by a stressed vowel are never ambisyllabic; consonants followed by an unstressed vowel normally are. The derivation of the pronunciation of words, then, happens in steps:

syllabification:	ske.le.tal	va.ni.ty	com.pe.ti.tor
stress assignment:	ské.le.(tal)	vá.ni.(ty)	com.pé.ti.(tor)
ambisyllabicity:	ské.l.e.t.al	vá.n.i.t.y	com.pé.t.i.t.or
allophony[3]:	ˈskeləɾəɬ	ˈvænəɾɪ	kʰəmˈpʰɛɾəɾə(r)

It is not only allophony rules that follow stress assignment in English but certain morphological operations, too. For example, there are a couple of **stress-sensitive affixes**, whose attachment to a base is determined by its stress pattern. Nominal *-al*, forming abstract nouns out of verbs, strongly prefers to be suffixed to an end-stressed word, e.g., *trý – tríal*, *dený – denial*, *refúse – refúsal*, *rehéarse – rehéarsal*, *arríve – arríval*, the only exception being *búry – búrial*.

As far as the stress rules introduced above are concerned, a note is in order here. English spelling is not always capable of reflecting the pronunciation of vowels, although it can be crucial whether a vowel is long, automatically producing a heavy syllable, or short, in which case rhyme weight depends on what element follows it. This fact can cause problems to students of English, who are frequently first faced with an unknown word in its spelt form. For example, nothing indicates that the second vowel in *can<u>a</u>ry* and *mus<u>e</u>um* is long – therefore its syllable is heavy and as a result, primary stressed: *ca.<u>ná</u>.(ry)* /kəˈneərɪ/, *mu.<u>sé</u>.(um)* /mjʊˈziːəm/. Compare *appar<u>a</u>tus* and *aspar<u>a</u>gus*, two words showing spooky resemblance. Still, since the third vowel is long in the former but short in the latter, they are stressed differently: *à.ppa.<u>rá</u>.(tus)* /ˌæpəˈreɪtəs/ vs. *a.spá.<u>ra</u>.(gus)* /əˈspærəgəs/. Unfortunately, vowel length is not consistently encoded in the spelling of English.

[3] The examples illustrate the pronunciations in a tapping dialect of English which distinguishes clear and dark /l/.

This chapter has looked into primary stress assignment in underived verbs and nouns as well as the different subtypes of adjectives. We hope that the discussion faithfully reflects the complexity of this issue, being influenced by syntactic, morphological and lexical factors beside the phonological ones: verbs and nouns follow two distinct patterns; neutral and non-neutral affixation exert various effects; and finally, all the regularities have exceptions. In spite of this, we are able to identify the stress rules of English as the generalizations which hold for the majority of the vocabulary and which characterize newly borrowed or coined items. Clearly, only the minority of the examples constitutes the cases we refer to as "irregular" even if some of them happen to be highly frequent words in English and therefore our impression of the proportions may be somewhat distorted. Perhaps this is a situation where the exception proves the rule.