AN INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS THROUGH POPULAR MUSIC

PATRICE LARROQUE

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Contents

Chapter 1
Introduction

1 What Is Linguistics?

Linguistics is the scientific study of human language. It is concerned with the description of sounds, structures, and meaning, in other words phonetics and phonology, morphology and syntax, and semantics and pragmatics.

The structuralist view of language brought forth the notion of system, that is, a set of relations or rules which are involved in the formation of sounds, words patterns, and sentence structure, or what Labov (1974: 451–452) calls "a fixed configuration," for example, the grammatical paradigms of tense or gender, or the relations between vowels. These connections form a stable arrangement in which the linguistic signs are defined by their relative co-occurrence within a given language. The stability and coherence of the system depends on this type of determination. Any movement within the system is immediately reflected in the other relations of the arrangement, and if the process is repeated, this may entail a redefinition of all the signs and markers of the system. The system may also be defined as a structure (whence the term "structuralism"). Both words are generally used to designate the same thing. The difference is that a structure refers to the elements or the categories whose relations are ruled by laws, while a system is about the relations between the elements. Thus, the structure refers to how the parts of the system are organized.

Some aspects of the techniques of structural linguistics have been questioned by Chomsky, for instance, who signaled that the surface structure of sentences did not allow direct access to the deep structure and, therefore, to their meaning. For example, a sentence like *Flying saucers can be dangerous* can have two different interpretations, either *flying saucers* or *making saucers fly*, depending on the relationship established between *fly* and *saucers*. In the former interpretation, *flying* is an attributive adjective while in the latter it is a gerund, that is, a verb form. The word "language" itself cannot easily be defined without reference to the context in which it occurs. It is ambiguous in English. Linguists have generally adopted the French

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terminology of Saussure ([1916] 1972) who used *langage* to describe the faculty of human speech and *langue* for a particular linguistic system, the term *parole* being used for an act of speech by an individual user of that system. In *The language of Britain is English*, the word "language" refers to a particular system and could be substituted for Saussure's word *langue*. On the contrary, in the sentence *Linguistics is the scientific study of language*, the word "language" describes human speech in general, which Saussure calls *langage.* The ambiguity can be resolved by adding a determiner (*the, a,* plural *-s*…) to the word. "Language" may also refer to a style of speech, a mode of human communication, or any specific utterance as in *Bad language can be offensive* or *Watch your language!* and expressions such as *legal/medical/literary language.* This can be linked with Chomsky's distinction between "competence" which designates the speaker's knowledge of his or her language and their capacity to produce (or generate) and interpret sentences/utterances, and "performance," the actual use of the language in a given situation. These distinctions may become necessary when dealing with linguistic analysis. A correspondence between the two theories is illustrated here:

Saussure	Chomsky
langue	competence
parole	performance

Speech production is a process of appropriation of the system, which means that the performer gradually learns the language and signals his or her position as an utterer by a number of individual and specific marks (cf. Benveniste 1974: 82). Language behavior, moreover, is related to a speech situation. There are specific situational features which lead the speaker/performer to produce utterances in conformity with the general patternment of the system. Also, language behavior presupposes the existence of an addressee, who may in turn become the performer. The ego is the center of speech production and includes time reference. The entities which are manifested in speech production exist in a system of units which are created relative to *here and now*. On the surface, linguistic description can be conducted at different levels: the clause structure level, the phrase structure level, and the word structure level. The basic sentence structures are statements, interrogative constructions, negations, and exclamatory and imperative sentences. These are likely to support the speaker's involvement in his/her speech. There is indeed a relationship between the form and the speech act it performs and which translates the speaker's attitude relative to his/her message (e.g., stance-taking phenomena). In sum, the object of the present study is a system which is both a social product (the faculty of human speech and communication) and a set of rules. It is an abstract system which can only be apprehended through speech, in this case song lyrics. In principle, it amounts to describing linguistic facts taken from utterances in an attempt to explain how the system works. It will then be necessary to use the variability of the sentences (paraphrase, rewording, substitution, etc.) and play on complementarities and oppositions.

As suggested above, phonetics and phonology both relate to the study of speech, but while phonetics deals with the physical properties of speech, that is, the production and the perception of sounds, phonology appertains to the arrangement principles of sounds which are possible in a given language. It includes morpho-phonology, which deals with the study of the relations between the form of morphemes and their pronunciation. For instance, the regional dialects of English all belong to the same phonological system. Indeed, most dialects have vowel reduction in unstressed syllables and a complex set of phonological features that distinguish strong (or fortis) and weak (or lenis) consonants (stops or plosives, affricates, fricatives, and approximants). Morphology, on the other hand, concerns the study of how words are formed in a language, and syntax the way in which the words are arranged to form phrases, clauses, and/or sentences. A sentence, or an utterance, is a linguistic product resulting from various mental operations. This attitudinal performance (these attitudinal operations) lends its own character and individuality to the sentence relative to other sentences. Lastly, semantics and pragmatics both refer to studying the meaning of words in a language. The difference between the two is that semantics basically focuses on meaning independent of a context while pragmatics is context dependent, that is, the meaning of words is analyzed in relation to their context of occurrence.

The distinction between morphology, syntax, and semantics may at first glance seem convenient, but not totally satisfactory, these different areas being, as it were, interrelated. That is why morphological, semantic, and syntactic observations will be described according to three approaches to linguistic analysis: the morpho-syntactic perspective, which accounts for the arrangement and physical form of the constituents of the sentence (noun, adjective, verb base, adverb, determiner, auxiliary, etc.); the syntactic-semantic approach, which deals with the role played by the elements in their mutual relations (predicate, argument, adverbial, etc.); and the semantic point of view, which focuses on the meaning of the relations between the elements.

The book is an introduction to the study of language. It is based on linguistic principles which aim to describe language and more precisely the language one speaks, namely English. Unlike many existing introductions to linguistics, this text, which is by no means exhaustive, proposes to demonstrate syntactic categories, morphological, structures, metrical structures, syllable structures, and varieties of English using song lyrics. It is intended for an audience of students who are new to linguistics and who want to discover the nature of language and the categories of general linguistics via popular music, as well as giving an outline of the description of English. Language teachers may find this text of interest. Carolyn Graham (*Jazz chants* 2000; *Let's chant, let's sing* 2006), for example, has composed cheerful chants and poems which use jazz rhythms to illustrate the natural stress and intonation patterns of spoken American English. In this regard, song lyrics can be used in language analysis as they reflect popular usage, along with the support of music, the extent of which can be explored in describing language rhythm and meter.

2 The Music-Speech Relationship

According to J.J. Rousseau ([1753] 1993), the first languages were sung and passionate before being simple and organized. In Charles Darwin's (1971: 367) view, primitive humans "endeavoured to charm each other with musical notes and rhythm." In fact, the origin of language has been subject to many speculations, from the primitive pow-wow or pooh-pooh to the divine source as described in the book of Genesis or in a Hindu tradition which states that language came from Saraswati, the wife of Brahma and the goddess of learning, wisdom, music, and aesthetics (cf. Yule 2014). So right from the beginning language is associated with music. But there are parallels and nonparallels between language and music (Jackendoff 2008).

The music system (made of sounds like language) works on two axes. One is horizontal and concerns sequences, that is, the progressive arrangement of groups of notes into phrases, and the other is vertical and allows the production, selection, and availability of several notes at the same time (Benveniste 1974: 55–56), as in, for example, chords. This functioning is not unlike that of language on its two syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes (this aspect will be discussed in the chapter on syntax), with the difference that in language two sounds cannot be produced simultaneously. The musical sequence is compatible with simultaneity, whereas the syntagmatic axis of language does not permit it. It affects the intelligibility of the message, the sound being in itself significant.

Music is naturally related to speech. Some signals marking boundaries in language and music, such as duration, the lengthening of intervals, and tonic placement, are comparable. These are important enough for listeners to be sensitive to and rely on them. Worf (2012: 334) sees music as "a quasilanguage based entirely on patternment, without lexation." If this is so, then setting words to music largely depends on the rhythm of the line to compose the melody, for text or music, it is the first element that serves as a reference to the other. In the opposite case, the melodic line will guide the cadence. A song is the combination of two independent components, text and music. Text setting, therefore, requires a constant interplay between the two. On the one hand, musical and linguistic groups must match, and, on the other hand, stressed syllables must fall on strong beats (Dell and Halle 2005: 1–2). Jackendoff (2008) concludes that "language and music share a considerable number of characteristics, and one detailed formal one, namely metrical structure."

3 The Metrical Structure of English

> You ask for a 'glimmer'? Well I am impressed with the way English has become the language of choice for most international popular vocal music. Note the way people sing in English in such competition as the European Song contest. I've sometimes had the opportunity to ask singers why they use English. The answer is partly functional, because English is the 'cool' language associated with the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and so on. But it's also partly structural: composers often say that the predominantly monosyllabic character

> of the common words in English makes it an easier medium to work with, for heavy beat music than languages where word morphology gets in the way. Rapsters also make this point.

This comment is taken from an interview with David Crystal, the famous British linguist, published in the *European English Messenger* 18.2 in 2009[1]; the interviewer was Dr. John Stotesbury, the editor of the newsletter. The initial question was: "Is there any glimmer of truth in the old saw that learning English is 'intrinsically easier' than learning some other language?" Besides the fact that English is a "cool" language and that it is associated with popular musical bands, the metrical structure of the language tends to match with the rhythm of rock or blues music.[2] Temperley (1999: 24–25) argues that "in inferring a metrical structure from a vocal melody we prefer a structure in which stressed syllables and strong beats are aligned." A language like English, whose sentences alternate stressed and unstressed syllables, naturally establishes a close relationship between syllabic stress patterns and the rhythmic structure of music. Of course, the predominance of monosyllabic words will make it easier to achieve this type of alternation. Thus, word morphology in English plays an important part in the composition of sentences and song lyrics. Furthermore, when composers write their music, they, consciously or unconsciously, rely on the rhythmic patterns of their native tongue (Patel 2007: 165), another element which is likely to link speech and music.

4 A Few Words About the Corpus

The study is based on a corpus of song lyrics containing usage examples taken from a variety of titles which are available and can be consulted on the web for analysis. Various styles are represented, and the texts all exhibit specific grammatical and linguistic phenomena, as well as aspects of nonstandard speech, that is, formally and grammatically "deviant" relative to standard British English and General American.

This corpus may appear to be heterogeneous and may raise a problem as to the choice of utterances which are to be described. As a matter of fact, the song lyrics selected contain attested contemporary spoken American and/or British English, including Australian and African American varieties. Songs, moreover, provide a speech situation, a context, and a speaker-hearer relationship. Indeed, the performer addresses an audience which are likely to respond to his/her appeal. Besides, different situations may yield different speech productions, hence different music styles. The attractiveness of such a corpus may, in addition, be another argument in favor of discourse analysis.

It may be noted, however, that popular songs are not typical examples of spoken discourse. But the recording of the human voice may be construed as the recognition of speech as a primary mode of language, particularly in its importance as a corpus of performances, which gives language a living reality. It is, moreover, worth emphasizing that the support of music helps to explore language rhythm and meter.

Suprasegmental features of speech such as stress and intonation, for instance, are indeed variable according to the performer, but they need to be assessed as spoken features of language.

For these reasons, there is significantly little emphasis on presenting the various music styles as models of spoken English. The very question of what the collected data are must be interpreted in a context of speech analysis, not as a stylistic exercise. In principle, there is no objective boundary between music genres. Some of the excerpts chosen for analysis might not be well known to the target readers of this text, but the linguistic phenomena which are discussed herein have been selected because they represent issues which come up many times in phonology, morphology, and syntax. These are, indeed, basic issues and also allow linguistic exploration of contemporary ones, which are at the same time grammatical, linguistic, philosophical,[3] and, needless to say, cultural, since everything tends to hold together.

Differences, or so-called problems, may appear, notably at the level of syllable duration, for instance, the variability of which can be seen when the musical and the spoken versions of the same utterance are compared. There are pressures from the music itself, and these may result in deviation. This occurs when words are set to music which, in many cases, largely depends on the rhythm of the lines to compose the melody. As a result, the textual realization overtakes its accepted limits to accommodate speech and music. Overlapping and clashes between musical and linguistic features will be expanded upon in the concluding chapter.

5 Presentation

To begin with, it may be useful to stress that the book is an introduction to the practical analysis of English speech productions, not an introduction to linguistic theory *per se*, although discourse analysis needs theory. As stated previously, the relevant concepts and aims will be explained in utterer-centered terms which tend to focus on the workings of the performer's mind and his or her verbal strategy and attitude. Since the linguistic analysis is concerned with a specific language-system, it follows that starting from the description of linguistic facts occurring in English song lyrics may seem an appropriate way to open up to further linguistic perspectives. The description of the English language through pop, rock, or folk music offered in the following chapters is liable to raise some questions about how the system functions and how the principles of general linguistics can be applied.

The book is designed as a linguistics course, not to be considered as music and language together. In reality, song lyrics constitute a live representation of what the English language is like, for songs usually reflect popular expression, and as already mentioned, the corpus is likely to be more attractive than the usual corpora used for the description of English. In the organization of the argument, the present chapter has served to outline the general background in which this introduction to English linguistics is discussed, along with a simple definition of what linguistics covers. It introduces such areas as English phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax,

semantics, pragmatics, and sociolinguistics, and evokes the natural relationship there is between language and music, including a brief comment on the metrical structure of English which is essential to explain the specificity of the English rhythm (this part will be developed in the next chapter on phonology). This introductory overview also contains the aims and scope of the present work.

Chapter 2 focuses on English segmental (and suprasegmental) phonetics and phonology. It includes the description of English syllable structure, English rhythm, word stress, metrical structure, and rhyming. All studies are based on currently used popular song lyrics. There may be a potential problem concerning rhythm which plays an important part here. Since the phonological effects are mainly explained from written lyrics, the musical aspects of rhythm will not be represented in musical notation. Some notes of clarification will be provided. It also contains a description of alliterations and of some aspects of English intonation.

Chapters 3 and 4 concentrate more on English morphology and syntax. As mentioned earlier, these two areas of analysis may be dealt with in conjunction. Indeed, morpho-syntactic analysis illuminates the relations between the form of morphemes and their function within the utterance. In sum, it combines the syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes of the language. For example, the verb *remember* may take either a *to*-infinitive clause or a gerund *ing*-clause as verb complement, depending on the context in which it is used. In the sentence *I can't remember to forget you* (a song by Shakira), the *to*-infinitive refers to a situation which is not yet actualized at the time of remembering, whereas the gerund *–ing* clause in *I don't remember loving you* (a song by John Conlee) means looking back to an earlier situation. So the morphology of the verb complement in the above alternation is closely related to its syntactic and situational environment. Therefore, the discussion in Chap. 3 first regards the component parts of words, or morphemes, and the different realizations of these morphemes, or allomorphs, according to their functional environment. Chapter 4, on the contrary, presents English syntactic categories and functions. These facts motivate their treatment in a separate chapter insofar as it concerns the internal structure of the noun phrase and the internal structure of the verb phrase, including verb sub-categories and the complement-adjunct distinction.

Chapter 5 concentrates on semantics and pragmatics. These two notions have already been briefly evoked, but it may be of interest to outline the relationship between lexical and phrasal semantics. In a second step, it defines the distinction between semantics and pragmatics, the latter being concerned with language used in particular situations involving implicatures, speech acts, and also non-verbal communication. The meaning of words then is likely to vary according to situation, usage, and speaker involvement. In fact, both domains tend to go hand in hand. Compare, for instance, the use of the words *pretty* and *beautiful* to describe someone, preferably a woman or a girl, who is attractive. The adjective *pretty* appears to be more attitudinal than the referential *beautiful.*

Chapter 6 deals with accents and dialects of English. There is, indeed, a distinction to be made between accent and dialect. All languages are, by definition, dialects, but some of them have been promoted to languagehood, that is, the language chosen, taught, and spoken in a country. Generally speaking, a language is the main

dialect of a nation, and its pronunciation and grammatical structure is to be adopted by the whole nation. In sum, Received Pronunciation in Britain and General American in the United States are considered to be model accents; they both appertain to different appropriation of the language. However, to preserve the phonetic unity throughout the text and unless otherwise specified, British transcriptions will be used. While accent refers to a phonological difference, standard and dialect are systemic variations of the same language. In this chapter, the Mid-Atlantic accent and the variability in accents of British singers are also approached: everyone has an accent, but performers tend to neutralize theirs when they sing. A description of some sociolinguistic aspects of African American English ends this chapter, a language use which is best illustrated in blues, rock, and rap music.

Chapter 7 provides a general conclusion that brings together the results with regard to linguistic structure and musical structure, and the mismatches that their association may raise. These problems concern the overlapping of musical structure and linguistic structure, and the possible clashes between the two areas. This concluding chapter ends with how the information is conveyed. Indeed, the functions of language exist in all communication processes, including songs, and engage both the speaker/performer and the addressee within a speech situation represented or created by the song lyrics.

The study is designed to place the linguistic description of English in a collection of texts which suggests a different way to go about analyzing the language. There is, additionally, the influence of the music on the grammatical forms and constructions of the texts. It may be contended that analyzing popular songs is only a matter of phonology, since readers can listen to the songs (which can be found on various websites) and identify their phonological features. There is indeed a chapter dedicated to the phonology of English, but songs are a mode of communication which differs from forms of other written genres in that the corpus of material is both written and oral, and the nonphonological considerations can also be analyzed either in their written forms or in connection with music. The description of songs can serve as a method for students to explore the relationship between discourse analysis and, for instance, pragmatics, which is interested in *parole* (performance) and its effects in communication.

From this perspective, the present text is intended to serve not only as a basis for specialized study but also as a self-contained description for non-specialists who need a practical method of analysis for the major structures; as such, it would suit elementary courses in linguistics, either as a core text or as a supplemental textbook. Thus, the target readers may be not only teachers and specialists, but also undergraduate students willing to learn more on linguistic analysis. The concepts and method which are developed in this textbook have been implemented in various linguistic and translation studies of university programs. Using song lyrics in linguistics classes may illustrate as well as demonstrate phonological and morphosyntactic phenomena, not to mention varieties of standard and nonstandard English.

Needless to say, the descriptions offered herein are not exhaustive. However, the linguistic areas covered are intended to be comprehensive enough to take readers beyond the mere communicative level of language. To this end, they can freely

exploit the bibliographical data and also refer to the end-of-book glossary to help them with terminological difficulties encountered in these pages or in further readings.

Notes

1. The *European English Messenger* is a newsletter of the European Society for the Study of English (ESSE). Its purpose is to disseminate information and views about English Studies in Europe and foster intellectual and scholarly co-operation and development.
2. In a previous study (*English Rhythm and Blues*, 2015), I hypothesize that early blues singers may have been influenced by the trochaic rhythm of English and that the linguistic rhythm of a culture can be reflected in the rhythm of its music.
3. There are indeed philosophical issues involved in the construction and rating of theories.

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Chapter 2
English Phonetics and Phonology

Phonology concerns the principles of organization of the various possible sounds in a given language. Phonetics, on the other hand, deals with speech sounds themselves, how they are produced and how they are perceived, including the physics. To transcribe speech sounds, phoneticians use the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA, see chart in the annex). The phonological form of a morpheme[1] consists of syllables which can be divided into units called segments or phonemes. These segments are organized into phonological constituents according to their own characteristics, that is, consonants, vowels, and glides.[2]

The division of morphemes into syllables and syllables into segments rests on the distribution between consonants and vowels. Some segments cannot be pronounced by themselves: for instance, a consonant (from Latin *consonare*, sound together) can only be sounded with a vowel. This can be explained by the fact that a vowel is always voiced, whereas a consonant can be voiced or voiceless. When the vocal cords are momentarily closed and the air flow from the lungs is restricted, the result is vocal cord vibration that is, voice. For example, the consonants produced in *bid* or *dab* are voiced, while those uttered in *pit* or *tap* are voiceless. Still, whether they be voiced or voiceless, consonants need a vowel to be sounded; *bd, pt, db, tp* would be difficult to pronounce and have no linguistic reality.

Voicing in consonants is determined by their force of articulation. There are two series of consonants: fortis consonants (as in *pit*) and lenis consonants (as in *bid*); they are sometimes called tense and lax consonants. Fortis consonants are voiceless, whereas lenis consonants can be voiced, but they can have different phonetic behaviors and remain voiceless depending on context. For example, the distinction /t/ and /d/ is lost after the fricative consonant /s/, so that *store* sounds like *sdore.*

In any case, a syllable consists of only one vowel (represented by V in the following formulae), occasionally preceded by a glide (marked G), and contains one or more consonantal segments (marked C) before or after the vowel. Syllables in English can therefore take the following forms: (G)V, C(G)V, (G)VC, C(G)VC, CC(G)V, CC(G)VC, (G)VCC, CC(G)VCC, (G)VCC. Three consonant clusters in

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onset position are only possible in English if the third consonant is /l/ or /r/ as in *splash, split, strip, straw, scream, screw*, and so on. In this case, the optional glide is infelicitous. It seems, moreover, that word-final sequences of three consonants are only possible if the last one is a bound morpheme as in *asked* pronounced /æskt/, *-ed* being an additional mark of the past tense. This aspect of segmental phonology will be examined later. Let us first have a look at the way that those segments are organized into phonological constituents. One of those constituents is the syllable.

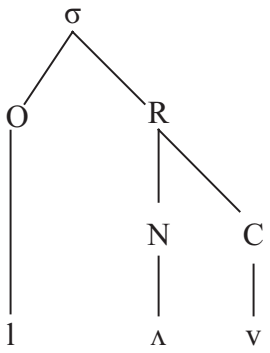
1 Syllable Structure

The perception of the rhythm of a language first depends on the syllable which is not only the smallest rhythmic unit of a language (Attridge 1982: 60) but also an element which can be isolated, perhaps recognized, and which constitutes a reliable regular articulatory basis. Thus, when trying to understand an utterance in a new and unfamiliar language, the learner will stick to the first speech signal of the new language that he or she can perceive, and in particular its rhythmic structure (Attridge 1982: 70). A foreigner will not be able to interpret the words of an utterance or rather will interpret them in the same way as his or her own mother tongue if they are pronounced in one breath, with no inflection of the voice and no pause. An utterance in French may, for instance, sound like one long word to an English ear. The syllable, then, acquires great interest in the rhythm of English speech. It is an important element which includes duration and cadence. If syllables have no fixed duration, there is still some regularity in the recurrence of stressed ones. It is, however, sometimes difficult to define the limits of syllables in a word or an utterance.

1.1 Nature and Representation of Syllables

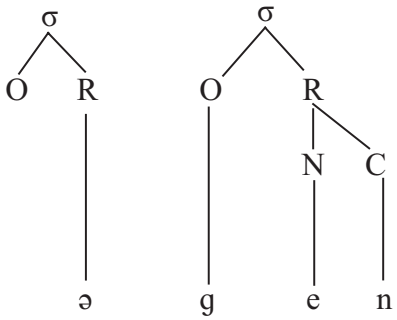
Syllables can be defined in two different ways: phonetically and phonologically. Phonetically, a syllable normally contains a single vowel in the nucleus and one or more consonants. The syllable is usually represented (see Carr 1999; Roach 2000) by the Greek letter σ (sigma), the letter O stands for the onset of the syllable and R for the rhyme which in turn can be subdivided into the nucleus (N) and the coda (C). In the word *love*, for instance, the onset is the initial consonant /l/, the vowel / ʌ / constitutes the nucleus and the final consonant /v/ the coda, as shown in the tree diagram of example (1).

(1)



In a language, the smallest possible word contains only one syllable. There is no word smaller than a syllable. The minimal syllable amounts to a single vowel as in English words like *I* /*eye* (/ai/), *or* (/ɔ:/), *are* (/a:/), *a* (/ə/), exclamations like *oh!* (/əʊ/), *ooh!* (/u:/), or *ow!* (/aʊ/) to express pain. In general, all languages have syllables containing onsets and rhymes. That is the reason why CV-like syllables (i.e., containing a consonant and a vowel) can be found in all languages. A syllable with an "empty" onset is a syllable which does not contain an onset consonant as in *again* (/ə'gen/), a word consisting of two syllables which is represented as follows:

(2)



Phonologically, interest will be more focused on possible combinations of sounds in the system. Some words have an empty onset (*only, about, enough, until*, etc.), while others contain one, two, three onset consonants (*bubble, catch, glad, trouble, street, spring*, etc.). In English, there are no words with more than three onset consonants.[3] Similarly, some words have a coda which contains a group of consonants, as in *burst, remind, catch*, which may pose a difficult problem as to the boundaries of the different syllables.

1.2 Syllable Division

The phonetic analysis of the syllable presents a number of difficulties concerning, in particular, the division between syllables. Indeed, whenever a consonant occurs before a vowel, it is likely to be uttered as if it were the onset of the syllable containing the vowel, even if both segments belong to two different words. Thus in connected speech, a word is frequently linked to the following word by pronouncing the final consonant as if it were the onset of the next word when the latter has an empty onset. A few examples are given below:

(3)

It is > 'tis
A dozen eggs > a / doz / neggs
I stole a kiss at the turn of a mile > I / sto / la / ki / sat / the / tur / no / va / mile.
(Chuck Berry, *No particular place to go*)

There is evidence of that when certain homophonic phrases such as in (4) are uttered in an unfamiliar foreign language.

(4)

Some others / some mothers
I scream / ice cream
The night train / the night rain
A plum pie / a plump eye
The stuffy nose / the stuff he knows.

This type of division may, of course, have an effect on the rhythm of the utterance, but also on its interpretation, for there is no space between the words in speech, as there is in a written sentence, and be a source of confusion.

These expressions are reminiscent of mondegreens as in (5a–b):

(5)

a. 'Scuse me while I kiss the sky / 'Scuse me while I kiss this guy. (*Purple Haze*, Jimi Hendrix)
b. I won't chew the steak / I want you to stay.

In example (5a), *this guy* (the mondegreen) is a misinterpretation of *the sky* (the original). Example (5b) can be explained by considering assimilation across word boundaries and the low perceptual salience of coda consonants.

To divide the syllables in a word, Roach (2000) proposes the "maximal onset principle," which states that when two syllables are to be divided, consonants should be assigned to the syllable onset, unless it would result in an infelicitous consonant cluster in English. The verb *remind* (/rɪ'maɪnd/), for example, will be divided as follows: *re.mind* (/rɪ.maɪnd /, the dot indicates the syllable boundary). In the case of *tomorrow*, the most evident division is the following: *to.mo.row* (/tə.mɒ.rəʊ/), although it may also be possible to suggest /tə.mɒr.əʊ/ just because an isolated syllable (here the stressed one) may not end in one of the vowels /i/, /e/, /æ, /ʌ/, /ɒ/, /ʊ/. It seems, however, that the basic syllable structure is naturally of the CV-type, one

consonant followed by a vowel (Carr 1999: 74). Then, the former division, /tə.mɒ.rəʊ/ will be preferred. Another possibility is to say that the consonant is shared by both syllables and that it is a case of ambisyllabic consonant (Roach 2000: 78). However, syllable division in a word goes with the placement of stress. In order to understand how English speakers put rhythm in their speech, it seems reasonable to underline the importance of the relationship between syllable weight and stress assignment.

1.3 Syllable Structure and Syllable Weight

Stress assignment also depends on syllable weight and therefore syllable structure. As mentioned before, there are in English stressed and unstressed syllables, and the English rhythm rests on stressed ones. Let us say that in musical terms, stressed syllables fall on strong beats and unstressed syllables on weak beats. In English, there is a marked tendency to stress so-called heavy syllables, that is, syllables with a "rich" rhyme. A rich rhyme is a complex rhyme containing several constituents, at least a vowel and its supporting consonant. A syllable with a "poor" rhyme contains only one vowel and is unstressed. For example, the English verb, *remind*, has been divided into two syllables, *re.mind*, which in turn is divisible into several segments: CV.CVCC. The first syllable contains only one vowel: it is therefore a poor, "light," and unstressed syllable. Conversely, the second syllable is complex, consisting of a vowel surrounded by three consonants: it counts as a heavy, stressed syllable. Then, *remind* will be pronounced as follows: /rɪ.maɪnd/. Now, take the noun *morning*, the syllabic and segmental composition of which is CVC.VC. In this word, the first syllable contains three segments and the second syllable only two. As a consequence, the first syllable, which is heavier, will receive most stress. This bears out what was said earlier concerning the placement of stress in words consisting of a base and a suffix (*morn+ing*); the base or stem is stressed. Consider another disyllabic example, the adverb *again*. The segmentation of the morpheme is V.CVC. Now it is clear that the second syllable is heavier that the first one, because it contains more segments. It will then be stressed and *again* will be pronounced /ə'gen/. A similar analysis can be conducted with the determiner *enough*, which exhibits the same V.CVC segmentation; it will be pronounced /ɪ'nʌf/. This low level of stress may result in the loss of the unaccented syllable at the beginning of the word, as in *'cause* for *because*, or *'scuse me* for *excuse me* (in example 5a). This type of aphaeresis is well illustrated in this line from Stephen Collins Foster's famous song *My Old Kentucky Home*: "They hunt no more for the 'possum and the 'coon,"[4] thus reducing the number of unstressed syllables between two stressed ones (stress lapse).

As for words containing more than two syllables, rarer in pop song lyrics, the principle remains the same, that is, the heaviest syllable receives primary stress, for example (the first two of the words illustrated below occur in Burt Bacharach's *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*, the next two in *My Guy* by Mary Wells, *undertake* and *university* have been chosen because they contain four syllables):

(6)

pneumonia: /njʊ.'məʊ.njə/
tomorrow: /tə.'mɒ.rəʊ/
together: /tə.'ge.ðə/
opinion: /ə.'pɪ.njən/
undertaker: /ˌʌn.də.'teɪ.kə/
university: /jʊ.nɪ.'vɜ:.sɪ.ti/

Concerning the examples in the above list, note that (1) the stressed syllable follows a syllable which has schwa (/ə/) as its sole nucleus vowel and counts as a light syllable (*tomorrow, together, opinion*), contains a diphthong (*pneumonia*, *undertaker*) or a long vowel (*university*), (2) in the cases of *undertaker* and *university*, the following rule applies: when two syllables precede the main stress, the former receives secondary stress, because a word beginning with two consecutive unstressed syllables is rhythmically infelicitous in English.

To end with this point, it is important to bear in mind that those observations do not actually constitute rules, but a general tendency which may help to identify factors playing a role in word stress assignment. Also recall that syllable weight is sensitive to the syntactic category of the words. Nouns behave differently from verbs and adjectives. That can be seen, in particular, in verb/noun pairs like *com'pound/'compound, con'tent/'content, con'trast/'contrast*, *con'vict/'convict*, *pro'duce/'produce*, and *re'gress/'regress*, where the noun (and the adjective with *compound*) is stressed on the first syllable and the verb (and the adjective *content*) on the second. There are of course exceptions like *re'gret*, whose stress pattern does not vary and which can be both a verb and a noun, or the adjective *gallant*, which can be stressed either on the first syllable, /'gælənt/ (= brave, courageous), or on the second syllable, /gə'lænt/ (= an extremely polite young man), according to its meaning. Many other exceptions, like borrowings from other languages, Latin, Greek, French, Indi, etc., could be cited, or neologisms derived from other words of different syntactic categories. Finally, music can also provide relevant illustrations of syllable division and therefore show some linguistic evolutions. Freeborn (1998: 325), for example, mentions Sir Walter Raleigh's poem *What is life?* set to music by Orlando Gibbons in 1612. Here are the first two lines:

(7)

What is life? A play of passion,
Our mirth the music of division …

According to Freeborn, the music breaks the word *passion* down into three syllables (i.e., on three separated notes) and the word *division* into four syllables, so the pronunciation of the words then must have been /'pæsi˛on/ and /dɪ'vɪzi˛on/, with secondary stress on the final syllable. In time, the reduction of the last two less stressed syllables led to today's pronunciation, /'pæʃən/ and /dɪ'vɪʒən/. All this shows that stress assignment in English is complex, sometimes confusing, and variable.

But words and syllables combine into sentences and utterances. The sentence is a well-defined syntactic arrangement, a well-formed construction, whereas the utterance is a linguistic product related to a context and speech conditions. In the

sequence, syllables are strong or weak whether they are stressed or unstressed, not only within the word but also within the utterance. Understanding depends upon that alternating pattern, and in the same way as word stress is sensitive to syllable weight, the rhythm of utterances rests on word stress.

2 Word Stress

As can be seen in the previous section, words of more than one syllable contain a syllable which bears most stress. The syllable is said to have primary stress. The other syllables are either unaccented or have secondary stress. So it seems legitimate to say that words in English have a stress pattern.

In the word *undertaker* for instance, the third syllable receives the most stress, the second syllable is unaccented and is the least prominent syllable in the word, and the first syllable of *undertaker* has secondary stress. It is less accented than the third one, but it is perceptually more salient than the second syllable.[5] Therefore, the stress pattern of the word *undertaker* is a syllable with secondary stress followed by an unstressed syllable, followed by a syllable with primary stress. Primary stress accent will be represented by a diacritical mark (') placed immediately before the appropriate syllable and secondary stress by using the diacritic (ˌ); unstressed syllables are left unmarked, thus: /ˌʌnder 'teɪkə/.

It is clear that English native speakers do not need instruction to know the stress patterns of words and probably memorize them from the beginning of their acquisition of the language. They internalize these patterns as part of learning to speak their mother tongue. However, it should be remembered that the effect of prominence in English is due to a combination of factors.

- First and foremost, a change in the pitch level, either on the stressed syllable itself or with respect to the adjacent syllable (an accented syllable is perceptually higher-pitched and therefore more salient than the unstressed syllables following it); this melodic phenomenon is the most important factor of stress.
- The timber or sound quality of the vowels, which is always reduced in a totally unaccented syllable. Pronouncing a full vowel in an unstressed syllable may lead to misinterpretations. Vowels in stressed syllables are perceptually longer than those in unstressed syllables.
- Stressed syllables are uttered with greater force and contrast with unstressed syllables which are weak or toned down.

There is no fixed primary stress in English words, which means that it is not assigned to a given syllable (in French it always falls on the final syllable, in Polish on the penultimate syllable, i.e., the syllable just before the last). Some stress assignment principles will be illustrated by examples of stress patterns taken from Burt Bacharach's song *I Will Never Fall in Love Again*, from Mary Wells' *My Guy*, and from the Stranglers' *Let Me Introduce You to the Family* (the reader is invited to refer to the recordings of these songs).

2.1 Primary Stress

Two-syllable words are typically stressed on the first syllable: *bubble, trouble, never, sorrow (I Will Never Fall in Love Again), handsome, honor, matter* (*My Guy*); but there are exceptions: words beginning with a Latin or Germanic prefix as in *remind* and verbs ending in *-ate* (*create, translate, locate*, etc.) are accented on the second syllable in British English; in American English one often has a choice: *tran'slate* or *'translate*, *lo'cate* or *'locate*. For longer words, remove the weak syllables (suffixes or prefixes) to leave the stem (or base) and count backward (from the end). The weak suffixes concerned are *-ed, -ing, -er, -or, -ist, -ly, -ful, -able, -less, -ment, -ness*. For example, when the suffix *–ing* is added to the two-syllable verbs *believe* and *deceive* (*My Guy*), it does not have the effect of shifting the stress, so *believing* and *deceiving* will be accented on the first syllable. A similar analysis can be conducted with the weak prefix *to*: in *tomorrow* (*I'll Never Fall in Love Again*) and *together* (*My Guy*), for instance, the stress falls on the second syllable. Words of three or more syllables are normally accented on the antepenultimate (the third from the last) syllable as in *pneumonia* (*I Will Never Fall in Love Again*), *introduce, family* (*Let Me Introduce You to the Family*, The Stranglers). There are, however, exceptions with words ending in *-ic*: *phonetic, linguistic, symbolic* (except for words which are not derived from adjectives and stressed according to the normal principle, i.e., on the antepenultimate syllable: *Arabic, catholic, arsenic, lunatic, heretic, politics, rhetoric, arithmetic*); words ending in *-ish* (*demolish, diminish, distinguish*, etc.); words ending in *-ion* or more generally VVC-type syllables have their main stress on the syllable immediately preceding the ending as in *opinion* (*My Guy*).

2.2 Secondary Stress

Since the rhythm of English requires that no word can begin with two unstressed syllables, there must be a secondary stress. For example, in the word *telephone*, it is the third syllable of the three syllables which is most accented and therefore has primary stress. Since the word begins with two syllables, a secondary stress is added to the first syllable. In fact, the syllable *phone* being the stem and *tele* a prefix, the latter is often dropped in connected speech as well as in many songs (cf. "*he'll never phone ya*" in Burt Bacharach's song *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*). When more than two syllables precede the main stress, the main stress of the deriving form is degraded to secondary stress, for example, *i'naugurate* > ˌ*inaguˈration*.

This brief overview is far from exhaustive and is only meant to give the reader a general idea of what can be said about word stress. Further investigation will be carried out particularly when dealing with the rhythm of English and metrical structure.

3 English Rhythm

As has been established previously, a sentence can be divided into a number of syllables variably composed. A sentence may contain stressed and unstressed syllables, stressed syllables being perceptually more prominent. They include syllables with primary and secondary stresses. In the aforementioned word *telephone*, for instance, the first syllable has secondary stress, the second is unaccented, and the third syllable has primary stress, represented as follows: *ˈtele˛phone*.

These conventions will suffice to describe word stress patterns, but they will not fully address the question as to how the levels of stress and degree of perceptual salience operate when these patterns are combined into phrases. For example, take the phrase *telephone call*. The single syllable of the word *call* has more stress than the other syllables in the phrase. What is more, there is a stress shift, that is, the stress pattern of *telephone* is modified, and the primary and secondary stresses in the word are switched around to avoid a stress clash. That cannot be explained only by describing isolated word stress.

At this point, it is important to consider a stage beyond the only word stress pattern and describe the rhythm of English as it can be perceived in connected speech. Abercrombie (1967: 94) defines rhythm as follows: "[rhythm] in speech as in other human activities, arises out of the periodic occurrence of some sort of movement, producing an expectation that regularity of succession will continue." This impression of rhythmicity also applies to music, especially when it refers to periodic instances and regularity of succession. That is why the use of song lyrics which are set to music may help to illustrate categories and structures. In order to account for the rhythm of English speech, a phonological constituent, which may be regarded as central to its character, will be introduced: the metrical foot.

The metrical foot is the basic unit of the rhythm of English speech. It consists of a stressed syllable followed by zero, one, or more unstressed syllables intervening between it and the next stressed syllable. A sentence may contain one or several metrical feet. The repetition of a metrical foot yields a trochaic rhythm. And indeed, the rhythm of English is fundamentally trochaic: a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable. Most two-syllable words in English follow that pattern. Yet, some of them are accented on the second syllable like *remind*, for instance, or because of stress-shifting endings. This grammatical phenomenon will be dealt with in the next chapter.

The rhythm of English is set on what is commonly known as the Rhythmic Alternation Principle (cf. for example, Schlüter 2005: 17–20). This principle refers to an ideal eurhythmic construction which alternates stressed and unstressed syllables on a regular basis, as in the sequence *(I'll) never fall in love again* (in Burt Bacharach's song). In this line, a strong (fortis) syllable alternates with one weak (lenis) syllable and forms a stressed-unstressed pattern. Other forms of rhythmic structures containing stress lapses (with more than one unstressed syllable) and stress clashes (two adjacent accented syllables) are accounted violations of this principle. These so-called infractions can be repaired by a number of compensatory

strategies: mainly the squeezing/lengthening of syllables and stress shifts. These deviations from rhythmic alternation are exemplified here in the first verse of *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*.

The line containing … *guy with a pin to* …, exhibits a stress lapse as two unstressed syllables, "with a," intervene between the single syllable of the words *guy* and *pin*, which typically bear the most stress; in the line … *enough germs to* …, there is a stress clash between *enough* and the single syllable of the word *germs*, which is stressed. It is interesting to note that when listening to the song, *pneumonia* rhymes with the phrase *phone ya*. One reason for that is the fact that "phone ya" constitutes a metrical foot and "monia" another. Rhythmically, the two feet rest on two well-balanced syllables, one strong, one weak, and in both cases, the vowel of the weak syllable is reduced. The pronoun *you*, being unstressed,[6] undergoes vowel reduction, which is an extremely common phenomenon in stress-timed English and is uttered with a schwa /ə/, transcribed *ya.*

As can be seen in the above example, *pneumonia*[7] contains one foot and so does *phone ya.* In fact, monosyllabic words of the lexical category may form metrical feet with function words as in the phrase *phone ya*. The phrase, therefore, contains the same foot structure as the second and third syllables of *pneumonia*. Thus, there is no direct correlation between the foot and the word or phrase as a unit of meaning or syntax. For example, the cover by Deidre Lang of *My Guy*, originally sung by Mary Wells, displays the sequence *birds of a feather we stick together*, with two metrical feet, 'birds of a' and 'feather we', which shows that metrical structure does not map onto syntactic structure. Another example of this occurs in *matter of opinion, I think he's tops*, which can be divided into four metrical feet: 'matter of o', 'pinion I', 'think he's', and 'tops."

Deirdre Lang's syncopated interpretation of the song emphasizes that phonological constituent, which is only possible because the foot is not sensitive to word boundary. The point is that the unaccented syllable of the foot is, as it were, perceptually "suspended," as in Pink Floyd's famous song *Another Brick in the Wall* (*The Wall*, 1979): … *you're just a…nother brick* …. In this line, the metrical feet are, among others, 'just a' and 'nother'. The pause intervenes between the two feet.

In the same way, double negatives have a rhythmic function and may help to compensate for violations of the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation. Take, for instance, the sentence *We don't need no education*, taken from the aforementioned song. Although many people, including teachers, argue against such a grammatical form, it appears to be more balanced with its double negative construction than *We don't need education*, or *We don't need any education.* The monosyllabic determiner *no* intervening between the verb *need* (typically stressed) and the first syllable of *education* (which bears secondary stress) repairs a stress clash and is much easier to place than *any* rhythmically. Furthermore, it yields an eight-syllable line which permits a pause (caesura) after *no*, marking the rhythmic point of division of the second metrical foot, 'need no', in the line. The same analysis can be carried out with the eight-syllable line *I can't get no satisfaction*, famously sung by the English rock band The Rolling Stones. In this case, besides allowing a break after the first part of

the line, the negative concord intensifies the negation by accenting the suspended negative determiner (*get NO…*) as it maps onto the half-singing, half-yelling chorus.

The same applies to deletions and contractions which allow removing one or two unstressed syllables, thus compensating for stress lapses. These include in particular "stray" syllables (as in *about* or *afraid*) or unstressed prefixes. Here are examples taken from the above-cited song lyrics: *about* > *'bout, because* > *'cause, excuse* > *'scuse*, *telephone* > *phone,* and so on. The song *My Guy*, for instance, contains the following line: *Nothing you could do, 'cause I'm stuck like glue*, which displays ten syllables with a break in the middle expressed by a comma; in music, it is denoted by a short silent pause. The line consists of two phrases of equal length (five syllables each) with the deletion of the unstressed prefix *be* off *because* and the contracted form *I'm*. In order to describe the construction of this line, it is important to distinguish word stress from phrasal stress, also called tonic placement. The whole sentence can be divided into two stretches of syllables with different pitch contours or tones. These stretches are pronounced, as it were, "in the same breath," and are generally called tone groups or intonation groups.[8] Within these groups, there is a syllable (usually on the last lexical element of the phrase) which is perceptually more prominent: it is called the tonic syllable or the nucleus. It may be noted that the two tone groups are separated by the introduction of a metrical pause, thus repairing a stress clash between two adjacent monosyllabic stressed words (*do* and *'cause*). Also notice that both tone groups end in the same sound. The song displays a number of internal rhymes, that is, rhyming words within the same line, which add rhythm layers to it.

On the other hand, contractions, which can be defined as the shortening of words or phrases by leaving out a letter or a sound, usually a syllable, are also involved in the rhythm of an utterance. They usually occur in oral or informal performances (such as personal letters) as well as in dialogues which are the written forms of spoken exchanges. For example, in the line *I can't be torn apart…* (*My Guy*), *can't* is the contraction of the word *cannot*. Other types of vowel elision such as *I'll* for *I will*, *won't* for *will not, he's* for *he is*, and *don't* for *do not* are commonly found in song lyrics as they transcribe speech and informal writing. The main contractions concern function words like auxiliaries and pronouns. Negated auxiliaries are often contracted as in the forms *can't*, *won't*, or *ain't*, but *not* alone is seldom contracted with other parts of speech.[9] In sum, a contraction is a type of elision which eases the pronunciation through reducing sounds. It, therefore, has the effect of influencing the rhythm (and sometimes the rhyme) of the line.

The analysis of lyric lines shows many contracted forms such as *I'm, gonna, you'd,* and *won't*, together with the clitic forms of *am* (*I'm*) and *had* (*you'd better/best*), which consist of a single consonant /m, d/ and the negation in *won't* merges phonologically with the modal auxiliary verb *will,* its host (cf. Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1614–1615)[10]; *gonna* is the contracted form of *going to* and can be described as an assimilation across word boundary. The initial *to* of its infinitival complement is morphologically incorporated into the preceding *ing*-form of the verb *go* to produce *gonna* and saves a syllable. This is not to be mistaken for the phonological reduction of the particle or preposition *to* schwa /ə/ as in *to be faithful*,

for instance. The main difference is that the form *gonna* can be stranded, and rhymes with words like *honor* and its low perceptual coda consonant (the rhyme is rich). To end with this point, it seems worth noting that typically unstressed auxiliaries may be assigned prominence if there is a negation attached to them. This prominence will be sensitive to context and the degree of stress in the host, in order to maintain the trochaic rhythm of the language. For example, *can't,* in *I can't be torn apart*, is accented, first, because the negation is attitudinal and typically stressed, and secondly because it makes the phrase more eurhythmic. Of course, this preference for eurhythmy is in many cases contradicted by a given combinations of words.

Indeed, as can be seen in the preceding examples, the number of unstressed syllables intervening between two stressed syllables may be variable. As a matter of fact, stress lapses are more widely accepted than clashing stressed syllables, probably because evasive actions are more easily introduced. In stress lapses, sequences of unstressed syllables are usually "squeezed" so as to fit in the interval between the two neighboring stressed syllables (Schlüter 2005: 28). The resulting pattern will then include vowel reduction or elision as well as consonant assimilation, which, in turn, has the effect of influencing the rhythm of a sentence or phrase. Another way of modulating the rhythm is to consider that one unstressed syllable may constitute a beat and be assigned a stress when it occurs in a stress lapse, especially in a series of more than two unaccented syllables between two stressed syllables. In example (8), taken from Michael Jackson's famous song *Black or White*, the first line exhibits three consecutive unstressed syllables between the first syllable of *message* and the first syllable of *Saturday.*

(8)

… message in the Saturday Sun

As suggested, it is about interrupting series of unstressed syllables and therefore maintaining a regular rhythm. In order to do that, an extra beat (or stress) is added to the preposition *in*, typically unaccented, and restores the trochaic rhythm of the line. There is evidence of that in the singing. Note in the phrasing the vowel reduction in the second syllable of *Saturday*, and the alliterative /s/ phoneme in the phrase "Saturday Sun."

Alliteration describes a figure of style in which a series of words in a verse begins with the same consonant sound. It differs from assonance, which deals with vowel sounds in words. Examples of assonance are found in the song lyrics of *My Guy* in which the repetition of the /ʊ/-like sound conveys an impression of melancholy, even doubt, considering the meaning of the sequence, while an /eɪ/-like assonance, still in the same song, may impart a sense of joy, of affirmation, to the line. What is more, the /aɪ/ sequence of *my guy* whose form adds to the poetic value of the line (cf. Jacobson's functions of language) lends support to the title of the song.

As a rhythmic device, it sustains the flow and sometimes creates onomatopoeia when it is used in song lyrics, as in Britney Spears' song *Lucky*: *Knock, knock, knock on the door.* The best way of detecting alliteration is to sound out the lines and listen for the words with identical initial consonant sounds in the song. The music, of course, will be of great help for the exercise, as it will immediately bring out the relevant alliterative sounds. For instance, the song *My Guy* contains the following

phrase: … *best be believing*, which displays a series of three words beginning with the plosive voiced consonant /b/. Besides the rhythmic effect of such a pounding alliterative sequence, it creates a harsh, authoritative tone emphasizing the affirmative mood of the line (cf. *You'd best…*). The same impression comes out of … *bursts your bubble…* (in Burt Bacharach's *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*), in which the plosive alliteration evokes, as it were, bitter disenchantment. In popular music, the /s/ sound seems to be quite commonly used. In Michael Jackson's song *Human Nature*, the /s/ phoneme is alliterative; it allows the performer to create a hushing sound with the sequence *sweet seducing sighs*, underlining the meaning of the lyrics, as the song suggests romantic undertones. Note that *shake* (in the line above), although it displays an initial grapheme "s," does not enter the alliterative effect as it does not begin with the sound /s/ but with the sound /ʃ/.

One final example of alliteration can be spotted in the song *Let It Be* by the Beatles. The song exhibits the following alliteration: *whisper words of wisdom*, which, with its three initial /w/ phonemes repeated at the end of the chorus, conveys a hushed feeling and a soothing tone to the song, illustrating the sage remark: *let it be.*

The rhythm of the language is an important musical constituent in speech. It rests on alternating strong and weak syllables, which certainly places English in the stress-timed language category and entails considering further phonological factors which may affect the speaker's melodic expression.

4 Suprasegmental Phonology

4.1 English Intonation

The suprasegmental phenomena include stress and intonation. As mentioned, syllables are not pronounced with equal force: in English stressed syllables contrast with unstressed syllables. The difference between stressed and unstressed syllables stems from the fact that unaccented syllables are less salient and generally occur in reduced forms, while stressed syllables are predominant and occur in their full form. Compare the sounds corresponding to the realization of the sound written <o> in the word *photograph* (cf. Ed Sheeran's song) and the stress pattern of the whole sentence in which the word occurs. In *photograph*, the first syllable is stressed and contains a full vowel; the second syllable is unaccented, and the sound of the letter <o> is reduced.

The IPA symbol for the sound written <o> in the word *photograph* is /əʊ/ in the first syllable; in the second syllable it is reduced to schwa transcribed /ə/. This vowel is typically short and occurs in unstressed syllables.

The syllables are pronounced on different notes (different pitches in the scale of utterable sounds for a given performer). The sequence of notes constitutes melodies which can be reduced to two types depending on what can be perceived at the end of the sentence: a falling melody or a rising melody. In the line "We keep this love

in a photograph," only the lexical terms (*keep, love, photograph*) are stressed and alternate with function words (*we, this, in, a*) which occur in unstressed syllables. Generally, the music follows this patternment, which can be of great help when dividing a sentence into syllables.

In a statement, or declarative utterance, in which the relations are either true or false, the melody (or pitch) tends to fall. In an interrogation, a *yes-no* question in which doubt is expressed about the truth of the relations, for example, in Elvis Presley's song *Are you lonesome tonight?* there is typically a rising pitch. It should be interesting to note that the music more or less follows the rise contour of the utterance. But in a statement as in the jazz song *When did you leave heaven?* by Lisa Ekdahl, in which "leaving heaven" has taken place, that is, in which the relation [you-leave heaven] is true, the pitch contour is a fall. The question applies to the moment of the leaving. Questions beginning with a word in *wh-* tend to have a falling tone.

Stress and melody constitute the intonation of a sentence. It is because intonation is a phenomenon that applies to the whole sentence and affects the entire sequence of segments that it is called suprasegmental. Intonation, on the other hand, may have different functions.

4.2 The Functions of Intonation

The attitudinal value or function of intonation can easily be drawn from the following examples. It can be converted to express the speaker's emotions and attitudes, and transmit them to addressees, perhaps including the use of non-verbal communication. Here, the well-incorporated language described by Tomatis (1977: 139)[11] can be evoked. Suiting the action to the word can be regarded as speech, communication, if only for facial expressions, nodding, sighing, or eye expressions. Some people speak with their hands, thus backing the intonations of their utterances. Gestures often rise and descend in accordance with the modulations of the voice, as if music should also be visual. Music is the vector relating two protagonists; it is also a code which can be used to produce (the speaker's point of view) and recognize (the addressee's point of view) the salient stressed syllables which determine periods and segments, and punctuate speech. This accentual function will, by contrast, make meaningful units more prominent and will emphasize the music of an utterance. The alternating movement, the "swing," of English will then be opposed to the linear perceptual monotony of a syllable-timed language. As has just been mentioned, intonation has different linguistic functions. Voice pitch variations have first the effect of identifying certain grammatical and syntactic constructions. Besides the rising forms which signal queries and the descending melodies characteristic of declarative utterances, pause in speech may also indicate category differences.

A much-cited example is the use of intonation to mark the difference between defining (or restrictive, with no pause) and non-defining relative clauses (or

non-restrictive, with a pause). In writing, the pause is generally represented by the use of a comma. Compare sentences (9a–b):

(9)

a. I want to be the person who wakes up next to you.
b. The person, who has just left the studio, is a famous musician.

The suggestion in sentence (9a) is that the person in question can only be identified through the modification supplied by the relative clause "*who wakes up next to you*," whereas (9b) suggests that the modification supplied by "*who has just left the studio*" is additional information which is not essential for identifying the head. So sentence (9b) has a non-defining relative clause since *person* has been independently identified. In speech, the distinction is represented by intonation. In the defining construction, in (9a), "*the person who wakes up next to you*" forms a single tone group, while in the non-defining relative clause *the person* constitutes one tone group and "*who has just left the studio*" another. There are two tonic placements, one on "*person*" and the other on the last lexical (stressed) element of the group, in this case "*studio*," marking the division to which a pause is added between the two tone groups (Carr 1999: 139). Note that in (10b) the non-defining relative clause is enclosed by commas, which translate the identification of the relative clause in its written form. In songs, however, that aspect can be perceived as the lines often exhibits two tone groups: the tones, which carry more salient stresses (sometimes elongated).[12]

The intonation changes in the following question tags also have a syntactic/semantic value. Consider the following examples (in bold type), the intonation contours of which can be either rising or falling:

(10)

a. You want to go to the US, **didn't you**?
b. Do you think I didn't go to the US? **Do you**?

The first instance—*"didn't you?"*—is the expression of the speaker's judgment about what he/she knows: "You want to go to the US, didn't you?" He/she does not question its reality. The speaker only seeks the addressee's approval or disapproval. As it follows a declarative clause, the intonation is descending. The second occurrence—*"Do you?"*—on the other hand, follows a query: "Do you think I didn't go to the US? Do you?"; the intonation is naturally ascending, for it suggests an action from the addressee. In songs, the music can be ambiguous and does not always follow clearly the expected intonation. In any case, a song may be a good example to practice question tags, as it may contain several instances of them (see, e.g., *A Little Time* by The Beautiful South).

Finally, intonation has a pragmatic function. Stress patterning and melody help to distinguish between new and given information in an utterance (Roach 2000). In English, it is common to front the elements which represent the given (which occurs to the left) in the construction of an utterance or a phrase and place the information-providing items (which occur to the right) in final position. It should then be noted that the new element is more stressed, because it bears either the nucleus or a contrastive stress (e.g., in the case of emphasis). Furthermore, information-providing elements are naturally emphasized and oriented toward the addressee.

This can be compared with grammatical constructions illustrating that movement, such as attributive adjectives (which occur to the left of the noun) as opposed to predicative or appositive adjectives (which occur to the right of the noun); *'s* genitive structures which denote a previous notional identification and whose first element constitutes the given information; compound nouns which use the head-initial placement to express the theme relative to the new information, the head-final placement in the sequence; *wh-* clauses (introduced by *what, who, which, where,* etc.) which call for new information to the right; and so on.

5 To Conclude

The linguistic phenomena studied in this chapter show that English segmental and suprasegmental phonology may expand the reader's understanding of what a stress-timed language encompasses. Word stress, syllable structure, English rhythm, and intonation all contribute to demonstrating effects of the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation, and this basic theory belongs to the domain of prosody (or suprasegmental phonology). Prosody involves many auditory properties of speech such as loudness, duration, pitch, and pause. Prosodic features are indeed suprasegmental; they affect every segment in an utterance, words, phrases, clauses. Phrases and clauses are grammatical concepts, but they can have their prosodic equivalents like tone groups which usually map onto the syntactic units intervening in the rhythm of speech (see Patel and Daniele 2003: 140, for further developments). Modulating word stress and syllable structure has the effect of influencing the rhythm of the language, but in the end all the auditory aspects of speech put together contribute to maintaining as much as possible its trochaic stressed-unstressed foot structure.

As already mentioned, there are similarities between language and music. In both areas, there is a sense that rhythmic segmentation, or grouping, is divided into phrases of equal duration and organized in a periodical succession to create a base rhythm. Rhythm is a fundamental component of both language and music, which operate on similar systemic principles. This is one of the reasons why introducing popular music may be of use to expand upon the workings of linguistic phenomena as it is naturally related to speech. There is, moreover, an organization which in the language correlates with a number of grammatical principles governing the function of markers in a proposition and thereby the morphological structure of words and phrases.

Notes

1. A morpheme can be defined as the smallest unit of meaning in a language. It can be a whole word like the determiner *the*, the noun *fortune* (free morphemes), or part of a word like *–ate* in *fortunate* (bound morpheme).
2. In linguistics, a glide is a sound that has both consonantal and vocalic characteristics, typically /j/ as in *you* or *university*, and /w/ as in *what* or *window* in English. They are also called approximants.

3. Most of the words listed herein are taken from Burt Buchanan's song lyrics *I'll Never Fall in Love Again.*
4. *'possum* for *opossum*, and *'coon* for *racoon*.
5. As a matter of fact, the word *undertaker* has primary stress on its first syllable when it means "funeral director." This phono-morphological phenomenon will be dealt with in Chap. 3.
6. Monosyllabic function words are typically unstressed.
7. The first syllable of *pneumonia* is unaccented and belongs to the preceding metrical foot 'catch pneu'.
8. A tone group can be defined as a stretch of one or more syllables in which the pitch contour occurs (cf. Carr 1999: 129).
9. The word *not* is an adverb and as such is not typically contracted, except as a clitic form attached to an auxiliary verb.
10. Note that *won't* is the clitic version of *wol + not*, *wol* being an outdated variant of *will.*
11. "Un langage bien intégré est en fait un langage bien incorporé, ou bien 'incorporisé', ou bien incarné, comme on voudra." (A well-integrated language is actually a well-embodied, or "incorporated," or incarnate language, whichever.)
12. Listen to *500 Miles* by The Proclaimers for an example of a relative defining clause and *It's All Over Now Baby Blue* by Bob Dylan for an example of a non-defining relative clause.

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Chapter 3
Morphology

Morphology can be defined as the material realization of morphemes. At first glance, it is about the internal structure of words, but it also concerns the relations between words. Indeed, it involves the analysis of the structure of words and part of words like bases, root words, prefixes, and suffixes. Furthermore, morphology considers parts of speech, intonation, and stress inasmuch as context may modify the pronunciation and meaning of words and phrases. In being part of a system, many words and phrases, as they are units of syntax, are related to one another by rules or principles which describe the grammar of the language. English speakers do not need explicit instruction to recognize these relations; they know, for instance, that *chain* and *chains* are related and distinguished only by the bound plurality morpheme *-s*. In addition, English exhibits synthetic aspects, especially when it comes to lexical modification. For example, speakers can recognize, from their unconsciously stored generalizations, the relations between the words that make up the phrase *muscle-bound man* (in *My Guy*). They can, from simple juxtaposition, infer the correspondence between the different terms. Lastly, there may be a relationship between morphological structure and phonological principles. That is, when a suffix is added to a root, it can have the effect of modifying the syllable structure, which in turn can influence the realization of the phonemes of the word to which the suffix is added.

1 Morphemes and Allomorphs

As discussed in Chap. 2, a word is a series of syllables making a whole and may contain several units of meaning or morphemes. Each of these units can match one or more syllables. Morphemes can be grammatically complex, and their form can consist of a root morpheme plus a bound morpheme. All morphemes have a syntax, that is, a prefix or suffix, a semantics or meaning, and a phonology, for example: the

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word *untrue* is an adjective (syntactic category), it has a prefix *un-* (lexical negation), a meaning (= not correct), and it is pronounced / ˌʌn'tru:/. Root morphemes are also called free morphemes or bases (or stems) when they occur unadulterated. Bound morphemes are generally affixes which are added to the base. For example, in Burt Bacharach's song *I'll Never Fall in Love Again* or in Mary Wells' *My Guy,* such words as *fall, love, bubble, trouble,* are free morphemes, while suffixes like *-ed* (past tense or past participle), *-ing* (nominalization or gerund), *-s* (plurality or third person singular in the present tense), or the prefixes *un-* (negation) and *re-* (repetition), among others, are bound morphemes. The realization of the former (the suffixes) can be perceptually just one consonant, an alveolar stop /t/ or an alveolar affricate /s/. These notations are the possible phonological forms of the aforementioned suffixes *-ed* and *-s*; other realizations will be examined thereafter. In these notations, the mark "-" indicates that the element between slashes is a suffix. A prefix will be represented by the mark "/… / -"; for instance, /rɪ/-, pronounced /rɪ/ and written *re-,* as in *remind*, or /un/-, pronounced /ʌn/, written *un,* as in *untrue*. The different types of morphemes are presented in the box below.

Morphemes	Free	Lexical Functional	*man, sing, happy* *the, and, to, near*
	Bound	Derivational Inflectional	*un-, -less, -ly* *-s, -ed, -ing, -er/-est*

In terms of auditory effect, bound morphemes are sensitive to context. The suffix *-ed,* for instance, can have different phonological realizations depending on the phonetic environment in which it occurs. These can be -/ɪd/ as in *tasted* and *reminded*, -/d/ as in *deceived* and *loved*, or /t/ as in *stamped* and *kissed*. So, after a fortis consonant or a stop *-ed* is pronounced /t/, after a lenis consonant or a vowel it is pronounced /d/, /ɪd/ occurs after an alveolar consonant /t, d/. Similarly, the phonological realizations of the suffix *-s* can be /s/ after a fortis consonant or a stop (as in *sticks* and *stamps*), /z/ after a lenis consonant of a vowel (as in *tears* and *lies*), /ɪz/ after an alveolar fricative /s, z/ (as in *kisses* and *buzzes*). The different realizations of a morpheme are called allomorphs according to its context of occurrence. Here, there are three allomorphs of each of the morphemes *-ed* and *-s*. A similar demonstration can be conducted with the suffix *-ing*, which can be either /ɪŋ/ as in *…be believing*, or /ɪn/ as in *I'm tellin' …* (in *My Guy*); it may sometimes become /ən/ owing to the low perceptual salience of the unstressed syllable.

In the same way, the realization of phonemes will be referred to as allophones. This comes in the form of pronunciations of certain words. For example, the lateral alveolar approximant /l/ has two allophones which are distinguished by a different place of articulation. When a lateral approximant occurs before another consonant or at the end of a morpheme, its articulation is formed between the back of the tongue and the vellum; before a vowel, the back of the tongue is lowered or restricted. Therefore, this lateral consonant has two allophones: one is velar, and the other alveolar. The latter, with the velar secondary articulation, is often referred to as "dark l" and transcribed using the velarization diacritic /ɬ/. The term "clear l" is

generally used to refer to /l/. Thus, the adjective *little* will be pronounced /lɪtɬ/. The word contains the two allophones of /l/. This is to be distinguished from the phonological devoicing of lenis consonants (pronounced without vocal cord vibration) under the influence of a neighboring fortis consonant. For example, clear /l/ is devoiced in such words as *place* or *clash*, which is different from /ɬ/. Devoicing may also affect the glides /w/ and /j/. For instance, in *twice,* the /w/ is devoiced owing to the predominance of the initial alveolar stop /t/.

All these distinctions may have the effect of influencing the phonetic morphology of certain words, for example, in *he's my ideal* (in the song *My Guy*) the place of articulation of the vowel is modified by its context. The distribution of the two allophones is that "clear l" occurs immediately before vowels, whereas "dark l" occurs immediately after vowels, or in coda position. In the word *ideal,* there is the sequence /ɪəl/, in which the vowel /ɪə/ is immediately followed by a dark /l/ in coda position; the diphthong may then glide to the back under the influence of the velar articulation of /ɬ/ (dark l) and may be perceived as /ɪʊ/.[1] In American English, conversely, the consonant <l> tends to be dark, that is /ɬ/, in all contexts, unlike British English. In Mary Wells' performance, however, this feature is not perceptually noticeable: the word *ideal* is realized with a clear /l/, because it occurs immediately before a vowel (cf. … *my* ***ideal as*** *a matter* …) by considering assimilation across word boundaries. It is, moreover, interesting to note that consonant devoicing applies to such voiced consonants as /b, d, ɡ/ in African American English (Baran and Seymour 1976: 472; Green 2002: 116).

These allophonic considerations are also to be regarded as a matter of morphology, not simple phonological phenomena, and include forms of pronunciation.

2 Allophones and Morphological Structure

The devoicing phenomenon occurs not only within words but also across word boundaries. In the phrase *a life of pain*,[2] for example, perceptual devoicing affects the lenis consonant /v/ of the preposition *of* under the influence of the bilabial stop /p/. In case of opposition between lenis and fortis consonants, the fortis consonant remains different from the devoiced consonant (devoiced /v/ is pronounced with less force than /f/). Sometimes, the /v/ is elided and the vowel is reduced to schwa, and *life of pain* will be pronounced as /laɪfəpeɪn/. This regularly occurs with words which are usually pronounced unstressed as linking words, for instance, but not only. A common type of consonantal elision is the form of pronunciation of the monosyllabic verb *give* in the phrase *gimme* (instead of *give me*) + noun, as in *Gimme Shelter* (the title of a famous song by the Rolling Stones), which is typically stressed and which undergoes in place of articulation the elision of its voiced coda fricative /v/ (weak form) in view of its low perceptual salience. The pronoun *me* is usually uttered unstressed, and the bilabial nasal stop /m/ combines, as it were, with the verb, yielding a new clitic from, pronounced /gɪmɪ/ in a eurhythmic

stressed-unstressed sequence: /'gɪmɪ 'ʃeɬtə/. Note the dark /ɬ/ before the alveolar stop /t/ in the word *shelter*.

Similar evidence comes in the form of pronunciation of the negated auxiliary *ain't*, pronounced /eɪnt/, which is the phonological form of *am not, isn't,* and *aren't*, which is used orally by many English speakers and a common grammatical feature in song lyrics. It consists of a word of one syllable, typically stressed as it carries the negation, it is easy to place in song lyrics, and there is evidence that its morphology is the result of the form of pronunciations of the negated auxiliary *be*. In nonstandard English, *ain't* has become the marker of negation for the auxiliaries *have*, and sometimes *do* as well. It can be regarded as a morphological adaptation or evolution of a negated auxiliary.[3]

As already stated, forms of pronunciation may entail morphological change, and this is particularly true in songs. When listening to Mary Wells' interpretation of her song *My Guy*, the backing vocalists, at the end of the song (verse 5), can be heard asking "*What'cha say?*" for "*What do you say?*". This modification can be explained by considering assimilation in place of articulation, which occurs between /t/ and devoiced /d/ (same place of articulation) plus the elision of the vowel /ʊ/ (weak form), thus *t'you*, pronounced /tjʊ/. A second assimilation occurs when /t/ at the end of a word is followed by the glide /j/ at the beginning of the next, as in the sequence *what you*, often pronounced /wɒtʃʊ/ or/wɒtʃə/ with coda vowel reduction. In this particular case, the alveolar stop /t/ and the devoiced palatal glide have fused into a palato-alveolar affricate, and the whole question is pronounced /wɒtʃəseɪ/, written *what'cha say?* This kind of fusion illustrates both place and mode of articulation.

Another example, which of the word *wanna* which is the phonological form of *want to*, is often used in song lyrics. This is a case of consonant lenition, that is, a reduction in the degree of constriction of a consonant and the voicing of the said consonant. As a matter of fact, the alveolar stop /t/ in both terms (*want to*) is realized as /n/, a voiced nasal alveolar consonant. The voicing of /t/ to /n/ can be construed as a kind of assimilation: the occlusive consonant (or stop) is assimilated to the neighboring vowel /ɒ/; the unaccented vowel is reduced to schwa. It may be argued that /t/ is more likely to be subject to reduction than any other voiceless stops (Carr 1999: 118).

Similarly, the sequence *got to,* which is also often present in song lyrics, will be realized phonetically as one word, *gotta,* and pronounced /gɒɾə/, exhibiting a voiced alveolar flap (or tap) between a stressed and an unstressed syllable. This process of flapping is quite general in American English. In some varieties of British English, this type of consonantal lenition may be realized by a glottal stop: / gɒʔə/. In many varieties of English, the reduction of voiceless stop to glottal stop often occurs in coda position and may be described as a consequence of devoicing or of articulatory ease of effort.

One final example consists of a series of contractions/elisions resulting in a morphological change into a single word. For example, the phonological form '*twernt*, which occurs in the third verse of Bessie Smith's interpretation of *Saint-Louis Blues*

(composed by W.C. Handy), instead of *if it weren't/wasn't* functions as a grammatical morpheme, as example (11) shows.

(11)
'**Twernt** for powder an' her store-bought hair

In examples like this, only the stressed syllable is pronounced. Here, the auxiliary is marked negatively (*wernt* is the clitic form of *were* + contracted *not*), so it is naturally accented and the beat falls on that syllable. As already pointed out, a word in connected speech, and of course in song lyrics, is related to the next word by pronouncing its coda consonant as if it were the onset of that word when it has an empty onset, or in this case a glide which is a non-syllabic vowel-like segment.[4] Since the words *if* and *it* are usually pronounced unstressed, and that the conjunction and the vowel of the pronoun are elided for the sake of meter, it follows that the alveolar stop /t/ is uttered as if it were the onset of the syllable containing the sequence, thus: /twɜ:nt/. In English, there are many words beginning with the onset cluster /tw/ (as in *twice, twin, twinkle, twirl, twist*, etc.); the combination is therefore a possible onset. Notice that in this position the glide /w/ is devoiced. It is also interesting to note that the oral morphology of the segment yields a new word which assumes a grammatical role, namely that of a conjunctive form. In sum, *'twernt* in this non-standard context is a morpheme which functions as a conditional marker. This point will be developed in the next chapter. Indeed, connected speech is rife with such morphological phenomena which are widespread in a language like English, especially when stressed and unstressed syllables are supposed to alternate to keep the rhythm. Remedying violations of the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation, especially stress lapses, often involves grammatical and syntactic variation, not to mention regional accents and differences in language use.

Morphological change notwithstanding, the shape of bound morphemes may have the effect of influencing the phonological form of roots (or stems), which can in turn affect the patterning of a phrase.

3 The Shape of Bound Morphemes

As outlined above, morphology and phonology are closely related, and their connection is complex. Word formation, syllable structure, and phonological principles are indeed interrelated. Kaisse (2005: 25), for example, claims that "the morphological make-up of a word has considerable influence on its pronunciation." This postulate appears to be essential when it comes to describing how morphology interacts with phonology. One particular area which shows how grammatical and phonological features interplay includes that of affixes, suffixes, and prefixes, which, added to a stem, are liable to modify syllabification and as a consequence affect the realization of the phonemes in the newly formed word (cf. Carr 1999: 92–93). Adding suffixes, moreover, may have a consequence on word stress assignment.

In English, suffixes can be subdivided into two categories, inflectional and derivational suffixes. It is often claimed that when a suffix is added to a word, it creates

a new form of that word (cf. Carr 1999: 93). Indeed, inflectional suffixes, as opposed to derivational suffixes, do not change the semantics of the root word, but it assigns a specific grammatical property to it: aspect, comparison, genitive, number, tense, and so on.[5] For instance, when the bound morpheme *-ing* is added to the verbs *believe* and *deceive* (e.g., as in Mary Wells' song *My Guy*), *believing* and *deceiving* are forms of these verbs.

As stated before, this form is always pronounced in the same way, with a syllabic suffix /ɪŋ/, sometimes the form /ɪn/ can be found, as in *I'm tellin' you from the start* (cf. Chap. 2). Similarly, when a suffix of plurality is added to a noun, as in *birds of a feather*, it is said to be a form of that word. In English, the morphology of the verb in the present tense is identical to its base form, that is, the infinitive, except for the third person singular which ends in *-s*, the realization of which is the same as the morpheme of plurality and of the 's-genitive. These grammatical inflectional suffixes do not actually affect the semantics of the root word. They just add meaning to it. The reader will have noticed in passing that *best* in *you'd best …* is the superlative of *well*: it is the inflectional form of an adverb and so cannot be regarded as a new word, despite the change in morphology.

When, on the contrary, a derivational suffix is added to a root word, it yields not only a different form but also another word. For example, the addition of the suffix *-ly* to the adjective *happy* produces *happily*, which is an adverb, thus a new word with a distinct grammatical function. In the same way, when the suffix *-ness* is added to the adjective *happy*, the result, the substantive *happiness*, is a different word. Similarly, when the suffix *-ment* (cf. *installments*, in the song *Pride* by Syntax) is added to the verb *install,* it yields a noun. The reverse is also possible. The adjective *faithful* derives from the noun *faith* to which the suffix *-ful* is added to form a new word. The same goes for *honor*, which may be modified with the suffix *-able* and obtain another word, the adjective *honorable*. There are many other examples of derivational suffixes in English (cf. Carr 1999: 93), some of which are stress-shifting morphemes.

Indeed, some English derivational suffixes, when added to a root word, have the effect of shifting the stress. Others, on the contrary, like the aforementioned suffixes (*-ful* and *-able*) are stress-neutral; they do not have the effect of shifting the stress. This stress-shifting effect may have an influence on the rhythm of a phrase. That is why the addition of a suffix may violate the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation, not only by adding an unstressed syllable to a word, but also by changing the stress pattern of the word or phrase. Take, for instance, the words *personal* and *personality*, which can be found in the same verse of *Trouble with Classicists* by John Cale.

The adjective *personal* derives from the noun *person*, which is, like most disyllabic words in English, stressed on the first syllable. The derivational suffix *-al* does not affect the stress pattern of the noun; it is stress-neutral so the adjective *personal* is also accented on the first syllable, thus /ˈpɜːsənəɬ/. It should be noted that only the stressed syllable has a full vowel; in the unaccented syllables, the vowel is reduced to schwa. Now, when the derivational suffix *-ity* is added to the adjective *personal*, the main stress shifts to the antepenultimate (preceding the next to last) syllable; the first syllable then is downgraded to secondary stress in virtue of the word stress rule,

which states that in English no word should begin with two consecutive unstressed syllables. As a result, the noun *personality* will be pronounced /ˌpɜːsəˈnælɪti/. Note that when the morpheme of plurality *-s* is added to the noun, the resulting form is *personalities*, but that does not change the stress pattern of the word.

As indicated above, unstressed syllables have the property of containing a schwa vowel which is almost mute perceptually in contrast with other vowels. This is what happens with related words. For example, the noun *photograph* (cf. Ed Sheeran's song title *Photograph*) is related to the hypernym *photography.* When the suffix *-y* is added to the word, the stress shifts from the first to the second syllable, and the vowel in the former changes from being a full vowel to a reduced one, marked by a schwa symbol, thus: /fəˈtɒgrəfi/. This kind of phenomenon is quite common in English.

Sometimes, the addition of a suffix may entail morphological changes within the base form. For example, when the derivational stress-shifting suffix *-ion* is attached to a verb, the stress shifts onto the penultimate syllable (i.e., the syllable immediately before the last); this is usually called the *-ion* rule (or the lion rule). This rule dictates that the syllable preceding the suffix receives primary stress.[6] It is the case, for instance, with the substantive *satisfaction* (cf. the famous number by The Rolling Stones), which derives from the verb *satisfy* and is initially stressed: /ˈsætɪsfaɪ/. When the suffix *-tion* is added to the verb *satisfy*, the resulting form, *satisfaction,* has /ækʃ/ instead of /aɪ/ at the end of the base. The stress pattern will be the same as that of *personality*, that is, /ˌsætɪsˈfækʃən/. It is possible that the coda consonant /n/ constitutes a syllable in which the schwa vowel between /ʃ/ and /n/ is lost, with the consonant becoming, as it were, syllabified. This consonant is called a syllabic consonant. The syllabic property of a consonant is transcribed by putting a subscript diacritic mark /ˌ/ placed under the appropriate consonant symbol, thus /ʃn̩/, and *satisfaction* will be pronounced /ˌsætɪsˈfækʃn̩/. In the song, however, it could be more difficult to sing the word *satisfaction* with a syllabic consonant, and Mick Jagger definitely uses a schwa. The other words ending in *-tion* (*information, imagination*) in the body of the song are pronounced with a syllabic /n/. Syllabic nasals and laterals are quite common in many varieties of English, particularly in a fast rate of speech. Take the noun *classicist* (from John Cale's song title *Trouble with Classicists*), which designates an artist or writer whose work is based on the principles of classicism. The related noun *classicism* will be pronounced by most English speakers /ˈklæsɪsɪzəm/ or /ˈklæsɪsɪzm̩/ in which the unstressed schwa vowel no longer exists, with /m/ becoming a syllabic nasal. Examples of syllabic laterals can be found in Burt Bacharach's song lyrics of *I'll Never Fall in Love Again* (verse 1), at the end of the nouns *bubble* and *trouble.*

These words have two syllables, and for many English speakers they may be pronounced either /ˈbʌbəɬ/ and /ˈtrʌbəɬ/, or /ˈbʌbɬ̩/ and /ˈtrʌbɬ̩/, where the second pronunciation has a syllabic lateral (dark /ɬ̩/). The second vowel in the first pronunciation is an unaccented schwa vowel which may be lost in faster or informal speech rate. Rhythmically, either pronunciation does not affect the trochaic meter.

It may be worth noting that perceptually less prominent final syllables become unstressed in the course of history. This is what seems to have happened to the *-ion*

suffix. Indeed, words ending in *-ion*, for instance, used to be pronounced with secondary stress on their final syllable (Freeborn 1998: 325, cf. Chap. 2, example 7). Thus, the stress pattern of nouns ending in *-ion* changed so that the suffix was unaccented and its vowel was reduced to schwa.[7] In many cases, the schwa vowel ceased to be pronounced. This may explain why Middle-English adjectives gradually lost their unstressed final vowel *e* in spoken language during the sixteenth century (Stevanovitch 1997: 69).[8] Likewise, in some nonstandard varieties, less salient coda consonants do not occur in connected speech as in *tellin'* (rather than *telling*) or *drif'* (instead of *drift*) in *a drif' o(f) snow*. Listen, for example, to Michael Jackson singing *I'm ba'* (*Bad* by Michael Jackson), repeatedly omitting the final consonant *d* of the adjective *bad.* In most contexts the grammatical suffix *-in'* is realized as /n/ with the absent unaccented vowel. The property of *-ing* (/ɪŋ/) as being pronounced /ɪn/ or /n/ is not restricted to nonstandard English but is also found in General American in unaccented syllables (Green 2002: 122). The same goes for the grammatical suffix *-ed* pronounced /t/ after an occlusive consonant and often deleted in connected speech, and for such consonant *st* clusters as in *burst* in *burst your bubble* (from Burt Bacharach's *song I'll Never Fall In Love Again*), in which the alveolar stop /t/ either is lost or coalesces with the following palatal glide /j/ of the possessive determiner *your* to form the palato-alveolar affricate /tʃ/.

Prefixed words, on the other hand, may also have an influence on the stress pattern of phrases. As mentioned previously, prefixes are morphemes, that is, units of meaning that, when added to a root, are liable to change its phonological form. It depends on the different types of prefixes, whether they are separable or not, in other words, when the semantics of the word is equal to the sum of the meanings of each element of it, or if it is not. Take, for example, the adjective *untrue* (from the song *My Guy*). It consists of a prefix morpheme and a root morpheme. Each morpheme has a syntax, a specific meaning, and of course a phonology. The phonological form of *untrue* depends on its stress pattern. In this case, the meaning of the adjective is equal to *un* + *true*, that is, the sum of its two constituents. The prefix *un-*, pronounced /ʌn/, is used to give the opposite meaning of the root morpheme (*true*) whose morphological form is a mental representation. As it is the root morpheme, it bears the most stress. But the prefix also means something, its mental representation is, as it were, a negation, and the addition of the two yields a new meaning: "not correct," or in the context of the song, "not loyal (to my guy)." It may be interesting to note that the definition of *untrue* also consists of two elements, two words, and therefore two distinct morphemes (*not* + adjective), which shows that *un-* is a separable prefix and as such can be accented. Since the root word *true* is perceptually more prominent, the prefix will have secondary stress. In view of the prominence of the root, the /01/ (or unstressed-stressed) pattern of *untrue* is also acceptable, especially when the prefix *un-* is immediately followed by a primary stress. So, *un-* can be either /2/ (secondary stress) or /0/ (unstressed). In the song the stress pattern of *untrue* is /21/, that is, /ˌʌn'tru:/.[9]

A similar example is the word *reinvention,* illustrated in the song *Pride* by the English music band Syntax. The word *reinvention* is a noun which consists of the base *invention* which translates what Pinker (1994: 56) calls "mentalese" (i.e., a

language of thought) into a syntactic construction, in that case a noun and a phonetic sequence (/ɪn'venʃ(ə)n/), and a prefix morpheme *re-* (pronounced /ri:/) which means "again," or "again in a different way." Here again, the addition of both constituents forms a new word. In reality, the prefix *re-* changes the meaning of the base (or root word). It is therefore separable and carries secondary stress. The phonological form of *reinvention* will be /ˌri:ɪn'venʃ(ə)n/. It may be worth noting that the line in which the word occurs is rhythmically trochaic, it displays stressed-unstressed sequences such as (be)'lieve in' 'rein' 'vention'. Other examples, exhibiting separably meaningful prefixes are *unsad* and *illegal* pronounced respectively /ˌʌn'sæd/ and /ˌɪ'li:g(ə)ɬ/.[10]

Conversely, prefixes which are not separably meaningful are not stressed. Recall the verb *remind* (taken from *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*), the meaning of which does not equate with the sum of its constituents. Words of that category are stressed on the second syllable, thus: /rɪ'mɪnd/. Similar cases abound: *re'search, pre'pare, mis'take, trans'late, ad'vance,* and so on. When the prefix consists of two syllables, it is always accented. For instance, the verb *undertake* is not separably meaningful, but *under* is a two-syllable prefix which must be accented on its first syllable; otherwise the word would begin with two unstressed syllables, which is illicit in English. Therefore, since the base (*take*) carries the most stress, the first syllable of the prefix will have secondary stress and be pronounced /ˌʌndə'teɪk/. However, the noun *undertaker* (e.g., the song title by M. Ward), which actually derives from the verb, may have two phonological forms: either /ˌʌndə'teɪkə/, as stated in Chap. 2, with secondary stress occurring before the primary (pre-tonic), or /'ʌndəˌteɪkə/ in which the secondary stress is post-tonic, that is, following the primary. The switching around between the secondary and primary stresses is certainly due to the fact that pre-tonic secondary stress may have pitch prominence, especially when the prefix is strongly meaningful. Thus, in the word *undertaker*, the prefix *under* may have low or high pitch depending on its semantics and remain subsidiary to pitch variance (cf. Jones 1986: Introduction xxii). So, when the prefix has low pitch the word *undertaker* naturally means "someone who agrees to perform something" and is pronounced /ˌʌndə'teɪkə /; when, on the contrary, it means "someone whose job is to arrange funerals," it is pronounced /'ʌndəˌteɪkə/. Historically, the four-syllable form may have been fixed by usage to refer to a funeral director and has acquired a default Germanic trochaic stress pattern, the first element of which has primary stress. As such, it behaves like a polysyllabic compound.

4 Compound Words

Unlike *undertaker* which consists of a base and an affix, compound words can be described as a combination of two free morphemes to form a new word (noun, verb, or adjective). For instance, *textbook, word stress, syllable structure, palato-alveolar*, or *stress-shifting* are compound words. As a matter of fact, since the English grammar exhibits synthetic aspects, especially when it comes to lexical modification, it

follows that compounding is a fairly common word-formation process. Now, there is the question of the phonological form of such combinations, in other words: what is the stress pattern of compounds given that separately free morphemes have their own patternment?

Generally, compound words have primary stress on the first element, which is the most prominent of the couple, as in *classroom* (*Another Brick in the Wall,* by Pink Floyd), *schoolboy, apron strings, store-bought* (*Saint-Louis Blues,* by Bessie Smith), *night-time* (*Human Nature*, by Michael Jackson), *movie star* (*My Guy*, by Mary Wells). As can be seen, compound words are morphologically different: some occur in one word, as in *classroom* or *schoolboy,* which are called "closed compounds," and others consist of two separate elements and are identified as "open compounds," for example, *apron strings* or *movie star.* The third type is hyphenated as in *store-bought* or *night-time.* The hyphen indicates that the combination must be treated as a whole. There seems to be a hierarchy between the three categories. First come the compounds spelled as two words, and the first element has an adjectival function; both terms are separable, although the combination is anaphoric, that is, constructed beforehand, contextually or culturally. When the two elements are joined by a hyphen, it means that the relation is lexicalizing; in most cases, compound adjectives are hyphenated. Closed compound words represent the final stage of the lexicalization process. They usually consist of only two words and occur as one; they are inseparable.

There are, however, "exceptions" to this tendency, notably in adjective compounds in which the first element is adjectival and the second constituent ends in the suffixes *-ing* or *-ed*. In that case, it is the second element which is naturally the most prominent, as in *clear-thinking* (*Texas Rangers*, by Neil Young), *cold-hearted* (by AC/DC), *broken-hearted* (in *Let It Be*, by The Beatles), *cross-eyed, black-headed* (*Saint-Louis Blues*). Such compounds incur stress shift when they are followed by an initially stressed noun in a noun phrase, in order to repair a stress clash.[11] Thus, in the citation or predicative form of *clear-thinking,* the second element is more prominent than the first one, whereas in Neil Young's song it occurs in the noun phrase *a clear-thinking joy*, and it is the first element of the compound which bears the most stress. Similarly, in *he is cold-hearted,* the second element, *hearted*, is more prominent than the adjective *cold*. But in the phrase *Cold-Hearted Man* (song title by AC/DC), the stress pattern of the compound undergoes stress shift, assigning greater stress on the first element. The offending sequence is then changed into a more eurhythmic phrase. Note that a case like (12) where the compound, *broken-hearted,* consists of two disyllabic elements (both are past participles) displays the same stress pattern in its citation and attributive forms as the aforementioned adjective compounds.

(12)

ˌbroken-'hearted > 'broken-ˌhearted 'people (*Let It Be* by The Beatles)

Note that the sung form of the above compound displays the stress shift, and the difference can be easily identified.

Saint-Louis Blues lyrics contain several adjective compounds among which are *store-bought, stone-blind, cross-eyed, black-headed, blonde-headed,* and *red-headed*. *Store-bought* and *stone-blind* excepted, all the other compound adjectives

have final stress on their citation forms. But when they occur in a noun phrase, as illustrated in (13), the Stress Shift Rule applies.

(13)

a. A black-headed gal ….
b. But a red-headed woman …
c. Blonde-headed woman …
d. … a cross-eyed o' man …

In examples like (13a–c), it is the first element, the adjective which is more prominent. Thus, the following phonological forms of the above compounds in noun phrase combinations will be: *'black-ˌheaded 'gal, 'red-ˌheaded 'woman*, and *'blonde-ˌheaded 'woman*. In sentence (13d), however, the compound precedes another (secondarily accented) adjective, *old* (pronounced /əʊ/ and written *o'*), not a noun; therefore, stress shift does not occur. The phonological form of this phrase is as follows: /əˌkrɒs'aɪdˌəʊ'mæn/. The citation form of *cross-eyed* remains, but still the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation is respected. The analysis of all these examples shows that a general rule for stress assignment in compounds is scant, and it is sometimes difficult to sense perceptual differences between shifted and unshifted conditions (cf. Schlüter 2005: 30). In truth, it is largely sensitive to context. Furthermore, the rhythm of the music must be accounted for.

In order to complete this overview of compounds, some additional descriptions may appear to be useful. That is, when the first element of the combination is a noun. As mentioned above, cases like these are primarily stressed on the first component which is more salient. The question, then, arises of why primary stress goes on the first element? Consider, for instance, the compound adjective *muscle-bound* which occurs in the song *My Guy* by Mary Wells. It is included in a phrase which consists of a head noun modified by a compound adjective, *muscle-bound*, and determined by the negative article *no*.[12] The compound roughly corresponds to a syntactic passive: *no man who is bound by muscles…* In this type of construction, *muscle* is contrastive relative to another bodily make-up or condition, whence primary stress on *muscle*: compare with such compounds as *iron-bound, duty-bound,* or *house-bound.* The phrase *no bound man* would be, if not infelicitous, rather vague. As a matter of fact, *muscle-bound man* corresponds to an intrinsic property: "someone with extremely large and strong muscles"; the word usually (and perhaps ironically) implies "in an unattractive way." The eurhythmic phonological form of this phrase will be as follows: /ˌnəʊ'mʌslˌbaʊnd'mæn/. On the other hand, in the compound adjectives *store-bought* and *stone-blind*, which also present a high degree of lexicalization, the noun indicates a standard of comparison: respectively "purchased from a store, not natural or homemade" and "blind as a stone." These are obviously hyponymic (cf. Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1656–1666). Notice, also, that *stone-blind* has an intensifying effect: it means "extremely or completely blind."

Other examples of compounds are the words *get-away, mint an' rye*, and *stove-pipe brown* taken from *Saint-Louis Blues.* The compound word *get-away* consists of an unsuffixed lexical base or root followed by the adverbial particle *away*.[13] This compounding process is quite productive in English and can be related to the clausal construction form *get away from …* The process of forming the noun is similar to

that of conversion, except that the verb and particle are separated in the clausal structure, whence the forming of a compound. The phonological form is also different: while primary stress falls on the particle (which is, as mentioned, adverbial), that is, on its second syllable, the first syllable of *away* being typically unaccented; the compound has it on *get*. The line *"pack my grip and make my get away,"* in which the compound occurs, has a regular trochaic meter displaying the following metrical feet: 'pack my' 'grip and' 'make my' 'get a' 'way.' It is, then, interesting to note that in Bessie Smith's original performance, a pause intervenes between the fourth and fifth feet, causing the unstressed syllable (written in bold type) of the foot, 'get **a**,' to be perceptually suspended (cf. the example from Pink Floyd's song *Another Brick in the Wall*, in Chap. 2). This example is another live illustration of a trochaic metrical foot which is, recall, irrespective of word boundaries. Again, the association between language and music is liable to reveal some of the morpho-phonological features of the English language, its rhythmic form in particular. *Mint an' rye* is what is generally called a coordinative compound. Very often, as in *actor-director*, the coordinating conjunction is replaced by a hyphen or the words are simply juxtaposed, as both nouns are of equal status. Here, *mint an' rye* refers to rye whiskey with mint. Similar examples are *rock an' roll* or *rhythm an' blues*, which denote music genres. In these compounds, the addition of the unstressed coordinator allows avoiding a stress clash, and the phonological form is more eurhythmic.

In the phrase *stovepipe brown*, the word *brown* is to be regarded as a substantive; it denotes a brown-colored person/man, so the phrase is a noun phrase whose head is *brown*. Associated with the compound *stovepipe*, it forms a complex combination. It may be objected that *stovepipe* is not a compound, even though both constituents can be analyzable into two words, *stove* and *pipe*. As a matter of fact, the hyphenated form *stove-pipe* exists, and dictionaries usually define it as "a pipe used as a stove chimney, or to connect a stove with a flue" (cf. for instance, *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*). Its meaning is made up from the meanings of the parts and pronounced /'stəʊv ˌpaɪp/. But, in that context, *stovepipe* does not have that meaning. In this respect, its meaning refers to a noncompound word, such as a "(tall silk) hat" denoting its wearer's striking appearance. Notice that it occurs in the form of one word in the excerpt, and that fact can be taken to back up the claim that it is not a compound. In that case, *stovepipe brown* is the only compound noun in that context, and *stovepipe* functions as an adjective. This may confirm the aforementioned evolution from compound to simple word. The phonological form of the phrase will then be /'stəʊvpaɪp'braʊn/. The same kind of analysis can be made with such words as *schoolboy* or *worktime*. In this respect, the example of *night-time* (in *Human Nature* by Michael Jackson) shows that the problem of hyphenated compounds is not clearly morphologically settled. In the phrase *Nighttime on the City …* (*The City of New Orleans* by Arlo Guthrie), for instance, the compound *nighttime* is not hyphenated. The written form denotes a different stage in the lexicalization process (cf. *week-end* and *weekend*), which is very often uncertain in English[14] and also sensitive to syntactic position. Indeed, there is evidence that the written and perhaps the phonological form of the word are dependent on the place they occupy. It appears that when the morpheme in Arlo Guthrie's performance, for instance, is

pronounced /'naɪtˌtaɪm/, that is, with its regular /12/ stress pattern, it occurs at the beginning of the line, whereas in … *across the night-time* (*Human Nature*), when Michael Jackson uses the word *night-time* with a perceptually weak second syllable, a short indeterminate sound, and thus a stress pattern close to /10/: /'naɪt(t)ɪm/, it occurs in final position; syntactic position may have an influence on the way the word is pronounced. What is more, the fact that the words are hyphenated or not is not significant when listened to, but it shows that the written form of a morpheme is not necessarily reflected in its oral form. The evolution from phrase (cf. *the time when it is* night) to compound (*night time* or *night-time*) to plain word (*nighttime*) involves some kind of instability in the morphological transition (which survives in written form) of an expression. This gradual change, which is more rapid with oral and frequently used words, may also bring about a grammatical and/or semantic evolution as in *stovepipe*, for instance.

As already suggested, the English language exhibits such synthetic features, especially when it concerns lexical modification, whence the necessity to determine more precisely the morpho-syntactic properties of the linguistic system in question. This grammatical aspect will be dealt with in the next chapter on syntax.

Notes

1. Cf. the phonological form of the word *milk*, which was written *meolc* in Old English.
2. The phrase occurs in the song *I'll Never Fall in Love Again.*
3. In some nonstandard English varieties, /eɪnt/ may occur in place of *hadn't* and *didn't.*
4. Carr (1999: 10) refers to the sound /w/ as a voiced labial-velar approximant. Although it displays consonantal characteristics (mode and place of articulation), it cannot be regarded as a consonant for it does not occur in coda position. As a vowel-like segment, it can not only occur at the beginning of a word (as in *want, winter,* or *word*), but also in such onset clusters as /tw, sw, dw, hw, θw/. Note that the letter at the end of words such as *window* or *yellow*, for example, is neither a consonant, nor a glide, but an element of the written cluster *ow*, which corresponds to the sound /əʊ/.
5. Irregular inflectional forms (such as irregular verbs, comparatives, superlatives, or plurals) do not affect the semantics of the word but only its morphology.
6. The rule is extended to other suffixes such as *-eous* (as in *outrage/outrageous*) and *-ious* (as in *victory/victorious*).
7. An analogy can be drawn with the American pronunciation of words in *-ary* or *-ory* (necessary, mandatory, etc.), which tends to place a secondary stress on the penult, thus: /'nesəˌserɪ/, /'mændəˌtɒrɪ/, while the British pronunciation usually is /'nesəs(ə)rɪ/ and /'mændət(ə)rɪ/.
8. The spelling of adjectives became invariable during the sixteenth century (Stevanovitch 1997: 69).
9. /0/ stands for an unstressed syllable, /1/ a primary stress, /2/ a secondary stress.
10. In some cases, *illegal* may be pronounced /ɪ'li:g(ə)ɬ/, the prefix being unaccented.
11. It may be worth recalling that the Stress Shift Rule applies to words carrying secondary and primary stresses as in compound adjectives whose stress pattern changes when they are used attributively or within a noun phrase. Then the secondary and primary stresses naturally switch around to avoid a stress clash.

12. Preferably, the description of a noun phrase will be given starting from the head noun backward.
13. It is different from a preposition which occurs before a noun, while an adverbial particle modifies a verb as in phrasal verbs.
14. It may also depend on regional preferences.

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Chapter 4
Syntax

The word *syntax* comes from Ancient Greek *súntaxis*, which consists of the latinized prefix *syn-*, meaning "together," added to the verb *tássein*, "arrange." It follows that speaking about syntax amounts to referring to a coordination which displays an orderly arrangement of parts. Of course, the parts are words or morphemes, and one basic description of the syntax of a language is the sequence in which a subject (S), a verb (V), and an object (O) usually occur in a construction. In this respect, the organization of parts in the sentence may not be in that particular order,[1] in accordance with the genius of the language. In the introduction of his textbook *Analysing Sentences*, Burton-Roberts (1998: 3) defines syntax as "the study of the form, positioning, and grouping of the elements that go to make up sentences." In sum, it concerns the construction, that is, the structural form of sentences.

As stated in Chap. 1, syntax mainly depends upon the speaker's word selection. Indeed, a performer's style is expressed by his or her own choice of grammatical constructions and preferred lexical items. Culioli's (1990) utterer-centered theory, which emphasizes the performer's assessment of the situational and contextual features, appears to be apt to sort out the essential underlying (mental) operations.

It has already been briefly evoked that there are two distinct ways in which the relationship between words can be considered. In sentences, the linguistic phenomena, that is, the placing of words, stand at the linear chain level, on an ordered syntagmatic axis. These phenomena constitute the core elements for the description of utterances/sentences. It is, in fact, this kind of structure which may allow an addressee to refer to a sentence as grammatically "well-formed," or "grammatical," to take Chomsky's terms (1957: 13). In reality, the addressee, who receives the sentence (or utterance), will deconstruct it to reconstruct it according to the arrangement of the markers occurring in the surface structure and give it a value, that is, a meaning within a well-defined context (cf. Culioli 2002: 186–187). Thus, the syntagmatic relationship of words may produce such well-formed utterances as (14a–b):

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(14)

a. Her hair rising from the forehead falls in thick waves on each side of the face.
b. He believes in reincarnation.

In these examples, the words are arranged in a relative order which appears to be "grammatical" for present-day English, so as to make sense. The notion of grammaticality widely depends on the different ways, norms, and standards which are acquired, and on the speakers' own appropriation of the linguistic system. In this regard, the performer gradually learns the language and, as mentioned before, signals his/her position as an utterer by a number of individual and specific marks (cf. Benveniste 1974). It should be noted that syntagmatic constructions are theoretically unlimited and, depending on the speaker's ability to internalize the grammar of the common language, likely to deviate from the norm. Also note, in passing, that the syntax of these lines maps onto the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation, displaying trochaic stressed-unstressed sequences, which is a natural tendency in English.

The other axis is vertical and is known as paradigmatic. It allows the selection and availability of words which share the same syntagmatic properties. The syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes can be illustrated as follows:

	Acquired purchased		Old used	Green red	Bowler cap
My uncle	**Bought**	**a**	**Brand-new**	**Yellow**	**Hat**
		the Ø			-s

Note that the subject of this sentence, *my uncle*, can be subdivided into the determiner *my*, which can be substituted for another possessive such as *your, his, her, our, or their* and the noun; the pronoun *he* can also fill the subject slot instead of the noun phrase. In (14a), *her hair* is in paradigmatic relationship with *it* and *he* with such personal pronouns as *she, we,* and *they* as can be seen with the pronoun *you* in (15) below:

(15)

Do you believe that reincarnation begins a new life?

The words *fall* and *believe*, in examples (14a–b), belong to the paradigm of transitive verbs. But here, the transitivity is indirect: in both sentences, the object slot occupied by *thick waves* and *reincarnation* is introduced with a preposition (*in*); it is known as a prepositional phrase. In (15), conversely, the verb *believe* may be construed as intransitive and the noun phrase *a new life* is a direct object, completing the transitive verb *begin*. At this point, it is clear that this type of analysis is not concerned with meaning, but only with the availabilities within the horizontal pattern. In this respect, a sentence like (16) is well formed syntactically, not semantically.

(16)

Colourless green ideas sleep furiously. (borrowed from Chapman 1987: 1)

Although this sequence of words can hardly be regarded as part of intelligible discourse in any variety of English, it can be accounted acceptable on English grammatical criteria. It responds to the Subject-Verb-Object analysis.[2]

Indeed, as already suggested, such syntactic knowledge does not specifically require instruction for linguistic communication. By contrast, linguists, who are keen on grammar, like to refer to a theory which is liable to yield all the sentences/utterances acceptable to a native performer. For instance, the constructions illustrated in (17a–f) would by no means be approved by any English speaker, for they violate categorical rules.

(17)

a. Mary Peter loves
b. Peter has going to Paris
c. Mary dined a hamburger
d. The government isn't agree with the Senate's decision
e. The government is not the responsible
f. Peter put the car

Such sentences as (17a–f) are ungrammatical in the sense that any ordinary speaker of English would feel that something is wrong with them, that they somehow do not belong to the system. These sentences may be produced by non-English speakers who do not master the rules and use different ones as a basis to communicate (Larroque 2008: 352). Yet, there are rules, the violation of which can be interpreted socially, idioms which are regarded as bad grammar, such as negative concord, or the use of *ain't*.[3] The third type of systemic principles governing the language is variable rules which do not really affect the system and whose choice depends on circumstances. It is the case of the split infinitive, (as in "*It is not unusual for prescriptive grammar to explicitly go against common use*," Andersson and Trudgill 1990: 26) or constructions ending with a preposition (as in "*Horace is an author I am much delighted with*," Lowth [1762] 1967: 127–128). The study of these aspects of language is often determined by socio-cultural factors and relates to sociolinguistics; refer, for instance, to Labov (1972) for social and stylistic differences.

The whole notion of grammaticality and deviation in song lyrics is most important as they reflect common language.[4] But since deviation is not precisely defined in syntax, the quality of such language will not be accounted for, and although a sentence like *Ain't nobody's business* (cf. *The Way You make Me Feel* by Michael Jackson) may be rejected as not grammatically well-formed, it can still be recognized and interpreted by a large majority of English-speaking people.

1 English Syntactic Categories

There are different types of syntactic construction: declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory. For instance, examples (14a–b) and (15) are respectively declarative and interrogative; the lines illustrated below are imperative (18a) and exclamatory (18b).

(18)

a. Take away …
(*Pride*, Syntax)
b. You'd best …!
(*My Guy*, Mary Wells)

Such structures are generally made up of two grammatical categories: lexical or content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs), and grammatical or function words which include determiners, quantifiers, numerals, interjections, prepositions, and auxiliaries. These words combine to form phrases.

A phrase is a sequence of words which stand together in a grammatical construction. It is headed by a lexical word. Thus, different types of phrases can be identified: noun phrase (NP), verb phrase (VP), adjective phrase (AdjP), adverb phrase (AdvP), and prepositional phrase (PrepP). A phrase contrasts with a clause, which includes a subject and a verb, and is a sentence or part of a complex sentence. Generally, a clause corresponds to a noun phrase and a verb phrase. If there is only one clause, it will be a sentence, but a sentence may contain several clauses. Thus, a sentence can be simple as in (14a–b), or complex and have more than one clause, as in (15), which consists of two clauses: *Do you believe* (main clause), followed by a subordinate noun clause,[5] *reincarnation begins a new life,* introduced by the conjunction *that,* to build up the entire interrogative structure *Do you believe that reincarnation begins a new life?*

2 Grammatical Functions: The Noun Phrase

2.1 Subject and Object

In the sentence *reincarnation begins a new life* (e.g. 15), the verb *begin* (*begins*) occurs between two noun phrases, *reincarnation*, on the one hand, and *a new life*, on the other. *Reincarnation* functions as the subject of the verb *begin,* and *a new life* as the direct object of the same verb. Notice that here *begin* is used transitively, whereas in a sentence like *I don't know where the road begins,* the verb *begin* is intransitive (no object). Some verbs can be ditransitive; they have both a direct and an indirect object. Compare (19a–b), for instance:

(19)

a. I gave my guy my word of honor (*My Guy*)
(IO) (DO)[6]
b. I gave my word of honor to my guy (syntactic manipulation)
(DO) (IO)

The verb *give* is ditransitive (cf. *lend, offer, sell, send, tell*, etc.), and syntactic manipulation may help to bring out the function of the complements. In (18b) the noun phrase (*my guy*) can be rephrased and repositioned as a prepositional phrase (*to my guy*). Of course, in the latter the rhyme and trochaic rhythm are lost. Notice that the place of the direct object can also be occupied by a *wh*-clause as in (20).

(20)

Tell me what's this all about. (A similar example can be found in the song I'*ll never Fall in Love Again*)

In this sentence, *what's this all about* has the form of a question with a subject-predicate inversion (*is this* instead of *this is*). It nonetheless functions as the object of the verb *tell,* for which it is obligatory; the sentence would not make sense without it.

Although English has a rather rigid word order, mainly due to the disappearance of morphological modifications, or inflections indicating the syntactic functions of words, it allows some freedom as to the syntagmatic arrangement of sentences. Fronting (also known as foregrounding), for instance, may occur and be interpreted by addressees as a stylistic device. The writer of a song has access to this possibility for emphasis, or simply because of formal constraints (including rhymes, rhythm, alliteration, musicality, etc.). Consider the structure of *My Guy* which displays inversions such as *nothing you can/could say/do …* beginning with the indefinite negative pronoun *nothing*.

This type of construction is a recurring pattern in the song, as if the performer wanted to insist on the exclusive character of her love. The syntactic analysis of these lines shows that the pronoun (NP) *nothing* is fronted, although it is the direct object of the verbs *say* or *do* and, therefore, should logically occur immediately after the verb. There are two syntactic reasons for that. First, this kind of manipulation has the function of bringing *nothing* into emphasis, so that it stands out from the rest. Secondly, the complex construction *nothing you can say*, which is, in fact, a restrictive relative clause is the subject of the phrasal verb *tear away*.[7] Thus, it logically occupies the subject slot before the verb, as it is the rule in English affirmative sentences.

2.2 Other Complementation

The other recurring syntactic structure to be considered in the song (*My Guy*) is the prepositional phrase *from my guy* (*of/to my guy* can also be found), which can be analyzed as consisting of a noun phrase, *my guy,* and the preposition *from*. It is complementing the phrasal verb *tear/take away.* Note that phrasal verbs consist of a base and an adverbial particle which modifies it. An adjective or a noun can also be complemented by a prepositional phrase as in (21a–b):

(21)

a. Be **careful of what you do**!
b. The **man with the umbrella** suddenly turned right.

In examples like these, the prepositional phrase functions as a post-modifier which qualifies the adjective or the noun.

2.3 Predicative as Complement

2.3.1 Subject-Predicative

Predicatives are used to attribute properties to a subject by means of intensive verbs (e.g. *look, become, feel,* and *remain*). Burton-Roberts (1998: 85–86) defines intensive verbs as a sub-category of verbs which require a single complement in the form of an adjective phrase, a noun phrase, or a prepositional phrase. This sub-category is represented by the linking verb, or copula, *be*. For instance, the copula in (22a) is complemented by an adjective. The adjective *glad* (*he's coming*) is a subject-predicative. This means that it applies to the subject *he.* As suggested above*,* the predicative can also be a noun or a noun phrase, or a prepositional phrase as in (22a–c).

(22)

a. I'm glad he's coming tonight
b. He may not be a great statesman
c. Hold me in your arms and I'm in ecstasy![8]

In sentence (22b), the verb group *may be* is complemented by the noun phrase *a great statesman*, which functions as a subject-predicative, as *be* is a copula. In (22c), the predicative is the prepositional phrase *in ecstasy,* following the typically intensive verb *be.*

Now, when the verb is complemented by a noun phrase, it may sometimes be difficult to decide whether it is a predicative or a direct object. The difference between a predicative and a direct object lies in the fact that an intensive verb denotes either an identity, or a property, as in (22a–c); it does not refer to a real thing. By contrast, in (22c), the phrase *hold me* (*in your arms*) is analyzable into a lexical transitive verb (*hold*) and a noun phrase (the pronoun *me*) whose referent is distinct from the subject of the verb (it is an imperative and, therefore, the inferred subject is *you*). The pronoun *me* occupies the direct object slot in the sentence. When two complements occur in a complex transitive subject-predicate relationship, the second one may be referred to as an object-predicative.

2.3.2 Object-Predicative

The predicative occurring in a complex transitive verb phrase attributes a property to the direct object of a subject-predicate relation, whence the name object-predicative. Here is an example taken from the song *If I Were a Boy* by Beyoncé, with a direct object and a predicative.

(23)

[…]
I'd put myself first and …

In (23), *I'd put myself first* is a complex transitive verb phrase, and the adjective *first* refers to the direct object, the reflexive pronoun *myself*, not the subject. In that case, the direct object allows for the inferred intensive construction *myself would be first*.

The object-predicative can also take the form of a noun phrase or a prepositional phrase as in *Make You my Girl* (Chrishan) or "*when I find myself in times of trouble*" (*Let It Be*). In these examples, the noun phrase (*my girl*) and prepositional phrase (*in times of trouble*) characterize the direct object which are respectively the pronouns *you* and *myself*. Again, the semantic relation between the object and the object-predicative, that is, the noun phrase and the prepositional phrase, parallels that between the subject and the subject-predicative. That relation can be reworded as intensive structures: *you become my girl* and *myself is in times of trouble*.

On this complex transitive interpretation, there may be some confusion as to the function of prepositional phrases whether it is a predicative or an adverbial.

2.4 Adverbial

The ambiguity of prepositional phrases stems from assigning different functions to the complement of the verb. The function of an adverbial is to determine the actual circumstances denoted by the complement of the verb, that is, place, time, manner, cause, and so on. It can be substituted for an adverb, whence the name "adverbial." For instance, in (24), the phrase *until tomorrow* is a time adverbial and can be replaced by the adverb (*pretty*) *soon* or the adverb phrase *sooner or later*.

(24)

I won't come until tomorrow

On that point, compare examples (25a–b) in which both prepositional phrases follow the preposition *on*.

(25)

a. The hero got bitten on entering Dracula's house
b. Give up on your self-praise. (Similar examples can be found in the song *Pride* by Syntax)

In sentence (25a), the adverb *there* can be substituted for the prepositional phrase, which functions as a place adverbial. In (25b), conversely, the prepositional phrase follows a transitive phrasal verb, *give up*, and can be identified as an indirect object. This may constitute an ambiguity which only syntactic analysis can clarify. Notice that the adverbial is different from the complement of the noun, as in (26):

(26)

[…]
A guy with a pin (to burst your bubble) (*I'll Never Fall in Love Again*)

The noun phrase *a guy with a pin* may also be ambiguous. Indeed, there may be two possible interpretations for (26): (1) "the guy is holding a pin," and the phrase is the complement of the noun *guy*; (2) "burst your bubble with a pin," that is, using the pin to burst the bubble, which can be analyzed as a manner adverbial. It can be inferred from the *to*-infinitive verb group that the latter interpretation is most likely.

Like the noun phrase, the verb phrase also has an internal structure, subcategories, and complements, some of which have already been dealt with in this section.

3 The Internal Structure of the Verb Phrase

3.1 The Verb

As it is a key word in language, the verb is the expression of a state (*be, become, look, remain,* etc.) or an action (*hold, tell, make, walk, talk,* etc.). The reason why linguistic analysis places much importance in verb forms is certainly because "le propre du verbe est d'être sous-tendu de temps" ("verb forms convey an image of time proper to the event expressed by the verb," Guillaume 1929: 7). That is, the verb is a lexical base which involves and explicates time (Guillaume 1964: 47). Time is intrinsically related to the very notion of verb, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, of time which can be divided into distinct periods (past, present, and future) according to the act of speaking. Therefore, the verb appears to be central in speech and particularly in the syntactic organization of the sentence/utterance.

In English, the verb has a choice position, perhaps because it allows the freedom of converting a word from one grammatical category to another without changing its morphology. For instance, distinguishing the verb *love* from the noun *love* is a quite common operation in English, a conversion which is a "derivational process whereby an item changes its word class without the addition of an affix" (Quirk and Greenbaum 1973: 441) and which can only occur with determination markers and the place occupied in the sentence. It may be worth remembering that starting from former states of English the language has become increasingly analytic, mainly because of the disappearance of morphological indications of grammatical relationship, on the one hand, and of the resulting similarity of forms, on the other. When inflections disappear only the root (or base), which both the verb and the noun have in common, remains.

The morphology of the English verb is rather simple, if it is compared to that of German, French, or other Romance or Slavic languages, for example. Its verb base allows three different forms, that is,

(27)

Love (base form) → loves → loving → loved.

The *-s* inflection indicates the grammatical relationship between the third person singular subject and the predicate in the present tense. As mentioned in Chap. 3 (Morphology), the suffix *-ing* refers to the present participle, the gerund, the verbal noun, or the so-called continuous form (*be + V-ing*). The *-ed* inflection indicates both the simple past and the past participle of regular verbs. As for the irregular verbs, the difference in tense and aspect (past participle) is marked either by vowel alternations, or apophony,[9] as in *fall, fell, fallen, bind, bound, bound, know, knew, known,* and so on, or by a change in the final consonant, /d/ or /t/; they sometimes

display a vowel alternation relative to the base form (e.g. *burn, burnt, burnt, tell, told, told, feel, felt, felt*). The *-ed* ending may denote time difference, tense sequencing, or attitudinal feel. The past participle (marked *V-en*[10]), which adopts the same form as the passive participle of verbs (notice that it is traditional not to distinguish between the two) is in Old English and Middle English, a meta-mark of anteriority. In fact, the *-en* inflection relates the predicate to the past (cf. the anteriority mark in Old and Middle English, and the term "past participle"). The reference to the past is illustrated in (28) and (29).

(28)

I gave you my word of honor that this will not happen again (see also the song *My Guy* by Mary Wells for this type of construction)

(29)

I seen you on the TV news (also see the song *Pride* by Syntax for an example)

In example (28), the past tense locates the time of the situation relative to the situation of the utterance (cf. for instance, Comrie 1975). In (29), the reference to the past is marked by *seen*, although the verb form is that of the past participle, which may constitute a deviation from standard rules. Again, the description of such forms is often considered from a social point of view and may be the subject of sociolinguistic studies. Historically, the past tense and the past participle have a common origin: in Old English, they derive from forms which refer to the past.[11] It is interesting to note, in passing, that the auxiliary *have* can be inferred from the verb form, representing the link which relates the past happening of the verb to the performer. Allusion to the passive participle of verbs was made above, an opportunity to learn more about passive constructions.

3.2 Passive Constructions

The structures looked at so far only concerned verb groups in the active voice, because syntactically, they do not display a passive auxiliary. The constructions which contain it are said to be in the passive voice. Many popular songs contain passive forms constructed with the auxiliary *be* (e.g., *My Guy*) or its contracted form *'s* (cf. e.g., *Pride* by Syntax), preceded by a modal verb (cf. *My Guy*). The passive auxiliary may also be the verb *get* (*got*) as in example (25a); this type of construction can be found in the song *Pride* (by Syntax). The sentence can be rephrased as *the hero was bitten in Dracula's house*, with a meaning close to *become*. Following the passive auxiliary, the verb adopts the past participle form or passive participle. Note that both forms are the same. Also notice that semantically, both refer to a resultative state, that is, something that has occurred.

Comparing the active and passive forms shows that, syntactically, both constructions exhibit a reversed relation, denoting a different point of view on the verbal happening. The relevance of the symmetry rests on the fact that in the passive voice, the construction is predicative. There is evidence of that in a sentence such as *it's*

made up of lonely moments (*Pride* by Syntax), where the neuter pronoun *it* is complemented by the predicate (*be*) *made up of lonely moments*, which, in turn, can be construed as attributing a property to *it*, or rather identifying the pronoun as *lonely moments* (*it = lonely moments*). In most passive instances, the subject-predicate nexus is transitive; the direct object of the verb in the active form becomes the subject of the passive. It has undergone a syntactic reversal in order to lay the emphasis (fronting) on the object. The focus shifts to the object of the transitive verb. Generally, passive verb groups are used when the agent is unknown, obvious, or can be inferred from the context. When the subject is a complex construction such as *nothing you can say…* (*My Guy*), the subject refers to an indeterminate notion (cf. the indefinite pronoun *nothing*). Now, if the subject of the passive is specified, it becomes a prepositional phrase introduced with the preposition *by*, as in (30).

(30)

I can't be torn apart from my guy **by anything you can say**.

Of course, this syntactic manipulation appears to be quite awkward, if not infelicitous, especially when the focus is on the performer (cf. *I*). Notice, nonetheless, the change in the indefinite pronoun from *nothing* to *anything* to avoid the repetition of a negative element, the negation being carried by the modal verb: *can't*. Since the direct object in the active becomes the subject in the passive, the object slot will not be filled when the verb phrase is passive. It may not be the case when the verb is ditransitive.

Ditransitive verbs were alluded to in Sect. 2.1, which deals with the grammatical functions of the noun phrase. Recall that such verbs may have two direct complements, an accusative (direct object of the verb) and a dative (indirect object of the verb), whence their name as ditransitive. Consider (31) below:

(31)

I gave my guy my word of honor (*My Guy*)

In this example, the verb *give* is ditransitive; as mentioned, it adopts two syntactic direct complements, a direct object, *my word of honor*, and an indirect object, *(to) my guy* (cf. the syntactic analysis in Sect. 2.1). Since both complements are syntactically direct, that is, are not introduced with a preposition, it follows that the verb can have two passives: each object can be fronted and become the subject of a passive construction, as in (32a–b).

(32)

a. My word of honor was given to my guy (by me)
b. My guy was given my word of honor (by me)

In syntactic manipulations like these, the focus is on a different item. In (32a), special emphasis is placed on the performer's word of honor, that is, her faithfulness, while in (32b), it is put on the object of her love. In (32a) the direct object becomes subject, leaving the indirect object in the prepositional phrase position. Note, in passing, that this syntactic manipulation reveals the actual indirect status of this object; the manipulation *my word of honor was given my guy* is ungrammatical. In (32b), the indirect object, *my guy*, becomes subject, leaving *my word of honor* in

direct object position. In all likelihood, (32b) will the most appropriate passive manipulation, the theme and the title of the song being *My Guy*, thus confirming that it is always the first object that becomes subject in the passive. Lastly, in these passives, the agent (*by me,* in brackets in the examples) need not be mentioned given the context.

Notice that although ditransitive verbs belong to a sub-category of verbs which take two direct complements, both the direct and indirect objects are not necessary for the constructions to be acceptable.

Tell, for instance, can be sub-categorized as a ditransitive verb. The expression *I'm telling you, he's a best-selling author* contains an indirect object (*you*) and no obvious direct object, while *I'm telling a lie* contains a direct object (*a lie*) and no indirect object. But both sentences are syntactically acceptable. In the former, however, the main clause, *I'm telling you*, is followed by a proposition which can be analyzed either as a subordinate noun clause, the conjunction *that* being deleted, or as an independent stretch of direct speech. Notice that both propositions occupy the position of the direct object and can be replaced by a noun or a pronoun (cf. *I'm tellin' you […] something*). This would make *tell* a monotransitive verb or a ditransitive verb. There is, indeed, an ambiguity as to the complementation of the verb.

Thus, verbs like *tell* and *give* may be assigned to both sub-categories, ditransitive in followed by two objects, one direct and one indirect (e.g. *I'm telling you a lie, I gave my sister a present*), and monotransitive followed by a direct object (e.g. *I'm telling a lie, I gave a present*). As for *I'm telling you, he's a best-selling author*, although *tell* is not obviously ditransitive as has been defined above, it can take a *that*-clause which may be analyzed as an object. This solution may appear unsatisfactory. The reason for this is that, although the phrase is acceptable, it nevertheless seems incomplete without the subordinate noun clause. Its incompleteness would be unacceptable out of an appropriate context. Indeed, it would sound odd if the following statement was omitted: *I'm tellin' you* alone needs a contextual direct object. Used intransitively, the verb *tell* serves to emphasize that what is said is true, in informal conversation, or in phrases such as *all told,* for example.[12]

Now, the omission from utterances of elements that can be inferred from the context or situation, that is, ellipted, may create acceptable, though grammatically incomplete, performances, especially when the elements are placed in unstressed position, like auxiliaries, for instance.

3.3 Auxiliaries

As illustrated in the corpus, there are two kinds of auxiliaries, primary auxiliaries and modal auxiliaries. Primary auxiliaries include *be, have,* and *do*; as for modal auxiliaries, they constitute a sub-category of verbs which comprises *can, may, must, shall, will* (and sometimes *dare* and *need*), and which do not have non-finite forms, that is, no impersonal, past participle, or *to* + *V* forms. Consequently, a modal verb cannot really be regarded as an infinitive form. *Be, have,* and *do*, on the contrary, can also function as lexical verbs (and so can *dare* and *need*). Of course, when the latter

function as heads, they cannot be fronted in questions and cannot be attached to the negative particle (*not* or *n't*). There are many occurrences which can serve as examples in song lyrics.

(33)

a. You're talking so sweet, well you needn't. (*Well You Needn't* by Thelonious Monk/Jamie Cullum)
b. We don't need an education.
c. That night exhaustion did what no pill could **do**, and she finally slept. (Concerning *do* also see, e.g., the song *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*)

In examples (33a–c), there are two verbs *need,* one is an auxiliary in (33a) and the other lexical in (33b). As illustrated in these instances, the lexical verb can take a direct object, whereas the auxiliary cannot. In fact, the auxiliary is normally followed by a lexical verb. In (33a), the verb is omitted and can be retrieved from the context: *You're talking so sweet, well you needn't talk so sweet*. This type of ellipsis is applicable to other auxiliaries, such as *do* in (31c), which refers to the immediately following proposition. Also note that when *need* is a lexical verb, it can be completed with an infinitive introduced by the particle *to,* as in *I don't need to see you,* for instance. Except for *must* and *need,* modal auxiliaries can have a present tense form and a past tense form: *can/could, will/would, may/might, shall/should*. One last peculiarity of modals is that they do not display subject-verb agreement, in particular with a third person singular subject.

As already pointed out, auxiliaries are grammatical, typically unstressed, elements. They can thus be contracted and be attached the negative particle (not or n't) as in (31a); in some nonstandard varieties, they may even be ellipted as in *De man she love wouldn't gone nowhere* (*Saint-Louis Blues* by Bessie Smith). In the latter, the past participle form of the verb *go* can be construed as an indicator of the underlying perfective aspect of the phrase.

3.4 The Perfective Aspect (Have + V-en)

Linguistic analysis often provides morpho-syntactic constructions with an important place, that is, the conditions which govern such and such form with such and such use. The common point shared by sentences which exhibit the perfective aspect is that it is possible for each one to formulate a construction expressing a result in a given speech situation. Note that the perfective aspect contains the auxiliary *have*, which, like all auxiliaries, establishes a direct relationship between the sentence/utterance and the performer. Consider, for example:

(34)

I've been there … (cf. *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*)

In this example, the phrase *I've been there* describes the state in which the subject of the subject-predicate relation (the first person *I*) is. This state constitutes the

result of a change between starting and stopping points, for instance, from "not be there" to "be there." The construction of the resulting state relative to the speech situation is made explicit in the after text in which the performer represents the process as completed, that is, as implying an end point (cf. the end of the verse: … *and I'm glad I'm out… That is why I'm here*). This stems from the fact that the performer posits that for the subject of the sentence there is a mismatch between the happening and the reference point (here, the speech situation). A similar analysis can be conducted for (35).

(35)

> *It's All Over Now, Baby Blue*, Bob Dylan (Verse 6 of the song beginning with: *Your lover who has …*)

As mentioned before, both present perfect forms contain the auxiliary *have*, which has the effect of modifying the head verbs. Notice that the auxiliary *have* is in its present tense form. This means that the past events *walk out the door* and *take all the blankets*, which occur in their past participle forms, are related to the speech situation which constitutes the reference point. Although the resulting state is not explicit in the context, except for the adverb *just* which evokes a short time before the walking out and the taking of all the blankets, the form expresses the completeness of the happenings. As a matter of fact, the perfective aspect refers to the way the actions are viewed by relating two situational planes, one prior to the other, the latter having a terminative meaning. It represents, as it were, a topical commentary on the resulting state of the process. Perfective *have* may also appear in a past tense form or follow a modal auxiliary; in that case it occurs in its basic root form as in (36).

(36)

> Or else he wouldn't have gone so far … (*Saint-Louis Blues* by Bessie Smith)

In this example, the expression of the resulting state is unactualized, that is, made less real by the modal auxiliary verb which expresses an assessment of the propositional content. Note that, syntactically, the modal verb comes first in the construction as it denotes the performer's attitude relative to the subject-predicate nexus, and the judgment emanates directly from her. Note, too, that the negative particle is attached to the first auxiliary for it has, logically and iconically, an attitudinal function. In sum, the syntagmatic relationship follows the language of thought.

Grammatically speaking, there may be some confusion between a tensed verb which does not always differ from its basic root form, especially when it concerns the present tense and the actual untensed root form. In (35), the subject is third person singular, so the form of *have* differs from its root. When the subject other than the third person is concerned, a simple syntactic manipulation will confirm whether it is tensed or not. In (36), by contrast, the form of *have* is not affected by the subject: it is, therefore, an infinitive (= basic root form).

3.5 The Progressive Aspect (Be + V-ing)

The auxiliary construction *be + V-ing* enables activity to be seen as anchored in a context. Historically, the form derives from the fusion between two structures: the equivalent of Old English *be* followed by *V-ende* (the present participle of the verb), on the one hand, and of the prepositional phrase *on + V-unge* (the dative case form of the verbal noun), on the other hand. The second element of the coalescence must be regarded by far as the most important.

When analyzed as a present participle within the *be + V-ing* auxiliary construction, the suffix *-ing* used to be a nominalization marker; it still is in such structures as *Swimming is a good sport* or *These boots are made for walking* (by Nancy Sinatra) in which the *-ing* form occurs in the subject and indirect object positions respectively. Finally, some linguists (Mustanoja 1960: 577; Visser ([1966] 2002): 1894; Crépin 1978; Denison 1993: 387; Stevanovitch 1997: 94; Schlüter 2005: 209–221; De Groot 2007) establish a derivation from the second structure < ic waes on huntunge> which has become *I was on hunting* > *I was a-hunting* > *I was hunting*. This type of construction can be seen in some dialects of the Midlands or in the Appalachians, where the idea that country people still speak Elizabethan English is widely held (Montgomery 1998: 66–76).

In contemporary English, *be + V-ing* auxiliary constructions have the following possible values: (1) aspectual, in the sense that it denotes an incomplete activity as in (37a–b):

(37)

a. I am trying to write a book; I am studying now
b. You're talking so sweet, well you needn't[13]

(2) situational, as in (38)

(38)

Listen, someone's singing in his bath.

In this case, the construction has the effect of a close-up on the situation;
(3) anaphoric, as in (39):

(39)

When you drive fast, you're driving to your death.

The phrase *you're driving to your death* refers to a commentary on the preceding part of the sentence. Notice that the anaphoric value is a constant in *be + V-ing* constructions for they are analyzable as descriptions of previous events or as they are happening. This can be viewed in many songs featuring phrases such as *I'm telling you* and *I promise I won't be deceiving you*. The modal sense of *be + V-ing* constructions stems from the fact that it implies direct anchoring to the performer and a strong involvement of the subject, as in, for instance, *you'd best be believing* (cf. *My Guy*), which combines the three aforementioned values.

In sum, the *be + V-ing* auxiliary construction signals the performer's actualization of the happening denoted by the verb which is viewed as in process. The action can, indeed, be actualized either by the facts (general statement, habitual action, or permanent state) or by the performer's own personal comment, as is the case with *be + V-ing*. The *-ing* ending is a nominalization marker which enables all elements and properties constitutive of a given verbal action to be viewed as a whole (unity and presupposition). It can only be interpreted relative to a reference point in a situation built by the speaker/performer, a context in which the performer introduces himself or herself and characterizes the subject at the moment of coding. This can be paraphrased by: "as far as I am concerned, I now consider the subject as being characterized by the predication." *Be* identifies the discourse to the context, while *-ing* signals the link to a precise situation.

The *be + V-ing* construction can also combine with the perfective aspect (*have + V-en*) as in *I've been loving you too long* (by Otis Redding), or with a modal verb as in *I won't be deceiving my guy*. The adverb phrase *too long* is an aspectual determination, whereas *I won't be deceiving my guy* is attitudinal and refers to a judgment on a process, that of deceiving.

3.6 Negative and Interrogative Constructions

The category of auxiliary verbs contains *be, have, do,* and modals. Except for the modals, these verbs can function as lexical verbs. But when they function as auxiliaries they must behave like auxiliaries. They are required in negative (with the adverb *not*) and interrogative sentences. As can be noticed in the previous examples, the negative particle (*not*) is generally placed immediately after the first auxiliary, which carries the tense (*won't = will not*). In (40), auxiliary *do* has been added to form the negative (*don't = do not*).

(40)

We don't need an education

Indeed, in present-day English an auxiliary is needed when a lexical verb is negated. Example 40 is the negative counterpart of *we need an education*. When that happens, auxiliary *do* is required in the absence of any other auxiliary. Note that in example (40) the auxiliary carries the present tense, and the lexical verb occurs in its (non-finite) root form.

It is often argued that the auxiliary verb *do* is devoid of meaning. This point of view is, for instance, expressed by Burton-Roberts (1998: 141): "Its sole function is to carry the tense instead of the lexical head verb when required." As a matter of fact, auxiliaries also have a locative (cf. *be* and *have*) and attitudinal (cf. modals) function. As such, they indicate a direct relationship between the speaker and the subject-predicate structure, and are not mere tense carriers; otherwise the use of *do* for emphasis in positive sentences (as in *we do need an education*) would not have any sense. *Do* subsumes in one word both the reference to a presupposed assertion and the speaker's attitude to it.

This can be seen in interrogative constructions. Consider the following examples:

(41)

a. Can you imagine life with no cars?
b. What do you get when you fall in love?
c. Do you believe that life is a long and winding road?
d. Would it be a sin, if I sang out of tune?

In questions, the auxiliary verb moves in front of the sentence as in (41a). In (41b–c), *do* is required to form the question in the absence of another auxiliary, and *do* moves to the front.

The inversion of the subject and the auxiliary verb is required when syntactically (and, of course, mentally) the subject-predicate structure is interrogated, that is, when the truth value of the statement cannot be asserted. In (41b), the interrogative is introduced by a *wh*-question word (*what*) which is the presupposed interrogative counterpart of *when you fall in love, you get something*, a question which expects a reply supplying an information item, for instance: *a life of pain and sorrow* as suggested in Burt Bacharach's song *I'll Never Fall in Love Again.* By contrast, (41c) is a *yes-no* interrogative. Here the subject-predicate nexus (you believe) is called into question and expects affirmation or rejection. In examples (41a) and (41d), the auxiliary is a modal verb. In (41a), it is in the present tense, whereas in (41d), it is in the past tense. There is, however, another difference between the two. While *can* in (39a) refers to a possibility or an ability to imagine, (41d) is a conditional expression (cf. *If I sang out of tune*), and the past tense *would* signals an incongruent relationship between the subject and the predicate. The same analysis goes with the following:

(42)

If I become [a] famous [lady], would you put my …? (cf. for instance, *Punk's Dilemma*, Barbra Streisand)

The hypothesis generates a fictive uncertain situation. Therefore, the functioning of the opposition present/past tense correlates with a modal discrepancy (not a temporal one) between the proposition and the explicit reintroduction of its opposite.[14] Other such examples can be found in song lyrics to complete this survey of interrogative constructions.

It may be interesting to note that interrogatives as well as negatives express the performer's attitude to a propositional content, the positivity of which he or she fictively challenges or negates. From that point of view, the syntax iconically and logically reflects the workings of the speaker's mind. Thus, the fronting of an element, and in particular a verbal one, gives focal prominence to that element. For instance, the positional highlighting of a negative auxiliary verb (*don't* or *ain't*) followed by an indefinite noun phrase in nonstandard English, as illustrated in the example below, is likely to add an intensifying force to the negation. It may seem inappropriate to use nonstandard constructions to demonstrate syntactic movements, but deviation is not precisely defined, and although these constructions suggest inadequate competence, they can nonetheless be recognized as grammatically workable and be accepted in a familiar spoken or sung register by a majority of English-speaking people. In fact, the fronted auxiliary dominates the whole

sentence and relates it to the performer as in the nonstandard expression *ain't nobody's business*. Similarly, the subject-predicate inversion directs focus upon the interrogative character of the statement.

As mentioned above, the syntax of an utterance or sentence tends to reflect the performer's angle. What comes first in the utterance indicates an attitude to the truth of a proposition. This can be seen in imperative constructions, as in (43a–b):

(43)

a. Don't tell me what this is all about!
b. Give up on your self-praise

These imperative sentences do not have a subject noun phrase. The subject is omitted but implied, because the predication is immediately related to the performer. Examples (43a–b) display a negative command with an auxiliary construction which, as already pointed out, refers to the speaker/performer. The fronted negative syntactically reflects that reference, and *don't* functions as a boundary morpheme. In (43b; 25b repeated), conversely, the imperative construction *Give up on your self-praise* is positive, and the head verb itself occurs in front of the sentence. Again, the syntax iconically mirrors the speaker's asserting the predication, which appears to be a friendly piece of advice. Furthermore, the fact that in both cases the verb form is fronted adds intensity to the whole sentence.

In light of what has just been said about the speaker-utterance relationship, it may be interesting to see how that correlates with the meaning of words and phrases, on the one hand, and on the other, their effect on personal expression in specific contextual situations.

Notes

1. The other possible sequences are VSO, VOS, OVS, and OSV.
2. Note that in this example there is no object, but only an adjunct adverbial which applies to the verb.
3. These are features which can be subject to sociolinguistic studies.
4. Deviation is not only concerned with syntax, but is also phonic, as in regional accents, for example, or as when a song writer chooses to make the phrase *phone you* be pronounced *phone ya* to rhyme with *pneumonia* (*I'll Never Fall in Love Again*, by Burt Bacharach).
5. A subordinate noun clause occupies the slot of a noun. It can act at the place of a subject or of an object.
6. DO = direct object, IO = indirect object.
7. It should be noted that when the relative pronoun, *that,* is the object of the sentence, it can be omitted from the relative clause; the NP is then construed as a "syntactic block." Also note that when the relative pronoun *that* is the subject of the sentence as in … *those chains that bind you (I'll Never Fall in Love)*, it cannot be omitted in present-day English.
8. Examples like these (cf. 19 and 20) can be found in popular song lyrics by Burt Bacharach (*I'll Never Fall in Love Again*), Mary Wells (*My Guy*), Michael Jackson (*The way you Make Me Feel*), and others.
9. Apophony refers to any sound change within a word which indicates inflectional distinctions.

10. *V-en* is a convention adopted by linguists to refer to the past participle, because it occurs in certain irregular forms of past participle such as *bitten, fallen, taken, chosen,* and *risen.* In theory, it could very well be *V-ed* because the majority of past participles end in *-ed*, but *-en* was preferred to avoid confusing with the simple past tense.
11. The evolution of what is called strong verbs in grammar, a system based morphologically on vowel alternation (apophony), shows that there may be some confusion between the simple past and the past participle, probably because of the influence of so-called weak verbs which made their simple past and past participle by adding a dental suffix /d/ or /t/ to their base form.
12. Constructions like these can be found in the song *My Guy* and analyzed in the same way.
13. It does not have a durative sense.
14. Generally speaking, the difference marked by the past is not really temporal in itself. Time reference constitutes a specific linguistic operation.

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Chapter 5
Semantics and Pragmatics

This chapter is not only concerned with meaning but also with the construction of meaning within social contexts and interpersonal relationships. This entails distinguishing between semantics, which deals with the meaning of words and phrases, and pragmatics, which combines the meaning of words and phrases with the speaker's attitudes within a given context and speech situation. For instance, the distinction which can be drawn between the modal use of *need* (cf. *Well You Needn't*, lyrics by Thelonious Monk/Jamie Cullum) and *need to*. The form *need to* is clearly oriented toward the actualization of the happening denoted by the verb, whereas the modal *need* expresses the speaker's involvement within a speech situation. *Needn't*, in the verse *You're talking so sweet, well you needn't*, refers to a prior debate (cf. *it is not necessary*). This analysis may provide a better understanding of the use of the modal auxiliary *need* in negatives.[1] Thus, contextual factors are, indeed, likely to impinge on the interpretation, that is, the meaning of syntactic and lexical choices.

1 Semantics

Semantics is the study of the meaning of words, phrases, and utterances/sentences. There are conventions as to what words refer and what speakers think that they might mean. It all depends on the speech community, on the one hand, and on the other, on the situation. So, the meaning of words is sensitive to their occurrences in phrases and sentences, but also relative to a contextual situation. As a matter of fact, a word (or a sign) or set of words (or signs) can only have a meaning within a context. The word *page*, for example, can only be interpreted in relation to other words, whether it is meant to be one side of a sheet of paper in a book, a small boy who walks with a bride, or a boy whose job is to be the servant of a knight in the olden times, and it can be a verb. Also, doing semantics may be concerned with the history and the classification of changes in the meaning of words or forms.

P. Larroque, *An Introduction to Linguistics through Popular Music*,
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In sum, the meaning of words depends on their evolution, as well as on the speaker's appropriation of the linguistic system. People share knowledge of the signification of a word, a phrase, or an utterance/sentence in a given language, but they can also have their own personal interpretation of a word according to their subjective or local reference.

1.1 What Is Meaning?

Besides the fact that the dialect of a particular social group may attach different meanings to common words, it is possible to make a distinction between notional meaning and contextual meaning. Yule (2014: 110) distinguishes between conceptual meaning and associative meaning.

Notional meaning consists of a set of defining features which name and contrast forms, colors, and so on. According to Culioli's (1990: 69) utterer-centered theory, a notion is "a complex bundle of structured physico-cultural properties and should not be equated with lexical labels or actual items. Notions are representations; they epitomize properties derived from interaction between persons and persons, persons and objects, biological constraints, technical activity, etc." One virtue of this definition is that notional meaning is culturally anchored. In truth, the function of a notion is to evoke an entity, and the word is but an image of that entity, a lexical label which represents that entity.

Take, for example, the word *glue*. It refers to the notion, and the operation is strictly qualitative. It evokes a "sticky" substance which can be found in a pot (cf. *a pot of glue*), a tube, or on the back of a stamp, and which can be used to fix things to each other. It may also refer to something which unites people. These components may be part of the notional meaning of *glue.* In the song *My Guy*, however, the association attached to the word *glue* has a slightly different connotation. It is associated with love, truthfulness, and inseparability like *birds of a feather*. This association is personal and cannot be construed as notional meaning, but as contextual or associative meaning.

The study of basic notional meaning may prove helpful when dealing with such sentences as

Colourless green ideas sleep furiously

As mentioned in Chap. 4 (example 16), this sequence of words is grammatically well formed, since it contains a subject noun phrase which consists of a head noun (*ideas*) and two successive attributive adjectives (*colourless green*), a verb (*sleep*), and an adverb qualifying the verb (*furiously*). The oddness of this sentence does not derive from its syntactic structure, but from its semantics. The problem is that the subject noun phrase does not make sense: ideas cannot be green and, if so, cannot be colorless. These associations are semantically incongruous. On the other hand, the kind of verb used with "ideas" must denote a purpose or a suggestion, not an

activity. As for the association *sleep furiously*, it is plain nonsense. Therefore, lexical constructions are subject to both syntactic and semantic relations.

1.2 Lexical Semantics

Nouns, as stated above, are labels which serve to name the notions which specifically refer to things, beings, places, or qualities. In a context, they represent the first degree of determination, which is why, in English, they often occur without a limiting modifier. A proper noun, for instance, designates a particular being or thing; it is usually capitalized like *Billie Jean* (by Michael Jackson), *Saint-Louis* (cf. *Saint-Louis Blues*), or *the Sunday Times*, which refers to a newspaper. Note that in the latter case, the proper noun names a thing and takes a definite article.

As for common nouns, the lexicon can be divided according to semantic features. In order to describe part of the meaning of a word, features such as + *human*/− *human,* + *male*/− *male*, + *animate*/− *animate*, for example, can be used to designate the different elements involved in meaning analysis. Describing the basic features of the meaning of such words as *man, bird, glue, take, tear away*, taken from Mary Wells' song lyrics *My Guy*, in the box below:

Man	Bird	Glue	Take	Tear away
+ human	− human	− animate	+ motion	+ motion
+ male	+ animal	+ sticky	− force	+ force
− young	+ feathered	− fluid	+ accept	− accept

On that basis, the distinction can be drawn. A feature analysis like this shows that at least part of the meaning of the word *man* contains [+ human, + male, − young], and *bird* involves the features [− human, + animal, + feathered]. As for verbs, only *man* can match with *take* and *tear away* (cf. the song lyrics of *My Guy*).

1.3 The Lexical Representation of Words

Thus, notions do have a dual function: a syntactic function and a semantic one. As has been seen, both particularly work hand in hand. The semantic function of words, nouns, concerns the quality/quantity features which carry different meaning components. The semantic function of *glue* taken from the song *My Guy* concerns its quality (cf. the [+ sticky] feature).

To differentiate abstract notions using these features may not be as easy, since there is more involved in the semantic content of a word than the aforementioned basic types. It should be noted that *glue* in *My Guy* is used in its notional (or conceptual) meaning.

Instead of considering words separately as containers of meaning, it may be interesting to look at the function they fulfill within a phrase or an utterance/sentence. As a general rule, a sentence consists of thematic (or semantic) roles. The central part of the sentence is the verb, and the noun phrases of the sentence describe the role of the people or things within the construction. In the first half of the song, the thematic role of the agent is taken by the noun phrase *you* (which is a pronoun and as such is apt to fill the role of a noun or noun phrase). The indefinite pronoun *nothing* fills the role of the theme, the entity which is affected by the action denoted by the verb. Note that the theme has moved to the front of the verse for stylistic reasons (see Chap. 4, Sect. 2). The theme can also be an entity which is being described, as in the second part of the line. In this subordinate clause (introduced by the conjunction *(be)'cause*), the subject, represented by the first person singular pronoun *I*, is not performing an action, but it fills the role of recipient (or experiencer). In this clause, the prepositional phrases *like glue* and *to my guy* are being used as the thematic roles of instrument and location (goal) respectively. Some of these thematic roles are illustrated in the following analysis of a small portion of Burt Bacharach's song *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*:

What	do	you	get when	you	fall	in love?
Theme		recipient		recipient		theme

A guy	with a pin	to burst	your bubble
Agent	instrument		theme

That's what		you	get	for all your trouble.
Theme		recipient		instrument

Notice that the pronouns *you* and *I* appear in the thematic role of recipients, as they represent entities which have perception (*get*) and feeling (*fall in love*).

Thus, in the same way that the meaning of noun phrases and verbs are used to build sentential meaning, the construction of paragraphs and texts also depends on semantic relations between sentences/utterances. This is generally known as textual cohesion.

1.4 Cohesion

Textual cohesion can be defined through the metaphor of weaving in which "a piece of string only gains meaning in relation to a whole". According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), textual cohesion is concerned with the relations that are established between different segments of a same text. In that, it is a component of meaning. In other words, cohesion is the grammatical and lexical relationships within a text. The etymology of the term "cohesion" refers to the Latin word *cohesio*, from the verb *cohere* which means "link together." Thus, speaking about cohesion amounts to describing a whole, the different parts of which harmonize as, for instance, in the first verse of the song *My Guy* (by Mary Wells).

The first cohesive device in a text is reference. There are two referential devices, anaphoric (i.e., referring to a preceding word or group of words) and cataphoric

(i.e., anaphorically linked to a following word or group of words[2]). In the song, anaphoric reference occurs in the form of the pronoun *me*, which refers both to the performer and (therefore) to the situation. This operation (for it is a mental operation) implies an antecedent, the performer, and an anaphor, the pronoun *me*. In other words, *me* is anaphoric (or points back) to the performer. Another example of anaphora is the use of the verb *do* in *after you do* (in *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*), which establishes the connection between the antecedent (*you get enough germs …*). The anaphoric reference is the use of the substitute verb *do*. Cataphora, by contrast, is the opposite of anaphora, an anticipative reference as in *'cause I'm stuck like glue*, which introduces the following lines in the song *My Guy.* The meaning, here, refers to the abstract notion of inseparability between two people. This phrasal semantics seeks to describe how the performer feels using the image of a stamp tightly stuck to a letter. This is to be developed further down in a next paragraph.

As already mentioned, cohesion is both lexical and grammatical. Lexically, repetition, that is, when a word or a phrase is repeated, as in *My Guy* in which the verb *stick* is repeated. Likewise, the complex structure *nothing you can/could* + verb is reiterated. This process has the effect of giving prominence to the phrase. Burt Bacharach's song *I'll Never Fall in Love Again* displays a prime example of lexical repetition: *Out of those chains, those chains that bind you*. Here, the repetitive operation allows adding further textual information to the word which is repeated. Indeed, besides the emphatic effect derived from the repetition, the preposition *out* and the noun phrase *those chains* are, as it were, picked up to be made more explicit as to the idea of being free and not in love. It is, moreover, interesting to note that these successive repetitions clearly establish a continuum. They serve to set up transitions to new stages and come to the conclusion illustrated by the last line.

Another way to put cohesion in a text is the use of words with very closely related meanings: synonyms. Synonymous forms are often defined as having the same meaning as other forms, and as such they can be substituted for other synonyms in sentences. This may be true in appropriate circumstances, but it also needs to be qualified, for in reality exact synonymy is virtually impossible: synonyms often show subtle variations in meaning. *Man* and *guy*, for example, are synonymous, but both differ in terms of formal versus informal uses. In the context of *My Guy*, *(my) guy* sounds more casual and intimate than *man.* By contrast, the relation between *face* and *guy* in the same verse can be described as hyponymy. In this relationship, *guy* includes *face*, so the meaning of *guy* is included in the meaning of *face*. Conversely, *guy* is a hypernym or superordinate of *face* in this context.

Furthermore, there is evidence of textual cohesion in a series of associations or successive thematic expressions. This relatedness of meaning can be described as metaphorical. For instance, the following sequence, *'cause I'm stuck like glue* (*My Guy*), shows an extension of the semantic features of the word *glue.* The two successive metaphors, which constitute a repetition of the same notion, bring out the literal sense of the inseparability of the performer's couple. The metaphor of the stamp stuck to a letter maintains the image of a very close relationship between two people. The second metaphor (*birds of feather stick together*) is a slight deviation of the phrase *Birds of a feather flock together*, whose symbolic meaning attached to it is

heightened by the verb *stick.* The association phenomenon can also be illustrated through metonymy. This figure of speech (related to metaphor) consists of using the name of one thing for that of another with which it is closely associated. For example, *Pass me the salt* means "pass me the shaker containing the salt." The connection, here, is a container-contents relation. In the song *Hey Jude*, by the Beatles, the performer sings "*To let her into your heart*," which must not be taken literally; otherwise it would not make much sense. The heart is traditionally held as the locus of love, so the recipient (i.e., Jude in the song) is simply invited (or reminded) to open up to love. A more subtle metonymic correspondence is found in *I'll Never Fall in Love Again* as "*A guy with a pin to burst your bubble.*"

In this phrase, the connection is based on a representative-symbol relationship. The word *bubble* can be construed as a metonymic expression which represents an abstract term such as "happiness," with the concrete symbol of the "bubble," which in turn may refer to a good or fortunate, though fragile, situation isolated from reality and unpromising (cf. the expression *live in a bubble*). This property is alluded to in these lines and further down in the song.

To end with this point on the knowledge of words, it may be appropriate to mention another type of relation between words: collocation or associated ideas. This is a way to organize words according to their tendency to occur together. The compound *movie star* (in *My guy*), for instance, is usually associated with fame, beauty, and success, likely to bring happiness, which is made explicit in the following line. Similarly, *muscle-bound* in the same song elicits health and strength. In Burt Bacharach's song lyrics (*I'll Never Fall in Love Again*), the word *love* elicits happiness, but also disappointment and bondage, whence the phrase *…, those chains that bind you*. One final aspect of love may elicit an unhappy feeling or a miserable failure.

Examples like these are found in everyday speech as well as in song lyrics and are not to be taken literally. Some of the most common collocations are actually positively associated, but in many cases the performer/speaker wants to give the opposite meaning which is to be inferred from the context. Actually, the relationship of meaning is binary, since the complex bundle of a notion is an open area which contains variable properties including positive and negative related values.

Interpreting words and phrases naturally depends on the context in which they occur, but also on the speaker's attitudes and judgments. This is more particularly the domain of pragmatics which is liable to provide some insights as to which meaning is intended in a given speech situation.

2 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of signs or linguistic expressions in relation with their users within a speech situation. This supposes the involvement of the performer/speaker in his/her utterances. For example, in the song *Well You Needn't* (by Thelonious Monk/Jamie Cullum), there is much speaker involvement, in the sense that the text

is subject to modality and implies careful consideration to interpersonal features. Palmer (1986: 16) defines the notion of modality as the grammaticalization of speakers' attitudes and opinions, often associated with such modal verbs as *can, will, must, may,* and *should*. According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 172–173), on the other hand, modality is a category of meaning (in contrast with mood, which is a category of grammar). The proposition usually takes the form of a subject-predicate structure, and modality designates the way in which the proposition is viewed by speakers (Lapaire and Rotgé 1993: 291). In a sentence like *It may rain tomorrow*, the proposition < it–rain> is qualified by the modal verb *may* and can be reworded as follows: *it is likely to rain tomorrow.* The paraphrase brings out the contingent/epistemic reading of the modal verb as well as the speaker's attitude as to the truth of the proposition.

Modality	The speaker's judgment or attitude applies to the entire proposition (or to the subject-predicate relation).
Mood	The mood system: indicative, subjunctive, conditional, imperative. The mood of the verb may be marked by the use of such modal operators (auxiliaries) as *can, may, must, should, will*, etc.

Here are a few lines taken from the song lyrics which are representative of the performer's attitude to the propositional content:

(44)

You're talking so sweet, well you needn't,
[…]
It's over now, it's over now.

This line (and the following ones) suggests some preexisting knowledge of what the performer intended to convey, what Yule (2014: 126) calls the "invisible" meaning. Therefore, the interpretation of the sign, here the modal *need*, is based not only on the words but also on what the performer intended to communicate. Then, contextual factors such as physical (or situational), cultural, personal, and interpersonal parameters are needed for describing and understanding an utterance.

2.1 Context

The words used in the first half of the lines in the aforementioned excerpt (example 44) constitute the linguistic context or co-text. They construct a background against which the performer can lean to express his or her personal angle and feelings. It may be noted that grammatically the continuous aspect (*be+ V-ing*) and the modal *will* which occurs in the following lines point back to the situation. Note, too, that the speech roles of speaker and hearer are defined by the first and second person pronouns.[3] They determine the speech situation and as such can be regarded as deictic.

2.2 Deixis

Deixis is a Greek word which means "showing" or "pointing." For example, the words *this, that, here,* and *there* have a deictic function. They are used to show objects, people, places, and phenomenal instances in the extra-linguistic world. On the other hand, the performer, when he or she speaks, marks him/herself out as the origin of the speech act. He or she locates his/her speech production relative to contextual features. There must then be evidence of marks left by the speaker in his/her performance and distributed over the whole utterance. These are deictic marks which serve to appraise situational and contextual constituents. This deictic relationship is the result of a pragmatic consensus on the relative positioning of the component parts of a speech situation.

Deixis can be personal, spatial, or temporal. In the song *Well, you needn't* personal deixis is illustrated by the pronouns *I* and *you* which are, as mentioned, linguistic indicators of the speech situation, the adverb *now* points to time, and spatial deixis is exemplified by the continuous aspect which enables activity to be seen as firmly anchored in a context. Deictic expressions are indicators of the speaker's appraisal of what is close to him/her (*here, this, now*) and what is distant (*there, that, then*). Notice in many song lyrics, as in speech, the distinction between *here* and *there*. This distinction is reflected in the meaning of the verbs of movement *come* and *go*.

What is more, deixis can also relate an event to a fictive reference point, as illustrated in example (45).

(45)

> I won't come until tomorrow. (cf. Burt Bacharach's song *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*)

In the above example, the fictive reference point is represented by the time adverb *tomorrow*, which places the event in the future.

2.3 Reference Again

As discussed in Sect. 1.4, reference is a textual cohesive device. It can hardly escape notice, however, that it is also an operation by which a performer/speaker directs attention to extra-linguistic entities. These entities are generally referred to in discourse and can be within (endophora) or without (exophora) the speech situation.

Endophora consists in pointing to some items which are within the speech act, that is, referring to words which represent directly observable situational constituents. As previously stated (cf. the first half of Sect. 1.4), if the reference points back to the item, it is called anaphora, and if the referent is anticipatory, it is cataphoric. Exophora, conversely, consists in referring to entities which are without the speech situation, that is, elements which specifically belong to the extra-linguistic world. In excerpt (44), for instance, much of the context carries the hearer's mind without the text, toward situations which are alluded to, and lead the hearer to infer, or imagine,

that the person represented by *you* in the text has been untrue or unfair to the performer. Additionally, even the pronoun *it* has an exophoric function. It is not, as it may seem, a mere unmeaning prop word, the grammatical subject of the sentence *It's over now*. Take, for instance, the opening line of Paul Auster's novel *Moon Palace: It was the summer that men first walked on the moon.* In this type of construction, *it* refers to a situation and not only to an element of the clause. It points to the moment of the year (identified as *summer*) and the event (*men walked on the moon*). As such, it actualizes, as it were, the predication (cf. Joly and O'Kelly 1989: 123). Similarly, in excerpt (44), the pronoun *it* points back to what is spoken about, the moment and the time of the period (cf. the adverb *now*) to which the performer is referring to announce that it is over. These inferences are necessary to comprehend the performer's intention.

2.4 Inference

As hinted above, inferring means coming to a conclusion from facts or premises. For instance, in example (42), the hearer can form an opinion about the relationship between the performer and his lover. The information contained in the lyrics is likely to create a connection between what is said and what is meant. Another example, Burt Bacharach's song, suggests that the conclusion *I'll never fall in love again* is only temporary. The contextual marks which make it possible to infer this knowledge are *at least* and *until tomorrow*, which set a limited duration to the period of time denoted by the adverb *never.* These examples make it clear that inference constitutes additional information which enables the hearer to relate word and world in order to obtain a coherent whole.

Now, if the word "inference" is used to describe what the hearer does from the information given by the performer, it may be appropriate to allude to what the latter does when he or she makes assumptions. This is particularly clear in the song lyrics *Well, You Needn't* (excerpt 44) in which the performer presupposes that his lover is or has been unfaithful.

2.5 Presupposition

Inference and presupposition are two sides of the language of thought. Pinker (1994: 56) wonders whether people's thoughts are "couched in some silent medium of the brain – a language of thought, or mentalese – and merely clothed in words whenever [they] need to communicate them to a listener." It is generally assumed that words determine thought. Yet, according to Worf, language can shape thoughts, and people's perception of the extra-linguistic world and their way of thinking about it is influenced by the structure of the language they speak (cf. Carrol, Levinson and Lee 2012).

The relationship, therefore, between words and thought is complex, and there is no direct correspondence between language and external reality. Sometimes, the performer/speaker's mental representations are not stated directly, because the marks left by the performer/speaker in his/her own discourse cannot be differentiated superficially. Some of the speaker's operations are performed mentally and will remain implicit or presupposed. Implicit assumption in discourse refers to the mental operations which need reconstruction. In brief, presupposition relies on thought processes and is usually triggered by what the speaker assumes is true or known by the recipient (listener or reader), that is, the pragmatic purpose of the utterance. Presupposition can also be triggered by syntactic elements such as conjunctions as in *Belinda smil'd and the world was gay* (A. Pope, in *The Rape of the Lock*) in which the conjunction *and* can mean "as a result," or prepositions such as *to* and *at* in the sentences *He threw a stone at the dog* and *He threw a bone to the dog*. In the prepositional phrase *at the dog*, it is assumed that the subject wants the dog to go away, that he expects a result; the phrase *to the dog*, conversely, indicates the direction and implies the sender's intention to play with the animal. In sum, presupposition can be triggered by linguistic items and structures (cf. for instance Macagno 2015).

In example (44), for example, the modal use of the verb *need* entails a dual presupposition: on the one hand, it implies that the performer acknowledges what the person denoted by *you* does, and, on the other hand, he rejects her arguments. It may be noted that the negation applies to the modality and rests on a presupposed positive statement. This is confirmed by the continuous (*be* + *V-ing*) aspect of the argument which looks back to a preceding situation. In the song *Pride* by Syntax, the question *Do you believe that life is holding the clue?* contains at least two presuppositions. In asking the question, the performer assumes (1) that life helps to provide solutions: in the noun phrase *the clue* the definite article is presupposing, and (2) that the question expects affirmation or rejection as regards the subject-predicate relation, thus implying a presupposed review of the *yes-no* alternative. In the phrase *Give up on your pride* in the same song, there is evidence of the underlying presupposition "you have pride" or "you are too proud." The imperative statement *Give up on your pride* assumes that there is an advantage for the addressee to open up and smile (cf. *shine a little light*).

In this sentence, "you have pride" has a presupposed negative effect. It is interesting to note, moreover, that in imperative constructions, the subject is omitted, but implied, an obvious mark of presupposition.

2.6 Implicature

The analysis of inference and presupposition involves the underlying assumption that participants in a conversation are, as it were, co-operating with each other. This principle was first developed by the philosopher Paul Grice (1975: 45). The co-operating principle is often presented as the Gricean maxims which include the

quantity (being informative), the quality (not telling lies), the relation (being relevant to the conversation), and the manner (being as clear as possible, in avoiding ambiguities) principles. Following Grice's maxims may help to interpret utterances which often involve conversational implicatures, that is, additional implied meanings. Consider the following example taken from Paul Auster's *Moon Palace* (Penguin, p. 45):

> "Jesus Christ" he said. "Are you still here?"
> "Still here," I said. "In a manner of speaking."
> "You gotta be out today," Fernandez said. "Apartment's rented for the first of the month, you know, and Willie's coming with the painters tomorrow morning. You don't want no cops dragging you out of here, do you?"
> "Don't worry I'll be out in a plenty of time;"

In the utterance *"You don't want no cops dragging out of here, do you?"* it may be assumed, according to the principles of quantity and relation, that Fernandez is angry and threatening (cf. the manner maxim) his tenant to call the police in order to make him leave the apartment. Now given the context, the tenant can work out that "*you don't want no cops dragging you out of here*" is a euphemistic way to invite him to move out, thus avoiding serious trouble. The tenant's answer shows that the message has come across. In the same way, the phrase *Well, you needn't* (in excerpt 44) involves being under necessity (according to the relation maxim), which implicates a prior debate, and the debate entails decision. This account follows Traugott's (1989: 50) conventionalizing implicatures, which arguably is involved in the development of modal verbs, in particular *must* and *will*.

As mentioned earlier, imperatives are usually used for commanding, giving friendly advice, or, as in the dialogue above, reassuring someone (cf. "*Don't worry, …*"). There is then a close relationship between the form of the sentence and the action performed by the speaker. This may be called a speech act.

2.7 Speech Acts

A speech act can be defined as the expression of something which not only conveys information but also performs an action. The Speech Act theory was first created by John Austin, further developed by the American philosopher John Searle (1969) and by the French linguist Oswald Ducrot (1972). In *How to Do Things with Words* ([1962] 1975), Austin explains that one does something just as one performs or states an action. He also distinguished different stages of perceiving a speech act which are locution, illocution, and perlocution. The locutionary level concerns the act of saying something as in *He told me:* "*You can't do that*"; the illocutionary level, or illocutionary force, deals with what the speaker does when he says something as in *He protested his loyalty*; the perlocutionary level describes the effect of the speech act, for example: *He talked me out of gambling*. Now these three aspects may appear simultaneously in such a simple sentence as *I am saying that he will tear down the street*. This utterance may (depending on the context of occurrence) be a statement, a warning, or a gamble on the event, and as a result, the expected

perlocutionary effect will be different each time. A useful way to remember the different types of speech acts are presented below:

Types of speech acts	Examples
Locutionary level	*He told me that he hated sport and all that sort of thing.*
Illocutionary level (force)	*You must be joking!*
Perlocutionary level	*He advised me to stop smoking.*

Thus, according to Austin's theory, requesting, ordering, promising, apologizing, complaining, or informing can be regarded as speech acts, in the sense that they correspond with actions performed by a speaker in an utterance. Moreover, the relationship between the form of an utterance and the speech act it performs is complex. Indeed, a single utterance may perform several speech acts at the same time. For instance, *I'll never fall in love again* is not only a concluding statement; it appears to be carrying out the speech act of "promising," and as everybody knows promises are seldom held.

Speech acts can be direct or indirect according to the speaker's intention. For instance, a statement such as *I believe in reinvention* (*Pride*) is an assertion that expresses belief, a direct speech act of some sort. Still in the same song, the interrogative structure *Do you believe that life is holding the clue?* is used with the function of a *yes-no* question and can be described as a direct speech act. Contextual data can also be analyzed as speech acts. This is the case of excerpt (44), in which the performer informs his situation as being difficult to deal with or understand by the way his lover behaves. Besides, the time of the utterances matches with the time when the girl has been disloyal.

It may be noticed, on the contrary, that the imperative construction *Give up …* (*Pride* by syntax) can have the function of a casual exhortation or a request (cf. *Please, give up on your pride*) in the form of a command. In fact, the imperative is usually the form of a verb that expresses orders, that is, associated with the action of "commanding." This is an instance of indirect speech act. The form of the utterance is used to perform a function which is other than the one which is fully intended in using the sentence type. Similarly, utterances produced in the form of a question can be interpreted indirectly. For example, *Can you imagine the way I felt?* in Chuck Berry's song *No Particular Place to Go*, the interrogative form does not actually ask a question. This example does not really ask a question about the addressee's ability. Indeed, this structure is not normally used as a question or a request, but rather as an exclamation, that is, a structure associated with the function of a question, but with the function of a vehement expression of surprise. In this excerpt, the performer does not expect an answer as if it were a direct speech act (cf. the context of the song). This is made possible, because there is a kin relationship between exclamatory and interrogative structures. They appertain to the same attitudinal, psychogrammatical operation, which is why both constructions often have similar syntactic structures. Exclamatives, however, are distinguished from interrogatives in that the object of the operation is already selected and identified; in the aforementioned

example, it focuses on the phrase *the way I felt*. So, in this case, the syntactic interrogative structure can be used as a rhetorical question indirectly expressing exclamatory meaning. Implicitly, it uses the indirect force of an exclamatory statement (cf. Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 923–924).

To conclude on this point, a case of indirect speech acts can be perceived in the call and response of the famous song *With a Little Help from my Friends* by the Beatles. The opening lyrics consist of alternating questions. The answer to the first question is another question which elicits loneliness and does not directly concern the initial question. Besides the fact that the "reply question" is, as it were, indirect, it raises the real point at issue and invites the performer to reflect on it. In some way, the reply question can be described as an indirect speech act inasmuch as the structure used is associated with the function of a question, but in this case it performs the function of an incentive. Interestingly, this type of indirect speech act representing actions associated with requests is left unanswered and so induces people to realize that the answer can be found by reasoning. Indeed, the syntactic interrogative construction entails a mental scanning of a category before selecting an item. Here, it may be noted that the idea of being alone presented in the reply questions can be inferred from the preceding ones: *when my love is away* may lead to being alone and constitute a concern, and *Are you sad*? answers *How do I feel?* Interrogatives are usually formed by the inversion of the subject and the auxiliary verb which syntactically represents an underlying mental operation forming a construct of logically possible answers. The correspondence between structures, functions, and the nature of the speech acts performed is presented below:

	Structures	Functions	Speech acts
Do you believe that life is holding a clue?	Interrogative	Question	Direct
Give up on your pride	Imperative	Casual exhortation, request	Indirect
Can you imagine the way I felt?	Interrogative	Exclamation	Indirect

Yet, indirectness in speech also concerns style and verbal strategy.

2.8 Style and Verbal Strategy

Songs are usually written in an oral or colloquial style which, as mentioned, reflects popular expression, and this form is used in direct address. Many song lyrics exhibit the pronoun *you*, as if to associate the listener to the storyline. In the Beatles' song, for instance, the verse appears as a dialogue; in (44), on the contrary, the performer addresses his lover, and the listener is somewhat the witness of the scene. These are direct statements.

Reported speech, also called indirect speech, conversely, is a morpho-syntactic conversion of spoken or written words. This style, or verbal strategy, is less objective than direct speech. Indeed, the words can be altered, and the tense of verbs used indicates that the speaker/performer cannot assert the truth value of the reported facts. This obvious distance between the reported utterances and the narrator's linguistic realization of them enables him/her to deviate from the words which were actually said. For example, in the song lyrics of *Billie Jean* by Michael Jackson, there is a temporal break between the "now" of coding and the event which is located relative to the tense of the verb of reporting (cf., e.g., *she told her name was Billie Jean*). This is an indirect statement which consists of a reporting (main) clause and a subordinate *that*-clause. Note that the subordinating conjunction *that* is omitted, as it is often the case in informal utterances. Note too that the past tense of the subordinate clause matches the tense of the reporting verb. This may be sensitive to the speaker/performer's attitude to the reported situation. As a verbal strategy, indirect speech may also allow for insinuations, unsaid comment, doubts, skepticisms, and even slander. There is evidence of that in the whole song.

Michael Jackson's song is about a woman, Billie Jean, who claims that the narrator is the father of her baby, which he denies. In verse 5, the reported words are ambiguous. They imply that since the narrator danced with Billie Jean until late at night, he may very well have been the father of her newborn son. The whole song is, as it were, made of indirect statements in which the narrator seems to be manipulated (so he claims), and as the song says "the lie becomes the truth." This is a fairly good example of what indirect speech may produce in terms of verbal strategy, especially if the verb *dance* is a double-entendre for "having sex" with someone.[4]

This ambiguity of meaning has the effect of mitigating the force of an assertion or of avoiding being rude. This way of putting things is, as it were, less assured, more "hedged" than the other.

2.9 Tentative Use

Tentative use refers to a form which cushions the effect that an utterance may have on the addressee (e.g., polite phrases). It is the case for all verbs and most modal operators. Generally speaking, it has the same force as conditional expressions. Polite phrases, for instance, are expressions used in accordance with social rules and, as such, are good examples of tentative use inasmuch as they show awareness and consideration of another person. A direct speech act, on the contrary, would appear disrespectful or more contemptuous. An indirect speech act associated with a question will remove this sense of social incivility.

But tentative use can also be associated with a lack of confidence. Someone who is uncertain, hesitant may use hedges to lessen the possible crudeness of their expression. This is what is alluded to in the first verse of the Beatles' song *With a Little Help from My Friends*. The first two lines of this verse are questions. These questions are formed with the modal operator *would*, which is the past tense of *will*,

and in this case the non-assertive mood can be analyzed as tentative.[5] The context, indeed, shows that the performer is uncertain of his capacity to sing in tune and of the listener's tolerance to his lack of competence. His attempt to give a reasonable performance can be associated with the function of a promise (cf. *I will try…*), which, in this case, is a direct speech act. It may be noted that *will* is in its full form, which denotes an act of volition.

2.10 Relationship Between Language and Mind

Attitudinal distancing, in pragmatics, refers to the way a speaker behaves in accord with his or her performance. Starting from Leibniz's statement that language is the mirror of the human mind, it may be interesting to look at the relationship between the two.

Speaking boils down to conceptualizing, that is, representing mentally, in a general and abstract way, situational components. But speech production cannot be limited to a mere conceptualization of contextual factors; a more direct relationship and a more figurative evocation of the extra-linguistic world can be considered. Indeed, one of the functions of language is that of expressing the speaker/performer's experience of real-world phenomena, and that happens through the filter of the mind. As a matter of fact, all utterances or sentences carry an imprint left by the speaker's mind. This is why language, and particularly speech production, must be described both at an external and internal level. These two levels of analysis are on the one hand, the propositional content, that is, the actual informational data, and, on the other hand, the modality, in other words the speaker's judgment about the proposition. Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 173) claim that "modality is centrally concerned with the speaker's attitude toward the factuality or actualization of the situation expressed by the rest of the clause." This definition points to the general concept of speaker involvement which exists in all utterances, especially those in interpersonal exchanges (Larroque 2013: 110). For instance, in the song *With a Little Help from My Friend*s, the lines *What would you …?* and *I will try …* display a difference in the aspectual form of the modal operator *will*. This difference is codified by distinct forms of mental processing: the past tense in the case of *would* is tentative and denotes an attitudinal distance, whereas the present *will* refers to a direct speech act. The use of *would* and that of *will* denote a different mental strategy. Another example of the pathway chosen by the speaker/performer is the difference between apparently equivalent constructions. In *Pride* (by Syntax), the question *Do you believe that life is holding THE clue?* can be compared to *Do you believe that life is holding A clue?* These two paraphrases roughly mean the same thing, except that the definite article (*the*) and the indefinite article (*a*) denote two different mental strategies: *the* is mentally retrospective, whereas *a* is not.

These two examples relate to the idea of a "language of thought," a theory developed by the American philosopher Jerry Fodor (1975), which hypothesizes that the mind works with a language similar to a natural tongue, and which allows

translating thought into surface arrangements that correlate with human behavior and thinking. Individuals have their own ways of representing their environment and more generally the extra-linguistic world.

There is, indeed, a mental link between the proposition which is suggested in the question *Do you believe that life is holding the clue?* and the speech act. The constituent interrogated is the relation of belief (cf. *Do you believe…?*) relative to the proposition *life is holding the clue*, a relation which is mentally established between the subject and the proposition. Here, there are two levels of analysis. The first is the relationship between the form of the utterance and the speech act it performs: the interrogative construction codifies a form of mental processing; it is attitudinal and interpersonal.[6] The second establishes a mental link between the subject (*you*) and the proposition: the question mentally implies *you believe that life is holding the clue.* A syntactic analysis of the utterance may highlight this relation of belief: *Life is holding the clue, do you believe that?* In this paraphrase, the indicator of subordination, *that*, has become a deictic pronoun which points to the object of the belief and as a consequence emphasizes the mental relationship. Immediate grammatical access to language representations may sometimes be indirect and unclear. Michael Jackson's song lyrics of *Billie Jean*, for instance, exhibit a sequence of events which are juxtaposed (cf. the song). This may give rhythm to the sentences, but it also conveys a sense of disquiet, even panic, relative to Billie Jean's claim. In this case, the narrator's mental representations are identifiable to his neural state and his linguistic coding. Lastly, as discussed in the introduction of this chapter, the use of *needn't* instead of *don't need to* (cf. excerpt 44) denotes a different way of thinking. The expression of modality is indeed a verbal mark of the performer's mental state. All these examples indicate that whenever a speaker/performer needs to communicate his or her thoughts, they will be clothed in words and phrases, for both seem to be mentally interconnected.

As Slobin (2001: 285) observes, "each type of language fosters its own modes of "thinking for speaking."" English, of course, has its own thinking-speaking relationship, but it is not homogeneous and may vary depending on its users and therefore fosters a slightly different mode of thinking. Slobin's statement can then apply to dialects and accents inasmuch as a language comprises regional, geographical, and class variants. This aspect of language will be approached in the next chapter.

Notes

1. The same analysis can be made with *dare* versus *dare to.*
2. This is also called anticipatory anaphora.
3. *You* implies *I* and vice versa.
4. This type of image can be found in the expression *Rock and Roll*, which refers to the fact of being rocked and by extension to a dance and music genre, but it is also used to suggest sexual intercourse with its cradle-like undulating motion (see Larroque 2015).
5. The past tense of *will* is here modal; it codifies the attitudinal (not temporal) distance between the moment of speaking and the happening denoted by the verb.
6. Recent research has made linguists more aware of the importance and attitude of the addressee in the communication situation.

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Chapter 6
Accents and Dialects of English

According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 13), the term accent is used "for varieties of a language distinguished by pronunciation, opposing it to dialect which applies to varieties distinguished by grammar or vocabulary." The development of national languages has reinforced the idea of dialect as a distributive system of a group of users with common regional or class characteristics and identity, hence the popular misconception that dialect and accent are one and the same. Most speakers of the British family of dialects, for instance, have a non-rhotic accent, which means that the sound /r/ in post-vocalic position is no longer pronounced whereas it is in American English (cf. Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 13). In addition, speaking a dialect or having an accent is often frowned upon as an offense to the standard language, which is regarded as the norm in the speech community. This social judgment is the subject of sociolinguistic studies. Besides, a person can have a regional accent and still speak the standard language. This is why it is important to distinguish dialect and accent, because prestige, status, and high-quality language are notions which vary in place and time, depending on personal, regional, and social factors.

1 The Dialect

In England, the communication between a person who lives in Newcastle and someone from Plymouth may be hindered, in particular because of the geographical distance, whence the need for a more neutral intermediate dialect, Standard English, in order to establish a linguistic link between users of different varieties. A dialect can then be defined as a language variety spoken in a region, a social class, and sometimes a professional group (jargon), therefore a more restrictive area than that of a national tongue.

P. Larroque, *An Introduction to Linguistics through Popular Music*,
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It can hardly escape notice, however, that Standard English is regarded as the sole representative form of the language, as *the* English language, which implies that dialects are deviations relative to the norm and that these deviations are accounted mistakes, linguistic corruptions due to ignorance or neglect. It may then be worth remembering that English, especially British English, is at the beginning a language of dialects (in North America, where English has only been spoken for over 400 years, it did not have the time to split). The national language can indeed be traced back to a dialect, a language variety, but a dialect which has gained prestige through its social, political, and cultural status, and thus has become a model, a linguistic reference, but it is neither the dialect of a region nor that of a particular social group (although Standard English is more common among the middle classes than among the working classes). In this respect, the idea of dialect can only be limited to a distinctive speech of a group within a language community, determined by region or class. The dialect can be distinguished by its grammar, lexicon, and phonology. As the American sociolinguist W. Labov observes, it is difficult to distinguish dialects and languages. It is in fact a matter of hierarchy between them: some dialects triumph over others and achieve languagehood, as is the case, for instance, in France with *la langue d'oil* over *la langue d'oc*, or in Scotland, English over Scots. As regards English, dialects other than BBC English (and with minor differences, the English spoken in Wales, Ireland, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa) or General American (GA; and Standard Canadian English) are considered nonstandard.

This point of view is widely shared by most linguists and sociolinguists. Trudgill (1998: 117–128), for instance, argues that Standard English is not a language. It is less than a language. It is only a variety among many others, even though it is the most important one. Standard English is not a style either. Labov (1972) claims that no one has only one style. Stylistic differences can be seen at the level of the lexis. Finally, Standard English is not a register, that is, determined by a subject matter or an activity (mathematics, medicine, etc.). At that level, it is a matter of lexicon and turn of phrase. Thus, accent apart, Standard English is a dialect, in other words, a sub-variety of English, and sub-varieties are dialects (Trudgill 1998).

2 Accent

According to Trudgill (1998), Standard English is not an accent, and what is generally called Received Pronunciation is sociolinguistically inappropriate insofar as it cannot be associated with any precise geographical area. Besides, the term "Received Pronunciation" (henceforth RP) actually shows that the judgment is arbitrary. In the United States of America, the more neutral and socially less connoted expression "General American" is preferred to refer to the standard language. It is also more accurate, because it corresponds to the English spoken by a majority of Americans, whereas RP is a minority use in Britain.

As a matter of fact, everybody speaks with an accent. It is a myth that some people have accents while others do not. An accent reflects the speaker's identity; it shows what country, region, or social class someone comes from (see, e.g., Esling 1998: 169–175). Speech is a social institution which involves individuals and, as mentioned, their own appropriation of the system, the grammatical and more accurately the phonological system. This may be regarded as the locus of variation; witness this quotation taken from George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* (1912), revived on stage and screen as *My Fair Lady* in 1956, and which has become a sociocultural cliché:

(46)

> An Englishman's way of speaking absolutely classifies him.
> The moment he talks he makes some other Englishman despise him
> One common language I'm afraid we'll never get
> Oh why can't the English learn to set
> An example to people whose English is painful to your ears?
> The Scotch and the Irish have you close to tears.
> There even are places where English completely disappears,
> In America, they haven't used it for years.

The play features the phonetician Professor Higgins, renowned for educating people's speech and correcting their accents, and Miss Doolittle, who appears to have some difficulty speaking in anything other than her local-dialect accent. As she worked hard on the acceptance of a new role for herself, she managed to accommodate to a new social milieu, quite different from her original working class which she left behind as and when her sociolinguistic transformation operated. This is a fairly good example of what often happens to people when they adopt new speaking habits in accord with their social choices.

By defining Standard English negatively, Trudgill strips it of everything that can be regarded as subjective, arbitrary, and social criteria, in order to keep the language, the whole language, and nothing but the language, which amounts to considering the system. The rest, according to Saussure's expression, is unessential and does not belong to linguistic issues. The apparent sacredness of Standard English is the result of beliefs about the language which are far from being based on scientific criteria and which tend to uniqueness, subordination, and prejudice against the unfamiliar. As a social activity, it may seem normal that the language should undergo social-linked judgments, but these must not conceal language-specific phenomena. Received Pronunciation and General American appertain to different appropriations of the system. In short, accent refers to a phonological difference relative to a standard, and dialect is systemic variation. Some of these differences, such as the "Mid-Atlantic accent," are illustrated in the following sections.

3 The "Mid-Atlantic" Accent and Variability in Accents of British Singers

The "Mid-Atlantic accent" (also called "Transatlantic accent"), is a non-rhotic cultivated hybrid of English (especially RP) and American accents. Its origin dates back to the early twentieth-century American upper class, broadcasters, and the film industry. It is not region-specific, but rather an arbitrary set of acquired speech patterns taught in American private boarding schools, before it spread to the entertainment world. The accent was fashionable in the first half of the twentieth century (Katharine Hepburn, e.g., was famous for her Mid-Atlantic accent) and embraced by members of the Northeastern upper class. Although it dominated in Hollywood and among the American Northeastern upper class, it rapidly became obsolete and declined after the Second World War. More recently, the phrase "Mid-Atlantic accent" also refers to any accent with a perceived distinct blending of both American and British features. Now, the prestige of non-rhotic and other British-related features began to change during the second half of the twentieth century. In the music industry, for instance, singers started to put on an American accent, probably to imitate their transatlantic counterparts.

As examples, Mick Jagger, Ed Sheeran, and many other singers who grew up in the area of London and have recognizably British accents in their speech sing as if they had grown up in the Northeastern part of the United States. The female British singer Adele, who speaks with a pronounced Cockney accent, does not sing in her local-dialect accent; she sounds as if she had a different voice. Likewise, the singer and songwriter Courtney Barnett is not British; although her drawling Australian accent in her speaking voice may be reflected in her songs, she has so-called Mid-Atlantic realizations of phonemes when she sings: her singing, for instance, has flapping of /t/ in intervocalic environments, as in *percolator* or *greater* (not the usual glottal or Australian voiced /t/), and the realization of her vowels sounds like a mixture of RP and General American (e.g. her song *Depreston*). The same thing can be observed with non-anglophone singers (cf. e.g., the Swedish band ABBA), since English has become the language of choice for most international popular vocal music. It seems that no matter where singers come from, they adopt a Mid-Atlantic accent.

There are many reasons for that phenomenon. The first reason for singers to lose their natural accent when they sing can be addressed in phonetic terms, that is, the pace at which the singing and speaking are produced and the air pressure from the vocal folds. In his blog, the British linguist David Crystal argues that the melody of a song cancels out the intonations of speech and that the beat of the music cancels out speech rhythms. As a consequence, singers are forced to stress syllables as they are accented in the music. Furthermore, vowels which fall on a beat or a sustained note have to be elongated more than they would be in connected speech. The air pressure, on the other hand, which is used to produce sounds, has much more force, and the airstream passes through the vocal folds unimpeded while singing. Singers have to learn to breathe correctly in order to sustain notes for their right durations.

This is liable to change the quality of the sound, resulting in the perceptual disappearance of regional accents, because syllables are stretched out and stresses sometimes fall differently as compared with ordinary speech. Consequently, singing with an accent becomes less noticeable.

It may be worth emphasizing, however, that the songs bear the stamp of the prosody of the English language and that the melodies can also be related to the internalization of prosodic patterns in one's infancy, that is, when one starts learning one's native language (Nazzi et al. 1998; Ramus 2002; Patel et al. 2006: 3042). For example, knowledge of the stress patterns of words, which is of prime importance in the rhythmic structure of English, simply comes from language acquisition. So, as Patel (2007: 165) suggests, when a composer writes music, linguistic rhythm is in his or her ear, and they are bound to reproduce it in their compositions. Therefore, if the pace of the music affects the pace of the singer's performance, the rhythmic and intonation structure of the language also has an imprint on the pace of the music.

It may be readily agreed, then, that the pace is often slower, and as suggested above, words are drawn out and more accented when they are sung. As a consequence, the accent is more neutral. Most singers are not aware that they are losing their accent when they sing, and some admittedly sound American. Crystal says that it is unusual to hold a regional accent all the way through an entire song, yielding something like "mixed accents." This is well illustrated in the song *I'm gonna be (500 miles)* by the Scottish music band The Proclaimers. When listening to the first lines of the song (which can be found in the album *Sunshine on Leith*), it can be observed that the realization of the vowels more or less parallels that of RP or General American. For instance, the /aɪ/ and /ʌ/ phonemes of *five, miles,* and *hundred* respectively are realized as in Standard English, whereas the /aɪ/ diphthong of *miles* in the third line undergoes the Scottish vowel length process and is realized as /ɐɪ/. The syllable *man* (third line), moreover, falls on a beat, that is, a sustained note and is therefore elongated. So the vowel in this position is realized as the RP /æ/ phoneme, instead of the typically Scottish English equivalent phoneme /ɐ/. Notice in passing that Standard Scottish English does not have the /æ/ versus /ɑ:/ distinction, but the single phoneme /ɐ/ for both. Finally, the realization of the vowel in *fall* is closer to the General American /ɑ/ phoneme.

One of the major differences between RP and General American (henceforth GA) lies in the pronunciation of the negated modal operator *can't*, the realization of which is /kɑ:nt/ in RP and /kænt/ in GA. This distinction can be perceived in one of the first recordings of the song *You Can't Always Get What You Want* by the Rolling Stones. Indeed, while, at the opening of the song, the choir sings *You* /kɑ:nt/ *always get what you want*, Mick Jagger takes up *can't* as the GA realization of it, that is, /kænt/. This is not unusual among English singers, all the more so since many Northern speakers have /æ/ instead of /ɑ:/ in some words, although this does not reflect a systemic difference between this type of variation and Standard English. It is interesting to note, moreover, that the syllable falls on a sustained note, which, when accented, is liable to be uttered with force, which affects the vowel quality with respect to length.

The aforementioned accent of the British singer, songwriter, and musician Ed Sheeran is characteristic of what is regarded today as Modern Received Pronunciation, which has features that are different from what can be called traditional or conservative RP. For instance, in Modern RP speech, the /t/ phoneme is realized as a "true t," as in *opportunity* or *start*, sometimes as a "glottal t" (or glottal stop, transcribed as /ʔ/), which occurs between vowels or in final position, particularly when the first vowel has primary stress, as in */fɔːʔɪ/* (*forty*) or /bɛʔə/ (*better*). When Ed Sheeran sings, the /t/ phoneme undergoes a process similar to that of flapping (or tapping, transcribed as /ɾ/) in North American English in intervocalic environments and where the first vowel is stressed as in *photograph.* A similar kind of flapping occurs when a /t/ occurs at the end of one word and is followed by a vowel at the beginning of the next, between *but* and *it* and between *that* and *I* (cf. Ed Sheeran's song *Photograph*). In this position, a /t/ will often be realized as a voiced articulation between vowels.

Another example of this flapping process can be heard in the realization of *better* in the song *Hey Jude* by the Beatles. In this song, *better* is uttered with the flapping of /t/. At the end of the song, the adjective is repeated several times, and each time, the realization of /t/ varies from /bɛtə/, to /bɛɾə/, to end up with something that sounds like /bɛɹə/. This is to be contrasted with /lɪtɬ/ (*little*), in, for example, *a little colder*, in which the /t/ phoneme is realized as a "true t." Note, in addition, the perceptual flapping of /t/ between *that* and *it* in several instances of the song.

Such phonological differences are susceptible to variation between different dialects and accents and may be another reason for singers to lose their accent. General American is considered more neutral and even American performers, other than Country singers who actively try to cultivate their regional accent, tend to neutralize their expression. There is, however, a further kind of variation between dialectal varieties of English, which may contrast with mainstream English, that is, African American English (AAE).

4 African American English

Green (2002: 2) defines African American English (henceforth AAE) as a linguistic system different from mainstream American English and from other varieties of English, although it shares features with them. In fact, it is both different from and similar to General American and other varieties of English. More generally, it belongs to the same linguistic system whose limits are actually those of mutual intelligibility. Beyond those limits, mutual intelligibility can be hampered and can foster changes within the system. But AAE is first and foremost a language use which differs from mainstream English by a number of specific aspects. As Green observes, "AAE cannot be defined by the syntactic, phonological, semantic and lexical patterns alone." She also considers speech events which are used in the linguistic system of English, speech events which are governed by set rules. Features

of AAE are best seen in blues, rock, and rap music as it appears to be the language of choice for these vocal music genres.

Therefore, AAE is characterized as a nonstandard spoken version of the language, because of marked differences from General American. Rapping, for instance, is taken to be both a music and speech genre whose lyrics and rearranged syntax tend to illustrate different types of casual talk and *braggadocio* statements. Culturally, rap and blues are linguistically linked with African American language. In their phonology, they may be related to present-day English, except perhaps in the gradual shift regarding lax vowels (e.g., /ɪ/, /æ/, /ɛ/, and /ɑ/), which change into diphthongs (e.g. *kiss* /kɪs/ and *little* /lɪtɬ/ are pronounced /kɪjəs/ and /lɪjətɬ/; *have* /hæv/ and *dog* /dɑg/ sound like /hæjəv/ and /dɑjəg/), and tense vowels, in particular diphthongs which glide into long monodiphthongized vowels (e.g., *ride* /ɹaɪd/ becomes /ɹɑːd/, *mile* /maɪɬ/ becomes /mɑːɬ/). These are also features typical of the American southern accent, best known as "southern drawl," a slow way of speaking with long vowel sounds. Grammatically, rap and blues songs rest on the use of some of the best-established linguistic features of AAE, including uninflected aspectual *be*, the negators *ain't* and *don't*, copula/auxiliary absence, verbal *-s* deletion, and the use of preverbal *come* (expressing speaker indignation) and *steady*, (cf. Larroque 2017: 81–82). Notwithstanding these specific features, AAE, as mentioned above, shares a number of characteristics with other nonstandard varieties.

Additionally, AAE exhibits a marked tendency to modify the stress pattern within the word. This may convey a different speech rhythm to the expression of users. It is interesting to note, for example, that many disyllabic words, normally accented on their second syllable, bear primary stress on their initial syllable, as in *'behind, 'Detroit, 'police, 'display*, and so on. The drawling rhythm of American southern speech may by some aspects (notably because of a tendency toward a division into phonological clear syllables comparable with the prosody of certain African languages) appear to be more syllable-timed than mainstream American speech, but overall, it still has a stress-timed rhythmic structure. Sentences are uttered more or less rapidly, as it is the case with rapping, with the use of intonation and pause, which are so many infractions of the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation. And even though recent empirical research on speech rhythm has given up on strict isochrony (Patel 2007: 177), it remains true that alternating stressed-unstressed syllables should constitute a rhythmic basis which must be as regular as possible. Musical forms such as blues, rock, and rap rest on this rhythmic basis.

Since rapping is a form of vocal delivery, the most typical features of AAE can be best illustrated by rap lyrics in *Talk to Me* by Twista (to be found in the album *Category F5*). Like all dialects and varieties, AAE displays consistent internal logic which characterizes this speech style and which may contrast with other varieties of English. The song *Talk to Me*, for example, shows that AAE speakers do not include auxiliaries in aspectual constructions such as *You knowin' the truth* or *You harborin' feelings* in present state expression; they use uninflected *be*, as in *but you steady just be holdin' on*, as a way of expressing a recurrent activity. When there is more speaker involvement, the auxiliary reappears, as in the interrogative statement *Now how the f… am I supposed to know …?* the negative construction *don't be tellin', o*r when the

event refers to the past: … *was steady be hearin'* …. Notice, moreover, the uninflected aspectual *be* and the verbal *-s* deletion in *He say, she say*, and *when it get dark*, and the absence of nasalization on the *-ing* verb endings (e.g. *tellin', hearin'*). It may also be noted that the main function of the marker *steady* is, in this example of song and more generally in AAE, to modify the subject-predicate nexus, while it denotes the subjectivity of the performer regarding the actions *holdin' on* and *hearin'* …: it adds an intensifying force to the structure and makes the marker an idiosyncratic feature of the grammar of AAE (cf. Baugh 1999: 101–109; Larroque 2017: 81–90). The song *Talk to Me*, in addition, displays one of the two regular negative operators, *don't*, which almost always occurs as one uninflected morpheme. As to the negator *ain't*, which stands as a generic contraction for *am not, isn't*, and *aren't*,[1] it is commonly used in other nonstandard varieties of English. In AAE, it occurs in double negative constructions in which negation is usually marked on auxiliaries and indefinite pronouns such as *nobody* or *nothing*.

Although negative concord existed in Old English and until the eighteenth century, it is no longer in use in present-day standards of English, because of a prescriptive rule which states that two negatives in a sentence yield a positive. This rule is not effective in AAE as negative concord is a current feature of that variety. For example, the negative meaning of *ain't nobody's business* is not affected by the addition of the negations. In many nonstandard varieties, the duplication of negations usually has the effect of intensifying the negative structure, but in AAE it has become nearly systematic, so that this form has lost its emphatic meaning. Thus, in order to compensate for the loss, the language has recourse to the fronting of the negative operator. In other words, the negative operator, *ain't*, moves to the front of the sentence. This way of negative marking contrasts with mainstream American English, which would prefer *it is nobody's business*. In fact, *ain't nobody's business* is no less negative than *it is nobody's business*, and the omission of the subject *it* brings *ain't* into the focus, thus emphasizing the negation, which is coherent with the rest of the statement.

Another typical example of the grammar of African American English occurs in the song *Ain't Nobody (Loves me better)* by Rufus and Chaka Khan (to be found in the album *Live—Stomping at the Savoy*). A possible mainstream English translation of the first lines of the song, *Ain't nobody loves me better* …, may be *Nobody loves me better* …, in which only the indefinite pronoun is negative in meaning. As already mentioned, AAE grammar usually signals the negative orientation formally by including *ain't* to the proposition, and as it is initially placed, this form can be described as an emphatic construction. In other words, the foregrounding of the negative morpheme adds an intensifying force to the negation.

It may be interesting to note, moreover, that in AAE, the mere evocation of the situational items brings out their existence, an existence which can be negated by the deletion of the reference point (*there* in the gloss below) and its trace in the utterance. Indeed, the sentence *Ain't nobody loves me better* … can be glossed as *There ain't nobody loves me better* …, in which *loves better* … functions as a restrictive relative clause with no relative pronoun, which is possible in subject position in the grammar of African American English.[2] Therefore, constructions such as those in

Ain't nobody (Loves Me Better) can be described either as containing relative clauses or as emphatic forms, depending on the gloss which accompanies it. It seems that the latter can be a favored interpretation in view of the negative character of the utterances.

5 The Blues, Jazz, Rock Music, and Rap

5.1 The Blues and Jazz

Larroque (2021) hypothesizes that early blues singers and songwriters may have been influenced by the trochaic rhythm of English in their performances. Indeed, English is a time-stressed language, which means that it has a regular tempo, in the same way as there is a rhythm in a blues song. This regular rhythm falls on the important words of the sentence, and the less important ones are unstressed. They are, as it were "squeezed" between the salient words to keep the rhythm. Rhythm is a kind of pulsation of rhythmic schemes produced by the perceptual distribution of alternating stressed-unstressed syllables.

At the beginning, a blues song is not conceived as music but rather as the verbalization of deeply felt personal experiences; this verbalization is sung (cf. Coulander 1992: 145). The resulting rhythmic schemes are reflected in the prosodic possibilities of English. Indeed, blues is a music genre based on a syncopated ternary rhythm, each beat is divided into an eighth-note triplet and played by omitting the middle one, alternating strong and weak beats, which is reminiscent of the English language. The apparent contradiction between the binary metrical structures of spoken English and the basic syncopated ternary rhythm of blues music may be explained by the fact that the accented syllable of the trochee is naturally and perceptually elongated, and assumes the role of the strong versus the weak syllable in a ternary rhythm.

The hypothesis that the early blues singers have been influenced by the rhythm of English raises the question of how the phonic system of the language is reflected in a musical form created by the community which speaks the language. From these first observations, it may be interesting to associate the study of rhythm with this special relationship between the language and music, and extend the investigation to other musical forms which derive from blues, such as jazz, rock and roll, and rap, which all rely on a marked rhythm and whose singing is much closer to American English speech.

Jazz, in particular, is characterized by what is usually called "swing," a time division in which two eighth notes are played in a syncopated ternary rhythm (i.e., a quarter note and an eighth in a triplet). This time division is reminiscent not only of the basic rhythm of blues but also of the trochaic pace of the English language. Jazz is rife with syncopated and off-beat sequences and gives enough room and space to improvisation, that is, to musical discourse which is likely to imitate linguistic discourse.

5.2 *Rock and Roll and Rock Music*

It was after the Second World War, in the early 1950s, that rock and roll (or rock 'n' roll) had its true emergence. This music style evolved directly from rhythm and blues, an urban contemporary expression of blues (cf. Jones 1963: 222), and has later developed into an international genre known as rock music. Although it inflicted a hard blow on blues music, the latter survived with its own audience. The binary and swifter rhythm of rock and roll departs from the syncopated ternary rhythm of blues and jazz, but it still reflects the trochaic patterns of the English language as illustrated in Chuck Berry's song *No Particular Place to Go* released in his album *Saint-Louis to Liverpool* in November 1964.

The song fits perfectly into rock and roll meter, in the same way as it mirrors the trochaic rhythm of the language, alternating stressed and unstressed syllables at regular intervals. Here, the language almost guides the music, and when the accented syllables are followed by two unstressed ones, the pattern is sung in a ternary rhythm (triplet), just as it would in discourse. Apparently, the song reflects the exact place between the words and meter. To avoid stress clashes, for instance, the triple rhythm may appear softer in music, as well as in connected speech. Note in Verse 4 that an unaccented prefix, a "stray" syllable, is added to the adjective *loose* (cf. "*get her belt a-loose*"), precisely to avoid a clash between two stressed monosyllabic words, *belt* and *loose.* What is more, when beating time to the rhythm of the stressed syllables, it is clear that they occur at regular intervals (aligned with the music). The unstressed syllables are therefore squeezed to fit in the intervals which are of equal duration. The resulting pattern is a two-beat unit in which the beats correspond with the accented syllables. Also note that an extra beat is added to the typically unaccented determiner *no* (in "*with no particular place to go*"), to repair a stress lapse, that is, to compensate for a series of three unstressed syllables and keep a rather steady alternating rhythm. The fact that it is a negative determiner makes it a perceptually salient syllable in the utterance.

English prosody is based on stress, and the earliest measures to develop were trochaic. This perceptual impression that language drives the music can include a wide range of popular songs, such as *Let it Be*, (The Beatles), *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*, (Burt Bacharach), *Pride* (Syntax), and *My Guy* (Mary Wells). Examples which may be taken from these songs exhibit that pace. They can be found in everyday speech and not be considered simply as fitting in the rhythm of the music. Iambic and trochaic rhythms have long been used by poets and dramatists because of their closeness to common speech. Generally speaking, the iambic foot conveys a rising rhythm to the verse or the sentence, while the trochaic foot will have the reverse falling effect, and it seems legitimate to apply the same intentions to popular songs. To be sure, there are also exceptions, stress clashes, and lapses as there are in common speech, but these violations of the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation are regularly compensated for. Sometimes, the

unaccented syllables are omitted or contracted, and only the heavy (stressed) syllables are uttered to keep the rhythm.

In *Let it Be*, for instance, the first line displays a perfect stressed-unstressed trochaic sequence, starting from the first accented syllable, the monosyllabic verb *find*. The cadence is regular, respecting the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation, and conveys a sense of comfort. The line "*So for at least until tomorrow*" taken from Burt Bacharach's song exhibits a series of two monosyllabic non-lexical function words (*so, for*) and a preposition (*at*) which are all typically unstressed. Since a foot by definition must contain an accented syllable, it follows that the counting begins with the monosyllabic lexical word *least.* In the last verse of *Pride*, the stress clash, *bad dream*, in *I seen a bad dream* will undergo beat deletion on *bad*, and the stress lapse in *bitter and cold* is repaired by encroaching the typically unstressed coordinating conjunction (*and* is reduced to *'n'*) on the preceding unaccented syllable to yield *bitter 'n' cold* and make it fit in the interval. The line *I gave my guy my word of honor*, in *My Guy*, exhibits a eurhythmic foot structure. However, the stressed syllables in *honor* and *faithful* (same line, Verse 3) are followed by three unstressed syllables which are not optimal rhythmic structures. When that happens, the middle unstressed syllable will be perceived as slightly accented. Thus, the particle *to* which begins the line and the conjunction *and* will be perceptually more salient. Note, when listening to the song (originally sung by Mary Wells), the two metrical feet 'I gave my' and 'guy my' confirm that metrical structure need not map on syntactic structure.

Although English allows for extensive sequences of unaccented syllables, the ideal rhythmic structure is the alternating stressed-unstressed pattern. This appears clearly when analyzing song lyrics which exhibit eurhythmy as well as violations of the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation. These are automatically compensated for thanks to the underlying referential trochaic structure, sometimes called "back beat" in music, which holds for most types of phrases in English. In truth, the rhythm of the music is likely to highlight the prosody of the language, as can be seen through the analysis of song lyrics.

5.3 Spoken Word and Rap

The final and perhaps most revealing music genre as regards the relationship between words and music is rap. According to Gil Scott Heron (1949–2011), a follower of the blues tradition, best known as a spoken word performer and regarded as the first rapper, "there's a big difference between putting words over music, and blending those same words into the music. There's not a lot of humor. They use a lot of slang and colloquialisms, and you don't really see inside the persons. Indeed, you just get a lot of posturing" (taken from an interview in the 1990s). The phrase "spoken word" refers to a form of oral poetic expression which, like music, appeals to the ear. Its meter more or less accommodates natural speech. In that, it rests on the

prosody of the language to convey emotions, beliefs, and cultural posturing. The prosody of a line, for example, is liable to bring speech patterns known from infancy. Gil Scott Heron's call for blending words into music to produce clearer and more artistic discourse stems from the fact that music and speech are naturally related, for the rhythm of words can give the melodies a language-like rhythmic pattern. Below is an example, taken from the cover by Gill Scott Heron of Robert Johnson's blues song *Me and the Devil* (first recorded in 1937), released in 1968.

(47)

> Early this morning, when you knocked upon my door (x2)
> And I say: "Hello Satan, I believe it's time to go".
> Me and the Devil, walking side by side (x2)
> And I'm gonna see my woman until I get satisfied.

From a structural point of view, this passage is divided into a verse form according to the traditional canonical pattern of blues. The rhythm is not always regular, but regularity is not a priority. This is more what can be referred to as a "story song," a ballad created from a lyrical theme, but which slightly departs from the ideal eurhythmic structure. Yet, it accommodates common speech with its trochaic pattern. The unaccented syllables are typically reduced, and the rhythm falls on the important words of the lines, all of which are lexical forms. Again, as in ordinary speech, the relevant units of the sentences are brought out revealing the natural relationship between phonology and music. In a song like the aforementioned, with little instrumental musicality, the intonation patterns of the language constitute the melodious spot of the song. Sense making relies on this relationship. Furthermore, there are in Heron's singing the same shouts and hollers reminiscent of work songs which sound like lamentation and angry rants. Musically, the harmony and twelve-bar format are indeed those of classic blues. In many ways, the performer expresses his thought indirectly, with circumlocution (e.g., Heron uses the metaphor of the Devil as an evasive argument for his evil spirit), in addition to the linguistic rhythm of the text which follows that of common speech. This rhythm is reflected in the music.[3]

The phonological analysis of a rap song may show the same characteristics. In *Talk to Me* (Twista), the wording fits the AAE ordinary speech, and the rhythm more or less maps on English prosody. In this song, one may notice that auxiliaries which are typically unaccented are deleted in the present tense, as in the phrase *You knowin' the truth*, which displays an optimal stressed-unstressed sequence. But it reappears at the end of the line to restore the trochaic foot structure: *you 'steady 'just be 'holdin' 'on* (recall that the superscript diacritic sign ' placed immediately before the start of the syllable indicates that it is stressed). The same remark applies to *you don't be tellin' me.* It may be noted that *don't* is naturally accented because the auxiliary is marked negatively. Conversely, the end of the first verse contains feet, which consist of stressed syllables followed by two unstressed syllables: *A nigga was steady be hearin' the bogus remarks*, which is less eurhythmic. In that case, the trochaic rhythm will be ternary, and the accented syllables will be squeezed in the interval. Again, since the basic unit of English rhythm in the metrical trochaic foot which extends from the beginning of one stressed syllable to the onset of the next, and

since the recurrence of stresses is regularly patterned, it follows that syllables between stresses do not have a stable duration. In other words, the greater the number of syllables intervening in the interval, the shorter the syllable, and the faster the tempo. This may explain why a rap song consists of alternating fast and slow sequences. It may hardly escape notice, moreover, that the twangy accent of AAE speakers adds a special musicality to the language and therefore to the songs. Indeed, as stated in Sect. 4, vowels are often distorted or elongated, and these variations are likely to have an influence on the overall music of the utterances.

6 English Accent Variation

It cannot be denied that the speech of a given speech community and, of course, of a speaker/performer within that community is naturally variable. Such variation can be found in practical usage, in the way people speak their language; it also involves their own appropriation of the linguistic system. Varieties of the same language exist in a context of a continuum and differ slightly from one area to another. This implies that the system is capable of absorbing changes inasmuch as they do not disrupt the continuum. When that happens, variation can eventually lead to severe divergence and a breach of mutual intelligibility.

Several factors are involved in such variations, and they may lead to a comprehensive understanding of variation in pronunciation in a given linguistic community. Differences are not only social or geographical, but also physiological and phonetic: for instance, the quality of the vocal tract, or the relationship between the phonemes within a phoneme system, not to mention the relative perceptual prominence of sounds, where they appear within the syllable structure, or whether they occur in stressed or unstressed syllables. Various phonic environments may be responsible for accent variation, as discussed below.

As suggested earlier, diphthongal realizations of vowel phonemes may be due to the drawling accent of American Southerners or of Australians or be triggered by the lengthening of vowels in accented syllables and a consequent change in the place of articulation. For the same reason, many vowels are frequently reduced in unaccented syllables (e.g., /i:/ → /i/ or /ɪ/, /u:/ → /u/ or /ʊ/, /ɑ:/ → /æ/, or → schwa /ə/), the latter being sometimes omitted, like unstressed auxiliaries or copulas in African American speech, as can be seen, for example, in rap songs.

The same phenomenon may occur with consonants. They are frequently weakened and voiced in intervocalic position. Flapping of /t/ is an example of the phenomenon, not only in North American English, but also in the expression of British and Australian performers (cf. Sect. 3). In coda position, consonants are often reduced in degree, sometimes leading to a change in place of articulation, as in the African American pronunciation of *-ing* forms, usually pronounced /ɪŋ/ in RP and GA, and which is almost systematically realized as /ɪn/. This is to be paralleled with consonant cluster reduction in coda position. When the cluster is composed of two consonant sounds, it is reduced to a single sound, as in *st, sk* → /s/, or *nd* reduced to

/n/, as in *rock 'n' roll*. Voiceless /t/ in coda position is also often elided; another example is the eventual loss of the approximant /ɹ/ in rhotic as well as in non-rhotic accents.

Variations are also idiosyncratic phonological representations and not only systematic. The music which accompanies the lyrics certainly has an influence on these realizational differences, sometimes causing intelligibility problems. Analyzing song lyrics may then help to gain some insight into the nature of the phonological knowledge owned by performers of different accents and dialects. It must be borne in mind, however, that the above list of variations in pronunciation is not exhaustive and that these changes are seldom limited to specific accents of English. They can, moreover, be influenced by the music, notably its rhythm (its fast or slow tempo), and the performers' flow and usual tendency to neutralize their accent and adopt a Mid-Atlantic articulation when they sing. Some, on the contrary, try to follow the melody of the words. It also depends on the language format and the music genre.

7 More on Language and Music

Like all human activity, language and music follow an evolution. Accents vary as well as syntax and grammar, and consequently reflect language changes. These variations are likely to leave an imprint on the musical quality of the songs which in turn will reflect linguistic evolution. Both are closely related. As stated before, music forms such as rock and roll and jazz, which derive directly from blues music, rely on an upbeat rhythm, one is binary, and the other ternary, but these cadences can still be related to the rhythm of the English language. Rock and roll is a popular and simple kind of dance music, with light lyrics, which can make people forget their worries, and which exhibits symbolic figures: for example, the name of this dance comes from a slang sexually oriented expression. The rhythm of jazz, on the contrary, is characterized by what has always been referred to as "swing," a time division which, as described above, is characterized by swing and reminiscent of the tempo of blues, and thereby the trochaic alternation of English. In addition, jazz is a music genre which gives free rein to polyrhythms and improvisation. In this way, musical discourse maps on linguistic discourse.

More recently, urban rap, which originated in the 1970s, displays the same mindset as blues, even though the African Americans' living conditions and worries today are different from those of the former slaves or farm workers in rural southern areas of the United States of America. It combines the same metaphors, the same indirectness, and coded double-entendres. Rap sounds like a recitative rhyme scheme in which the pace of the language is of prime importance. It seems that the rhythm of the English language gives the singing its tempo, alternating binary and ternary groupings or phrases. There are indeed some similarities with primitive blues in which only rhythm and speech prevailed. The singing has a staccato feel, the words are sometimes spoken or hollered, and the texts convey a conscience, a strong identity, and social and political demands. The cadenced singing evokes at

the same time the storyteller, the poet, and the musician who chronicles everyday life. Rap is a music genre essentially based on rhythm rather than melody and can easily be traced back to the origins of blues.

Whatever the music style chosen, learning and/or studying English implies considering its stress-timed rhythm and its intonation, both based on word stress and the melody of the utterances. The choice of popular music to bring out the rhythm of speech has been motivated by two preoccupations. On the one hand, music is likely to reflect a number of linguistic phenomena and, on the other, the wide-spread idea that language and music have aspects in common, many of which rooted in speech.

Thus, comparing both the linguistic and music systems boils down to establishing a bridge, a correlation between well-known popular music styles and speech, the rhythm of which is of much importance, if not essential, when it comes to decoding and interpreting utterances. The emphasis is not on making an oral grammar by treating the phonology (and syntax[4]) of English completely, but rather on describing a number of linguistic phenomena, and trying to relate the same to language use. It may not be an easy task, because generally both music and language mutually influence each other, and it is always very tempting to stop at the first impression that music is the guide, not the reverse. It all depends on the point of view adopted. What seems to be important is to know exactly which has most influence, the music or the language, and if there are marked similarities and differences between the two.

Notes

1. In AAE, *ain't* may also appear as the contraction of the negative auxiliaries *hasn't* and *haven't*, and is argued to occur in past contexts (cf. Green 2002: 39).
2. It may be suggested that the foregrounding of *ain't* (as well as of *don't*) parallels that of the syntax of Old English in which the verb was initially placed in order to brings the whole utterance into focus (see, e.g., Stevanovitch 1997: 100).
3. "In language, the African tradition aims at circumlocution rather than at exact definition. The direct statement is considered crude and unimaginative; the veiling of all contents in ever-changing paraphrases is considered the criterion of intelligence and personality. In music, the same tendency toward obliquity and ellipsis is noticeable: …" (Jones 1963: 31).
4. Prosodic features, such as rhythm and intonation, may sometimes influence the construction of phrases and utterances.

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Chapter 7
Musical Structure and Linguistic Structure

Language and music are two analogous (semiotic?) systems, in which the sign represents something else by evoking it as a substitute (cf. Benveniste 1974: 51).[1] The signs of language, which are acquired in infancy, generally constitute the first system on which the speaker relies. Apart from lexical units, phrases and propositions which are grammatical concepts, another constituent, prosody, is of prime importance as regards the music of spoken language. It consists of intonation, rhythm, and stress, and is, as already mentioned in the previous chapters, reflected in popular songs.

The music system obviously displays differences relative to the linguistic system. The nature of the signs and their functioning may appear to be problematic. Music is made of sounds which are represented by notes. These are not directly comparable with linguistic signs, but still, as in utterances their composition has its own syntax. The other analogy which may show a difference is that music is a system which, like language, functions on two axes: the axis of simultaneities and the axis of sequences. This can be homologous with the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes of language. Now, the syntagmatic axis of music somewhat contradicts the paradigmatic axis of language, which is concerned with selection and excludes intrasegmental simultaneity (cf., e.g., Benveniste 1974: 56). Neither does the axis of sequences correspond exactly to the syntagmatic axis of language, since the musical sequence is compatible with the simultaneity of sounds, as in chords. In sum, music can be regarded as a language which has syntax, but no semiotics as such. This contrast reveals that prosodic features are to be emphasized when studying the relationship between language and music.

Patel (2007: 165) notes that "there may be a direct route from language to music," which he calls "the direct route hypothesis," based on the idea that the prosodic patterns of language have been acquired in a very early age. It has, indeed, been established that young children are very sensitive to the prosodic patterns of their native language (Nazzi et al. 1998; Ramus 2002). They internalize statistically, and probably unconsciously, the prosodic patterns of their mother tongue. This is called

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"statistical learning." It can hardly escape notice, however, that statistical learning of tone patterns is not limited to infants. Adults may also be sensitive to the music of a language and acquire its intonation and rhythm, especially when they learn a new idiom. The example of African slaves brought to North America is quite significant. They relied on their own native languages while copying the prosody and syntax of English, the only concrete element that they could interpret (Jones 1963: 21–22; see also Larroque 2017: 21).

Of course, there can be conflicts between musical constraints and the phonological rules of the language, and thus contradict the natural speech production, but the reasoning mainly aims at bringing out the similarities (overlapping) and differences (clashes or mismatches) between musical structure and linguistic structure.

1 Overlapping Between Musical Structure and Linguistic Structure

As has been stated above, there are similarities between language and music. Both have syntax, language has music, and they both function on a horizontal axis and a vertical axis. Although these two systems tend to contradict each other, there is still a possibility to draw a parallel between the two.

Linguistic syntax is a multi-layered organization with a strong relationship between the different arrangements of sequences and meaning. There are syntactic principles which define different subunits: words which consist of morphemes, phrases which contain words, and sentences or utterances which combine phrases (i.e., noun phrases, verb phrases, adjective phrases, adverb phrases, and prepositional phrases). Also, linguistic structure is sensitive to the fact that a word can assume abstract grammatical functions. For example, a noun can be used as a subject or an object (direct or indirect), but it can also be a part of a compound noun and have an adjectival function. Similarly, a verb can become an auxiliary, as, for instance, *do* and *have*. But without a context (sentence or utterance), the grammatical function and meaning of a word cannot be determined precisely. Finally, only conventional structural relations (a language is a system, i.e., a set of relations which form a fixed configuration in which markers are mutually determined. This mutual determination is the source of the stability and coherence of the system) can be regarded as the basis of linguistic syntax.

As to music syntax, the same features are to be found, if one accepts that music has a comparable syntax. Like linguistic syntax, it is a multi-layered arrangement which defines a three-tiered array. The lowest level is occupied by the scales which consist of conjunct degrees or tones, a set of sounds which form an asymmetrical pattern of intervals. These sounds are combined to form groups and phrases, just as there are words and phrases in linguistic syntax. The next level in this organization is the chord structure which sits on the simultaneity axis. Recall that simultaneous sounds are impossible with phonemes. In the music system, chords have a harmonic

function and contribute to the rhythm of a piece of music. Rhythm is the more or less symmetrical order in which the different durations are arranged. Rhythm is one of the main treasures of music, and its combinations can vary *ad infinitum*. Chordal syntax, moreover, may reflect the underlying rhythmic reference in which stressed syllables and strong beats are aligned. The third level of the pitch organization is key structure. The key is the highest level which forms the basis of a piece of music. The whole constitutes a hierarchical structure. As for linguistic syntax, that is, the organization of subunits for the meaning of an utterance/sentence, it may be interesting to consider the hierarchical structure of music in order to find a correlation with linguistic syntax. Music and language have a rhythm, and music and language have movement, and tensions, and resolutions.

For example, violations of the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation, most notably stress clashes and stress lapses, are repaired either by beat deletion (stress clashes) or by beat addition or stress shift (stress lapses). In music syntax, these infractions can be compensated for by syncopation or off-beat sequences. Here, an analogy can be drawn between the two systems, especially with a language like English whose utterances alternate stressed and unstressed syllables, and which establishes a close relationship between syllable stress patterns and the rhythmic structure of music. The head of a time-span may, for instance, display the first syllable in an utterance with the note which is in a relative strong metrical position, like the first beat in a measure (Lerdahl and Jackendoff 1983). Recall that when composers write their music, they more or less consciously rely upon the rhythmic patterns of their mother tongue. Note, moreover, that abstractness in both systems is reflected in the abstract cognitive relationships, as both are comparable in their complexity and hierarchical organization. They are comparable, even similar, but not substantially analogous. The music system is not a semiotic one.

There are indeed a number of common features. As in language, musical rhythm is not only temporal, and the division of sentences/utterances into syllables and metrical feet can be compared with the grouping of tones in musical phrases organized into periodic sequences to create a sensible basis for rhythm. Although the aforementioned axis of sequences contradicts the paradigmatic axis of the language, the horizontal (syntagmatic) axis, which actually is concerned with sequences, allows for the grouping of notes into phrases. As music is initially related to speech, there are comparable boundary signals in language and in music, such as, for example, duration, the elongation of intervals, and tonic placement. These signals, while adding sonority, are important enough for listeners to be sensitive to and rely on them as references.

Language, the communication function of which is fundamental to specify its elements, also has its prosody, its music and sounds. At this point, a complete linguistic study of popular music can be carried out. It would not only be a matter of communication, but it would include the transmission of messages as well as a roller coaster of emotions. Such an approach would suppose arranging segments like sound-carrying vowels phonetically alongside prosody, while signaling those that express emotions best. The actual aim would be to show how the study of sounds can have an impact on the overall impression of an utterance.

On the other hand, rhythm and gesture, which denote genuine speech,[2] are generally meant to convey expressiveness. This description may apply to popular music, which is sensitive to rhythm, a stress-timed systemic sound pattern.

It has already been stated in the previous chapters that stress patterning plays an important role in identifying accented and unaccented syllables. Words have stressed and unstressed syllables according to the alternating trochaic scheme of the English language. This allows for a division of utterances into metrical feet, that is, another rhythmic perceptual landmark in speech, not to mention tonic syllables (tonic placement) which indicate tone group boundaries.

The study of rhythm has shown that music complies quite faithfully with the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation, which tends to function as a deep trochaic structure by correlating stressed syllables with strong beats or the strong part of beats in the music. This can be verified in many popular songs already produced in English, whatever the style. It may be noted, however, that clashes or rather mismatches relative to the natural cadence of songs can be remedied by such rhythmic evasive strategies, as syncopation and off-beat rhythm.

2 Mismatches Between Musical and Linguistic Structure

The relative notion of mismatch between word stress and meter evoked above refers to the interval which exists between two things or two facts. As suggested, these can be regarded as clashes inasmuch as they contradict the natural flow of sounds. Flow refers to how fluidly lines and words are uttered or recited.[3] Fluidity involves a regular, smooth, and "unsurprising" cadence which may fluctuate according to contextual environment and influences. Fluidity is also a feature of what may change and is therefore difficult to explicate or describe. It may be worth noting, however, that disruptions between language stress and musical stress bring the energy and dynamism characteristic of rock music, for example.

This discrepancy can be temporal or spatial. When it applies to music, the interval concerns meter and rhythm. It may also mean a disruption between the melody of a song and the text, considering that it is mainly about matching stressed syllables with strong metrical positions. Each syllable must or should be aligned with a beat or the strong part of a beat. There is, moreover, a natural beat, the tactus, that listeners keep when they clap their hands or snap their fingers to the rhythm of a song or a piece of music. It is a regular rhythm which may be of prime importance in the definition of clashes or mismatches between stresses and beats. Matching stressed syllables with beats is rather strict in English in view of the stress-timed character of the language, and mismatches will no doubt be problematic under certain conditions. Off-beat sequences, for instance, sometimes yield impossibilities and may sound awkward to the listener's ear.

Dell and Halle (2005: 5) note that mismatches or clashes depend on their environment: for example, when two adjacent syllables occur in the same line, one unstressed and the other stressed, and when the unaccented syllable corresponds to

the tactus. [4] In addition, illicit stress mismatches mainly concern disyllabic words and noun phrases consisting of a determiner and a noun as illustrated in a song, *Follow Me*, taken from the original soundtrack of the television series *Tandem* (2017), by the composer Arno Alyvan. The recording of the song (to be found on the web) features the tactus in the form of finger snapping.[5] In *Follow Me*, mismatches in the first line may only concern monosyllabic words, and the syllable *at*, a typically unaccented preposition, is not within the tactus. Therefore, there is no illicit mismatch, unless the singing of the noun phrase *the break* makes the determiner fall on the tactus[6]; likewise, the following lines alternate stressed and unstressed syllables without contradicting the tactus. In the third line of the chorus, conversely, there may be an illicit mismatch concerning the noun phrase *no rest*. While the typically stressed verb *move* falls on the first beat of the measure, a strong position, and is elongated to the second beat, so that the accented adverb *fast* also falls on a strong position and compensates for a stress clash between *move* and *fast*, the naturally unstressed determiner *no* of *no rest* falls on the fourth beat, which concurs with the tactus, thus creating an illicit mismatch and an off-beat effect. This is to be compared with the noun phrase *no one*, in the first verse (second line), which does not yield a stress mismatch, since the determiner (*no*) does not coincide with the tactus. Also note that the negative determiner of the noun phrase *no rest* makes it a perceptually salient syllable and brings to the fore the metrical foot 'fast no,' which, as mentioned, shows that metrical structure need not map on syntactic structure.

As stated previously, the empirical study of the musical and linguistic structure of a stress-timed language like English entails stress patterning and rhythm. It implies analyzing the rhythmic structure of English. The difficulty is that word stress in English is both fixed, it always falls on the same syllable, and free, that is, the main stress is not linked to a position in the word. Stress assignment, however, depends on the structure, the syntactic category, or the origin of the word. For example, the opening word, *rendez-vous*, is a French word which like all French words is stressed on the final syllable. However, the word has been integrated in English since the sixteenth century, and like in most compounds in English, it is the first element which is the most prominent. In the song, *rendez-vous* displays a trochaic stressed-unstressed pattern,[7] as both the first and final syllables are stressed and fall on a beat, the second and the third beats of the measure,[8] which matches with the rhythm of the music.

As has been emphasized earlier, semantically full words are naturally accented and can serve as perceptual landmarks in the utterance. The utterance is a series of words organized in phrases which may appear as one unit if the division into syllables and tone groups is not perceived, and that involves rhythm. Regularity is not always respected; sometimes the metrical foot only consists of one syllable or of several unaccented syllables between stressed syllables, which yield clashes or lapses, and may cause conflicts with the musical structure. Furthermore, there may be clashes between musical demands and the phonological rules or principles of the language, and thus contradict natural speech production. As noted earlier, the rhythmic organization of speech is somewhat analogous with that of music. These two forms of expression have a rhythm, a melody, meter, stresses, and intonation. But in

many cases music and linguistic structure are not aligned, and such evidence can be observed in the syncopation phenomenon.

Syncopation can be regarded as a disturbance, as its etymology suggests. The word derives from Greek συγκοπτω, "sygkoptô," which means "break." Therefore, syncopation can be seen as a rupture of the regular flow of rhythm. It is used in many musical styles in the placement of rhythmic stresses where they would not normally appear. As a matter of fact, it helps to connect phrases together, especially when stress clashes occur.

In phonology, syncopation, or syncope, means the deletion of a sound, of an unaccented vowel, or of a vowel within a word: for example, *over* > *o'er* and *heaven* > *heav'n*. Such forms as *don't*, *gonna, wanna, ain't*, best known as contractions, may also be regarded as syncopations, some of which can have an impact on the rhythm of the utterance. In the song *Follow Me*, for instance, the form *gonna* which consists of a stressed syllable (the first one) and an unstressed syllable, instead of *going to* which exhibits two unaccented syllables, allows for a more eurhythmic sequence where stressed syllable and strong position are aligned. In a phrase such as *'cause I'm stuck like glue* (cf. *My Guy* by Mary Wells), the deletion of the unaccented prefix of *because* and the contraction of *I am* are likely to keep the regular alternating stressed-unstressed syllables. Lastly, the phrase *ain't nobody's business* exhibits two adjacent accented syllables between *ain't* which is stressed (it is marked negatively and therefore reflects an attitudinal choice) and the initially stressed indefinite pronoun *nobody.* The resulting clash is resolved by syncopation which introduces a disruption, a pause with a lowering of the voice between the two clashing syllables.[9]

In music, syncopation consists in displacing the usual accent away from a strong position into a weak beat or a subdivision of a weak beat. The recording of *Follow me*, for instance, shows that the melody starts on the second beat (a weak beat in music) of the measure, which creates mismatches all along the song. This piece of music is very syncopated, which adds life and character to the whole song. Syncopation has, indeed, often been described as a rhythmic tension between accent and meter, as it tends to contradict an established and expected metrical pattern. Although this kind of rhythm complexity is liable to violate rhythmic expectations, it may have the effect of bringing movement to the music, and this is where linguistic structure and music structure come together.

3 When Music and Language Come Together

Grammar is personal, a personal acquisition of the language. At this point, it may be useful to remember Benveniste's words (cf. Introduction) which state that speech production is a process of appropriation of the system, a concrete form of the language, as it were, by which cultural and social backgrounds are combined and exist in relation to a variety of music genres and (perhaps) other languages. Recall that the appropriation of the system also means that the performer learns the language or

a form of the language, and that there are verbal marks of the speaker's state (see, in Chap. 6, examples of performers who put on a Mid-Atlantic accent when they sing).

The association with popular music goes along this line. It illustrates perfectly the perception of the language through its prosody, especially its rhythm and intonation. Music gives concrete expression to these landmarks and somewhat represents them according to stylistic patterns. Thus, the music of the language is perceived first and permits the organization of speech production. Popular music speech, moreover, is necessarily informal, even nonstandard, and associated with any, socially underprivileged or not, speech community. This type of speech uses common words, the majority of which are monosyllabic (sometimes disyllabic), which makes it an easier medium to set lyrics to music and bring about the English-specific trochaic rhythm, but also raises other questions. It is interesting to note, in passing, that this word morphology is a predominantly common character of words in English.

There are, however, problems which are still to be described and relevant answers which are yet to be found. It may, indeed, be possible to investigate more precisely both linguistic structure and musical structure by working on other music genres. Rap, for instance, which has not been thoroughly described, may bring new elements as to the grammatical complexity and the flexibility of the language. Rappers use predominantly monosyllabic words to make their texts more forceful, convey emotions, play with the polysemy of words which allows for various interpretations and double-entendres, and achieve complicated rhythmic effects. Besides, language variation, standard or nonstandard, is liable to clarify the system and add precious information as to the culture associated with the language. There is, in fact, no objective boundary between the different aspects of language. Everything in a speech community is related, the nature of things and the people. When people acquire their language, they are acquiring, without conscious awareness, a conceptual system and a culture at the same time. Therefore, accounting for informal or nonstandard grammatical phenomena in popular song lyrics may also contribute toward a better understanding of the language and of the relationship between language and music. Music may indeed be another source of information in the general description of language and culture.

As outlined before, English is a language of choice for popular music, and the regular cadence which gives rhythm to it is widely subject to its influence. This can be seen in such music genres as blues, rock and roll, or rap. The rhythmic stability of the songs rests on an underlying (sometimes syncopated) trochaic pattern, which shows the importance of phonological, and consequently morphological, phenomena in the linguistic description of English. The surface, conversely, exhibits irregular occurrences, breaks, periods of unequal length, stress clashes, and lapses, simply as ordinary conversation does. But other features of both areas are significantly similar, like the oral aspect, the prosody related to emotion, and the performer's freedom of interpretation.

There are, in addition, vowels in syllables comparable with notes, which function on the same horizontal axis, and combine to form phrases. If, in music, there are units that cannot be compared to linguistic signs, there are, however, modulations

and intonations in both areas. Again, it is possible to speak about linguistic as well as musical prosody. This mostly concerns relations of quantity and intensity between beats and syllables, as can be perceived in the performers' interpretations.

There are also some features which are distinct and peculiar to each domain. First, meter, for instance, contributes to the division of the musical phrase into recurring isochronic intervals and forms a sensible base for rhythm. Then, the linguistic and musical syntaxes have different and specific representations in the two respective areas. There may be an organization which in the language maps on a number of grammatical principles governing the function of markers in a proposition, like agreement rules, for instance; but music has a system which permits simultaneity of sounds to form chords, and chords have both a harmonic and rhythmic function. Yet, things are not as clear-cut as they may seem. There is, indeed, evidence that the linguistic rhythm can leave an imprint on the musical rhythm, which occurs at the level of the melody, that is, at the level shared by both domains. When that happens, melodic rhythm reflects the cadence of the lyrics.

4 Advantages and Drawbacks

The proposed argument entails advantages as well as disadvantages. One disadvantage is the heterogeneity of the phenomena described which may affect the reliability of the analyses. The second reservation, which is linked to the first, is the wide diversity of the corpus of song lyrics. Indeed, even if many factors are recurrent in many songs, the specificity of each performance has not been thoroughly accounted for, especially as far as African American English and rap are concerned. Jazz, funk music, and rap, for instance, use heavily syncopated rhythms and are linked to African percussive polyphony, which is not the case with popular music, but which can be of great use when dealing with ternary trochaic pattern. However, the description of one type of song lyrics may make the resulting analyses more reliable, but there is always the risk of describing too few grammatical and phonological aspects of the language. The objective is to cover the diversity of the English language, including accents and dialects, standard and nonstandard productions. Since song lyrics mirror ordinary speech, the description of a large number of linguistic facts aims at demonstrating that there are universal grammatical and phonological principles which govern language structure, and which are involved in what Chomsky (1976: 29) refers to as the essence of human language. The example of rhythm, for instance, is quite significant, and setting words to music does not only mean matching accented syllables with strong beats or subdivisions of strong beats in a measure, thus showing clearly that English is stress-timed language, but it also involves speech rhythm, intonation, and linguistic sounds (vowels and consonants). These are just examples; other features of the English language can thus be demonstrated.

On the other hand, certain of the more obvious characteristics of music have proved helpful in describing the language. The association with music illustrates a

number of aspects of the language which otherwise would remain theoretical or abstract. For instance, it brings to the fore the prosodic dimension which is to be accounted for. In effect, prosodic elements also constitute workable markers. In part of the collected corpus, prosodic features must also be regarded in context. The duplication of markers, for example, often translates intensity in discourse; this can be perceived via both the immediate musical context and the prosody. Besides, informal or nonstandard features of the language, which are usually accounted mistakes, have phonological as well as morpho-syntactic relevance in the description of the system. The features which are identified belong not only to such areas as phonology, morphology, and syntax, but also to semantics and pragmatics. They are relevant to the system in which they fit, in accordance with the context of the songs. Discourse analysis in the descriptive approach, that is, by explaining linguistic facts as they actually occur and not as they should be, relies on the context, both physical and linguistic, in which words are used. The context of a song also comprises music. The description of song lyrics allows bringing out some aspects of the language, for it is essential to establish a relationship between linguistically relevant grammatical and lexical elements and their musical contextual expression.

Discussions about different music genres tend to ignore that relationship and the features that they have in common, because only surface markers are pointed at without considering that music and linguistics are closely related and that music may play a role in the grammatical construction of utterances. Conversely, those discussions are not concerned with the similarities, which are numerous, and which can enlighten certain aspects of language use, not to mention the underlying structure of speech production. It may be noticed, moreover, that in many cases music tends to clarify the functioning of the language, especially as far as phonology is concerned. The fact that music is naturally related to language adds another point to the argument. Therefore, introducing linguistics via popular music is another more practical angle of investigation, for song lyrics globally reflect common speech and its diversity.

It may be contended that musical demands should have an influence on the morpho-syntactic arrangement of the lyrics. It is true to some extent, but it must be borne in mind that composers have, as mentioned earlier, internalized the music of their native language, in particular the rhythmic patterns, when they learned to speak it. So, as Patel (2007: 165) suggests, “when composers write music, linguistic rhythms are ‘in their ears’, and they can consciously or unconsciously draw on these patterns in weaving the sonic fabric of their music.” This does not mean that musical constraints should be overlooked or denied, but there is evidence of this link in the song lyrics studied.

5 The Conveyance of Information

Furthermore, song lyrics are of high information value: the performer's intention is less to impart information as to how he or she feels about the subject exposed than to suggest or request a response from the listener. In the case of a song, the packaging of information, that is, the information structure is multi-layered. What is more, the performer's interpretation may provide further information about the subject by adding specific intonation patterns and gestures. In short, music as well as language plays a decisive part in the processing of information. Lastly, linguistics combined with music may allow taking in more than a fraction of the available information as compared with usual linguistics courses. Signs like duration, the elongation of intervals, and tone placement, for instance, can be compared in both areas. These signs are important enough for listeners to comprehend and then rely on them to treat the information within the context of a song.

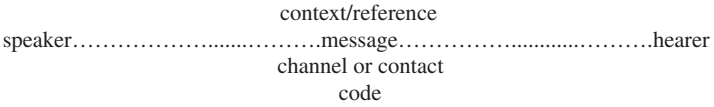
Discourse analysis must consider syntactic recurrence and sentence patterns. As a matter of fact, the performer delivers his/her message acoustically to the listener who deconstructs the message and reconstructs it according to his or her own appropriation of the system in order to interpret the message. Moreover, listeners differ in their listening abilities, so it is important to take the addressee's standpoint into account. One example of this is the song *Well You Needn't* by Thelonious Monk/Jamie Cullum (see Chap. 5, example 44) and the frequent use of the same sentence and constructions. The meaning of these recurring features may be purely internal to the song, but it also conveys information as to the performer's mindset relative to his lover's behavior. The grammatical forms, which, as noted, denote comments (*be + V-ing* forms) or judgments (use of modal verbs), point back to acts which take account of former attitudes and situations. The song's repetitive sense precisely expresses his disappointment and bitterness, and explains the recurring catchphrase *It's all over now*.

The linguistic content of a sentence/utterance generally conforms to a regular graphological realization of a usual production. Many of the verses in songs tell a story with apparent connections between them; they are, as it were, conversational. An analysis of two stanzas of *I'll never Fall in Love Again* by Burt Bacharach/Hal David and sung by Dionne Warwick may reflect the conversational character of what a popular song retains. In this song, the first line of each stanza is a question, a *wh*-question which expects a reply supplying an information item. The reply comes in the second line and is somehow repeated in the third line in an intensifying form (cf. *That's what you get, after you do, …*): *that*, in the first verse, points back to the reply and is identified to the *wh*-pronoun (*what*) to insist on the disappointing character of falling in love, thus justifying the conclusion *I'll never fall in love again.* Not only does this first verse inform the listener about the subject, but also it informs about the performer's painful experience and intention. Similarly, the third line of the second verse takes up *You get enough germs to …* (*do* is here used to replace or refer to the predicate <catch-pneumonia>) to make a judgment about the preceding proposition (cf. the modal auxiliary *will* contracted as *'ll*). Therefore,

taking into account information about the disadvantages of falling in love draws on the contrast between personal experience (cf. *your bubble*) and the outer world (*a guy*), a person exposing her true feelings against its constraints. So here, there are two layers of information which regard the individual and the general.

6 More About Communication

At this stage, it may be interesting to account for the mental aspects of language and speech, that is, for the way in which language is produced and understood. Indeed, the meaning of a sentence/utterance is the result of cognitive processes (thinking, emission, perception, and perhaps memory) involved in the ordinary use of language, and in which the speaker/performer and the addressee/listener are engaged together in communicative situations. This psycholinguistic aspect of language, which relates to and associates such areas as phonetics, semantics, and general linguistics, is represented in the mind. There is indeed a constant interplay between the idiosyncratic way in which the verbal system has been internalized and the common language. This can be seen in many excerpts studied. An example like Burt Bacharach's song, for instance, exhibits a number of communication functions (or functions of language) such as Jackobson (1963: 209 sq.) determined them. These functions, which, except for the context, may be construed as cognitive processes involve the classical speaker-hearer relationship (as illustrated below) and define an area of interdependency between cognition and language:



The message sent by a performer to an addressee implies a point of reference; it requires establishing a relationship between two protagonists and a common code. Each of these features plays a part, leaves a trace, or gives the message its character. There are factors which exist in any linguistic verbal happening.[10]

The reference is represented by the context or the situation, the reference point on which all communication acts rest. For instance, in the song *I'll Never Fall in Love Again* deictic words such as the pronouns *I* and *you* are apt to determine a situation of utterance, whereas the third person pronoun *he* or terms like *a guy* refer to people who are outside the speech situation. Therefore here, the song denotes an informative aspect of language which is consonant with the aforementioned speaker-hearer representation.

Indeed, songs usually display an expressive (or emotive) feel which relates to the trace left by a performer in his or her utterances. In principle, all utterances, when they are produced by a speaker/performer, carry with them his or her own mark, thus revealing something about them, an attitude toward the action or state. Everyone knows the importance of the phenomenon, and even a neutral expression can have a

meaning. It is interesting to note, moreover, that this function does not alter the actual meaning of an utterance, but it adds information as to the performer's mindset.

Communication involves contact and is liable to trigger a response from the addressee. In some way, it engages the addressee. Indeed, addressing someone equates with asking them to do something (explicitly or implicitly), to be active, or simply be acknowledged. This function is notably illustrated by such imperative forms as *Don't you know …*, or *Don't tell me …*

The interaction between the speaker/performer and the addressee is always associated with the context. Recall that the speaker and the addressee are the main constituents of the speech situation. Therefore while the speaker/performer appraises the situation, he refers to the conditions of communication. This is what the phatic function of language is about.[11] Common examples are words such as *hello*, *good morning*, or casual discussions of the weather, the sole meaning of which is to make sure that the communication channel is open. It is common knowledge, for instance, that people do not speak as they write. Still, in the same song, the phrase *Don't you know that…*, for example, is meant to signal a willingness to maintain the bond between the performer and the listener. It does not seek or convey important information. Moreover, the conversational format and tone (see, for instance, the repeated emphasis in the replies) of the song serves a social function and as such can be construed as phatic. In sum, the lyrics of *I'll Never Fall in Love Again* illustrate an informal discussion (cf. *a guy, he'll never phone ya*) in which the performer tries to justify (or explain) his/her position.

There is, indeed, a metalinguistic level in a song, which reflects the speaker/performer's awareness of his/her code. In fact, it refers to the use of language to discuss or describe itself. In *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*, this linguistic awareness is manifest in the line *That's what you get for all your trouble*, which points back to the preceding metaphor, *burst your bubble*, to comment on it. Notice that metaphors also pertain to figurative language and as such come within the metalinguistic area: *burst your bubble* is another way to say that the guy may end the girl's happiness by making her realize what is happening.

One least commented function of language is its poetic feel which can be defined as based "on the message for its own sake." It is the main function in poetry and slogans. For instance, in Joe Biden's 2020-presidential campaign slogan *Build Back Better*, it is clear that the graphological realization of the message (cf. the alliterating *b*) has an added value, more meaning, even though the information itself is not particularly well formed. The poetic function is also the operative function in song lyrics. A song is, as it were, conceived as a poem which is set to music. For instance, the rhyming scheme at the end of each line of *I'll Never Fall in Love Again* displays couplets, that is, two successive lines which rhyme and have the same meter as in *your bubble/your trouble*. Rhyming couplets tend to lay the emphasis on the theme of the song.

Although the poetic function is a much-debated topic, there is evidence that the aforementioned list offers a few comments to add to the discussion. It draws attention to the fact that these different functions of language are inseparable and that it is therefore impossible to take out and isolate what may correspond with one

function, say the referential factor, that is, the objective "raw" information (in the sense that the context should exist by itself, independently of the speaker/performer), from a production. The expressive and the conative functions (which engage the addressee), for instance, constantly interact between them, together with the referential function which is at the center of all communication processes. When dealing with song lyrics, it is obvious that the poetic function should operate and play a relevant role in the making of sense.

It is then plain to everyone, whether linguists or non-linguists, from this discussion that communication through language is not only confined to the conveyance of information in isolated utterances. Sense making appears to be a construction and rests on a prior discourse, and each utterance is related to former uses while existing in anticipation of a response. It is, as it were, the manifestation of multiple voices (cf., for instance, Jackobson's different communication functions) which emerge at the surface of an utterance. That is, each sentence/utterance presupposes what has been previously said. Many recent linguistic theories contain a description of such presuppositions (cf. Horn 1997; Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet 2000; Beaver and Geurts 2007).

In addition, the relationship between the speaker/performer and the addressee can be defined as a process which engages both. It may be supposed that the speaker's intention is to construct a clear and distinct meaning from an actual speech situation and that the addressee's task is to deconstruct the speaker's referential intention, solve the ambiguities and indeterminacies, which most of the time remain unsaid, from the traces left by the speaker in the surface structure of his or her speech production, and reconstruct the deep structure of utterances.

The very nature of a sentence/utterance can be seen in every area of communication, in the sense that it reflects the complexity of another discourse, that of language. Indeed, linguistic uses tend to bring about the complexity of speech production, that is, the ambiguity which combines two discourse units: on the one hand, the predicative level which supposes the conveyance of information and, on the other hand, the attitudinal level, mainly represented by the expressive and conative functions, which reveals the speaker/performer's intention and feel relative to the information partially denoted by the referential level of language. Lastly, recurrent discursive interplay processes may result in grammatical phenomena which can be related to deviant or nonstandard constructions depending on the speaker/performer's appropriation of the linguistic system. But this is another debate which is likely to raise questions as to the performer's own language use.

7 Conclusion

This introduction to linguistics through popular music uses song lyrics to illustrate how language is a combination of phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic factors. The phonology of the English language can, indeed, be well highlighted when described in parallel with music, especially when rhythm and meter

are concerned. The trochaic metrical foot, for instance, is a central part of the rhythm of English speech, and as a phonological constituent, this stress pattern is closely connected to the perception of the speech signal (Carr 1999: 99–100). Using song lyrics helps to bring about syntactic categories, morphological structure, metrical structure, as well as syllable structure and intonation.

Also, song lyrics exhibit features of varieties of English, which show that language is changing. These varieties, although they may be regarded as deviant, nonstandard, or simply socially and politically inconvenient, are in no sense linguistically wrong, and minor variations in grammar or pronunciation are unimportant as long as they do not disrupt mutual intelligibility. More often than not, they can be convenient to repair violations of the Principle of Rhythmic Alternation. A common example of this is negative concord which is liable to compensate for stress clashes and lapses. Other nonstandard forms may also be operative for this kind of "deviation." These may be associated with phonological variation.

Furthermore, song lyrics display a wide variety of morphological and syntactic categories, since they reflect emotional as well as common speech. Again, syntax may vary against the pressure of the music, but in general, composers will favor the predominantly monosyllabic character of the common words of English, especially as this type of morphology makes it an easier medium to work with. Besides, English-speaking song writers have had in their ears the rhythm and intonation (i.e., the music of the language) of their native language since they were infants, and that naturally shows in their compositions.

Semantic properties, on the other hand, are the components of meanings of words, and that, of course, comes within the making of sense. Everything works together and contributes to the understanding of the system. Many linguistic phenomena are yet to be described as and when new songs are released, reflecting new linguistic forms. Rap, for instance, is likely to produce this kind of novelty insofar as rappers tend to use rearranged syntax illustrating different types of casual talk linked with African American language. This has been alluded to in Chap. 6. It is worth recalling, moreover, that African American speech rhythm maps more or less faithfully onto the trochaic rhythm of the English language, and since rapping can be taken to be both a music and speech genre, its flow and patterns may serve as models for describing some phonological features of English rhythm and intonation. The words themselves are predominantly monosyllabic, which is consonant with the composers' general practice. The music may also contribute to revealing the various grammatical, morphological, and syntactic characteristics of the language.

The corpus of the songs used for this study may appear disparate as many music genres are illustrated. They have been selected in accordance with the linguistic phenomena displayed. This particular trait has been approached in this concluding chapter (Sect. 4), but the variety of features investigated compensates for this apparent lack of homogeneity. Moreover, as English emerges as a transnational language, it is bound to develop into various linguistic forms which are determined by country, region, or social class. Song lyrics are no exception, since they reflect those variations of the language. This can be seen in accents and dialects of English, which

tend to dissolve into the Mid-Atlantic accent which British singers, for example, adopt. Apparently, performers, except for country singers who use an assumed accent, lose their natural accent when they sing.

Finally, it is always possible that language structure and musical structure are sometimes overlapping and sometimes clashing. These two areas certainly have similarities, but they also have differences, notably when it comes to meter and the simultaneity of sounds, as in chords. These inconveniences must not interfere between music and language. They are, on the contrary, likely to bring about unexpected parallels between the two areas. Indeed, linguists and linguistic research may gain in identifying the phenomena which are common to both. The example of early blues singers who may have been influenced by the imprint of the trochaic rhythm of the English language in their music (cf. Larroque 2021) is a strong argument that language and music are liable to interact and mutually clarify each other.

Notes

1. Music may be regarded as a semiotic system inasmuch as the note is a distinctive sound unit which determines oppositions in the scale which in turn determines the paradigm of note values.
2. Gestures often accompany speech rhythm and can be used as a means of communication.
3. One definition of the word "rhythm" relates precisely to fluidity.
4. The tactus can be defined as the rate at which most people would naturally clap their hands, snap their fingers, or tap their feet while listening to a piece of music (Lerdahl and Jackendoff 1983; Dell and Halle 2005).
5. In order to feel the actual rhythmic pattern of the song, the reader is specially invited to listen to it.
6. In many cases, the singing may influence the rhythm of the melody which is sensitive to the singer's interpretation. Thus, the grouping of syllables may vary slightly and create clashes between musical and linguistic structure.
7. A word like *rendez-vous* may behave like an English compound (accented on the first syllable), but still retains some of its French original pronunciation with a full vowel on –*vous*, which may be construed as a post-tonic secondary stress, as in the case of second elements of compounds.
8. In a 4/4 tempo, for example, the first and third beats are strong positions, with a natural prominence on the first beat, the second and fourth are weak beats. In any case, the first beat is always the strongest.
9. A secondary stress may be perceives on the syllable –bo- of *nobody*, yielding the stress pattern *'no, body*. In that case the stress clash is repaired.
10. Note: the approach outlined in this section may provide the reader with sufficient educational implications to help him/her to make significant linguistic observations in the analysis of texts.
11. The term *phatic* derives from a Greek verb meaning "speak."

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Appendix

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THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 2020)

CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k g	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ		
Trill	ʙ			r					ʀ		
Tap or Flap		ⱱ		ɾ		ɽ					
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approximant		ʋ		ɹ		ɻ	j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant				l		ɭ	ʎ	ʟ			

Symbols to the right in a cell are voiced, to the left are voiceless. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

Clicks	Voiced implosives	Ejectives
ʘ Bilabial	ɓ Bilabial	’ Examples:
ǀ Dental	ɗ Dental/alveolar	pʼ Bilabial
ǃ (Post)alveolar	ʄ Palatal	tʼ Dental/alveolar
ǂ Palatoalveolar	ɠ Velar	kʼ Velar
ǁ Alveolar lateral	ʛ Uvular	sʼ Alveolar fricative

OTHER SYMBOLS

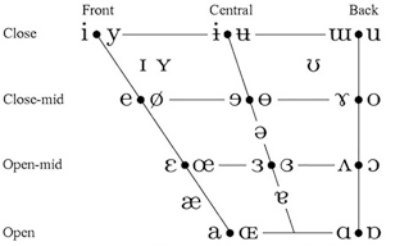
ʍ Voiceless labial-velar fricative
w Voiced labial-velar approximant
ɥ Voiced labial-palatal approximant
ʜ Voiceless epiglottal fricative
ʢ Voiced epiglottal fricative
ʡ Epiglottal plosive

ɕ ʑ Alveolo-palatal fricatives
ɺ Voiced alveolar lateral flap
ʃʒ Simultaneous ʃ and x

Affricates and double articulations can be represented by two symbols joined by a tie bar if necessary.

t͡s k͡p

VOWELS



Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

SUPRASEGMENTALS

ˈ Primary stress ˌfoʊnəˈtɪʃən
ˌ Secondary stress
ː Long eː
ˑ Half-long eˑ
◡ Extra-short ĕ
| Minor (foot) group
‖ Major (intonation) group
. Syllable break ɹi.ækt
‿ Linking (absence of a break)

TONES AND WORD ACCENTS

LEVEL		CONTOUR	
é͡ or ˥	Extra high	ě or ˩˥	Rising
é ˦	High	ê ˥˩	Falling
ē ˧	Mid	e᷄ ˧˥	High rising
è ˨	Low	e᷅ ˩˧	Low rising
ȅ ˩	Extra low	e᷈ ˩˥˧	Rising-falling
↓	Downstep	↗	Global rise
↑	Upstep	↘	Global fall

DIACRITICS

◌̥	Voiceless	n̥ d̥	◌̤	Breathy voiced	b̤ a̤
◌̬	Voiced	s̬ t̬	◌̰	Creaky voiced	b̰ a̰
◌ʰ	Aspirated	tʰ dʰ	◌̼	Linguolabial	t̼ d̼
◌̹	More rounded	ɔ̹	◌ʷ	Labialized	tʷ dʷ
◌̜	Less rounded	ɔ̜	◌ʲ	Palatalized	tʲ dʲ
◌̟	Advanced	u̟	◌ˠ	Velarized	tˠ dˠ
◌̠	Retracted	e̠	◌ˤ	Pharyngealized	tˤ dˤ
◌̈	Centralized	ë	◌̴	Velarized or pharyngealized	ɫ
◌̽	Mid-centralized	e̽	◌̝	Raised	e̝ (ɹ̝ = voiced alveolar fricative)
◌̩	Syllabic	n̩	◌̞	Lowered	e̞ (β̞ = voiced bilabial approximant)
◌̯	Non-syllabic	e̯	◌̘	Advanced Tongue Root	e̘
◌˞	Rhoticity	ɚ a˞	◌̙	Retracted Tongue Root	e̙
◌̪	Dental	t̪ d̪	◌̺	Apical	t̺ d̺
◌̻	Laminal	t̻ d̻	◌̃	Nasalized	ẽ
◌ⁿ	Nasal release	dⁿ	◌ˡ	Lateral release	dˡ
◌̚	No audible release	d̚			

Some diacritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, e.g. ŋ̊

Typefaces: Doulos SIL (metatext); unitipa (symbols)

Corpus of Songs

Ain't Nobody (Loves Me Better), Rufus & Chaka Khan (1983)
A Little Time, The Beautiful South (1990)
Another Brick in the Wall, Pink Floyd (1979)
Are You Lonesome Tonight?, Elvis Presley (1960)
Bad, Michael Jackson (1987)
Billie Jean, Michael Jackson (1982)
Can't Help Falling in Love, Elvis Presley (1961)
Cold-Hearted, AC/DC (1978)
Follow Me, Arno Alyvan (2017)
Gimme Shelter, The Rolling Stones (1969)
Hey Jude, The Beatles (1968)
I Can't Remember to Forget You, Shakira (2014)
I Don't Remember Loving You, John Conlee (1982)
I Wanna Be Your man, The Beatles (1963)
I'll Never Fall in Love Again, Burt Bacharach/Hale David (1968)
I'm Gonna Be, The Proclaimers (1987)
I've Been Loving You Too Long, Otis Redding (1965)
If I Were a Boy, Beyoncé (2008)
It's All Over, Baby Blue, Bob Dylan (1965)
Let It Be, The Beatles (1970)
Let Me Introduce You to the Family, The Stranglers (1981)
Make You My Girl, Chrishan (2011)
Me and the devil, Gill Scott Heron (2010)
My Guy, Mary Wells (1964)
My Old Kentucky Home, Stephen Collins Foster (1853)
No Particular Place to Go, Chuck Berry (1964)
Photograph, Ed Sheeran (2014)

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Pride, Syntax (2013)
Punk's Dilemma, Barbra Streisand (1969)
Saint-Louis Blues, Bessie Smith (1924)
Satisfaction, The Rolling Stones (1965)
She Called Me Baby, Harlan Howard (1964)
Talk to Me, Twista (2009)
Telephone Call, Kraftwerk (2010)
Texas Rangers, Neil Young (2016)
The City of New Orleans, Arlo Guthrie (1972)
The Way You Make Me Feel, Michael Jackson (1987)
These Boots Are Made for Walking, Nancy Sinatra (1966)
Trouble with Classicists, John Cale (1990)
Undertaker, M. Ward (2003)
Well, You Needn't Thelonius Monk, Jamie Cullum (1944)
When Did You Leave Heaven?, Lisa Ekdahl (1997)
With a Little Help from My Friends, The Beatles (1967)
You Can't Always Get What You Want, The Rolling Stones (1969)

Glossary

Accent a way of pronouncing words, which shows a speaker's origin.

Acquisition the development of ability to learn a (first or second) language in communicative situations.

Affricate a consonant uttered by stopping and releasing the airflow through the vocal folds (e.g. the first sound of ***ch****eers*).

African American English (AAE) a dialect used by African Americans in the USA.

Allomorph one of the forms a morpheme can have.

Allophone one of the slightly different ways a phoneme can be pronounced.

Alveolar a consonant produced with the tip of the tongue placed behind the upper front teeth as in the first sound of ***t****ake*, or ***d****o*.

Ambisyllabic an ambisyllabic consonant is a consonant shared by two syllables.

Anaphora the use of a word (or an expression) such as a pronoun or the verb *do* instead of repeating the word used earlier.

Approximant a consonant produced when the articulators come fairly close together but not sufficiently to create friction.

Assimilation a process whereby a feature of a sound when pronounced becomes part of an adjacent sound.

Associative meaning abstract or indirect meaning (as opposed to notional or conceptual meaning.

Auxiliary verb a verb used with another verb to show its tense, form questions, form the passive, change the aspect of a main verb, or denote the speaker's attitude to a proposition. The main auxiliary verbs are *be, have, do*, and modal operators such as *can, will, must*, and *may*.

Bound morpheme a morpheme which cannot stand alone such as derivational (e.g. *un-, -ness, -ly,* and *-less*) or inflectional morphemes (e.g. *-ed, -s,* and *-ing*).

Cataphora pointing forward in discourse, or anticipatory, as opposed to anaphora.

Channel a way to send information.

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Closed syllable a syllable which ends with a consonant.
Coda the part of a syllable after the nucleus.
Code the linguistic system used in communicative situations.
Cognitive processes processes involved in the organization of how we think.
Coherence the connections between the words and phrases of a text.
Competence the knowledge and ability to generate and interpret sentences/utterances in a language.
Compound words the combination of two (or more) words to form a new item (e.g. greenhouse).
Conative indicates the orientation toward the addressee.
Conjunction a function word used to link clauses, phrases, or words. *And, because*, and *that* are conjunctions.
Consonant a speech sound produced by restricting the air flow.
Consonant cluster a group of two or more consonants in sequence.
Context the situational context or verbal context (co-text) which constitutes the background for a sentence, an utterance, or a text.
Co-operative principle an underlying assumption of conversation in which speakers and addressees act co-operatively and mutually accept the direction of the exchange in which they are engaged.
Corpus linguistics the study of language in use by analyzing a collection of occurrences in texts, dialogues, or song lyrics, for instance.
Deep structure the underlying structure of a sentence/utterance as represented as the utterer's mental operations (as opposed to surface structure).
Deixis the use of words such *this* and *that*, or *here* and *there* as a way of pointing at objects, places, beings, phenomena, and so on, which occur in the extralinguistic world.
Dental a consonant pronounced with the tip of the tongue placed behind the upper front teeth. The coda consonant of *tooth*, for example, is a dental.
Derivational morpheme a bound morpheme such as *–ing* or *–ed* used to change the category of a word.
Descriptive grammar an approach to grammar based on the description of grammatical phenomena and structures actually used in the language, as opposed to prescriptive grammar.
Devoicing a process by which a voiced consonant becomes voiceless as a result of sound assimilation with an adjacent voiceless consonant (e.g. *obtain* is pronounced /əp'teɪn/).
Dialect a variety of language distinguished by grammar and vocabulary.
Dialectology the study of dialects.
Diphthong a sound which combines two vowels or a vowel with a glide as in *day* or *toil*.
Direct speech act an act in which the form (e.g. imperative) used directly coincides with the function (e.g. order) performed by an utterer, as opposed to indirect speech act.
Discourse analysis the study of language in texts and conversation.

Endophora the use of a word or phrase to refer to something within a text or discourse, as opposed to exophora.

Epistemic indicating whether a statement is true, possible, necessary, or contingent.

Etymology the study of the origin and history of words.

Eurhythmic structure an optimal rhythmic structure alternating a stressed syllable with an unstressed syllable as in *My 'uncle 'bought a 'red and 'yellow 'hat.*

Exophora the use of a reference without a text or discourse, in contrast with endophora.

Experiencer see "recipient" below.

Flap (tap) a voiced alveolar sound produced with the blade of the tongue touching the alveolar ridge. It is the sound that many American speakers share instead of /t/ or /d/ in such words as *pre**tt**y, percola**t**or, for**t**y, ri**d**er, rea**d**y.*

Fortis strong in contrast with lenis

Free morpheme a morpheme which can stand by itself as one word.

Fricative a consonant uttered by pushing the airflow through the inside upper part of the mouth; /f/, /v/, and /θ/ are fricatives.

Functional morpheme a free morpheme used as function word; the conjunction *and* the preposition *to* are functional morpheme.

Generative grammar a set of rules which define the possible sentences/utterances in a language.

Glides sounds produced when articulated from a vowel sound. They are also called "semi-vowels" or "semi-consonants," sometimes approximants (e.g. the initial sounds of *week* and *year*).

Glottal a sound produced between the vocal folds as in ***h**ead.*

Glottal stop a sound produced by blocking the airflow as it passes through the vocal folds.

Grammar the arrangement of structures of phrases and sentences/utterances.

Illocutionary act reflects what is done with words.

Implicature an additional meaning provided by a speaker/performer. (See the cooperative principle.)

Indirect speech act an act in which the form does not directly match the function. (See direct speech act.)

Inference additional information used by a listener (or reader) to create connections between what is said and what is meant.

Inflectional morpheme a bound morpheme used to mark the grammatical function of a word (e.g. he play**s** tennis).

Instrument the semantic role of the noun phrase identifying what the performer used in his action (e.g. *the man cut bread with **a knife***).

Intensive (verb) an intensive verb calls for a single complement, which can be an adjective phrase, a noun phrase, or a prepositional phrase. Examples are *be, become, seem, remain, look*, and feel.

Intonation the way the performer's voice rises and falls when he or she speaks.

Isochrony the rhythmic division of time into equal periods by a language.

Labiodental a consonant produced with the upper teeth and the lower lips as in ***f**un* or ***v**erse*.

Lenis weak, in contrast with fortis.
Lexicalized uttered as one single word.
Linguistic context a set of words used in the same phrase or sentence/utterance (see co-text).
Location the semantic role of the noun phrase indicating place (e.g. *the patient is **in the waiting room***).
Locutionary act the performance of an utterance.
Manner maxim the assumption in conversation that the speaker and the addressee will be as unambiguous as possible.
Maxim one of the four assumptions in conversation linked with Grice's co-operative principle.
Mentalese according to Pinker's definition, the language of thought.
Metalinguistic using words for describing or discussing language.
Metrical foot a foot in English consists of a stressed syllable (either primary or secondary stress) and any unstressed syllables intervening between it and the following stressed syllable.
Mid-Atlantic accent a distinct non-rhotic blending of British and American accents.
Middle English the English in use between around 1100 and 1500.
Modality the expression of logical meaning or personal attitude through the use of modal verbs. Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 172–173) present modality as a category of meaning (as opposed to mood).
Modern English the English in use since circa 1700.
Mondegreen a mishearing or misinterpretation of a phrase in such a way that it yields a new meaning.
Mood the grammatical expression of modality; mood is a category of grammar (e.g. indicative, conditional, subjunctive, and imperative).
Morpheme the minimal unit of meaning or grammatical function.
Morphology the study and description of the structure of words and phrases.
Nasal a sound produced through the nose (e.g. ***m**y **n**ose is itch**ing***).
Noun a word such as *man, car, bus, boat.*
Noun phrase a phrase whose main constituent is a noun (e.g. *an old **car***).
Nucleus the vowel in a syllable.
Old English the English in use before 1100.
Onset the first segment of a syllable.
Open syllable a syllable which ends with a vowel.
Palatal a consonant which is articulated by raising the tongue to the palate, also called "alveo-palatal" or "alveolo-palatal" (e.g. ***sh**oe, **y**ield*).
Passive voice the form of the verb used to focus on the experiencer.
Perlocutionary act refers to the effect of an utterance on an addressee.
Person the grammatical category distinguishing the different entities of the paradigm of the person (first, second, third person, etc.).
Phatic signals the conditions of communication (e.g. the word *Hello* on the telephone used to make sure that the contact with the addressee is established).
Phoneme the minimal sound unit in a language.

Phonetic alphabet a set of symbols representing the speech sounds of a language.
Phonetics the study of the characteristics of speech sounds.
Phonology the study of the systems and sound patterns in languages.
Pitch the effect of vibration in the vocal folds, making the voice lower or higher, rise or fall.
Pragmatics the study of speaker involvement in a given situation.
Predicative the complement of an intensive verb (e.g. *He looked **funny** in his hat*, *Peter is **a taxi driver***; *Peter must be **in his house***).
Prefix a bound morpheme added to the beginning of a word (e.g. ***un**true*).
Preposition a function word used with a noun phrase: *at, to, with* are prepositions.
Prepositional phrase a noun phrase introduced by a preposition; *with a hammer* is prepositional phrase.
Presupposition an assumption by a speaker/performer about what is already known.
Principle of Rhythmic Alternation the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables at rhythmically regular (ideal) syllabic distances. It belongs to prosody.
Pronoun a function word which can be used in place of a noun phrase (e.g. *my uncle = he*).
Prosody reflects patterns of speech sounds and beats in poetry, discourse, and music.
Psycholinguistics the study which investigates the mental aspects of language and speech.
Quality maxim the assumption in conversation that what is said is believed to be as exact as possible.
Quantity maxim the assumption in conversation that what is said is as informative as required.
Radical designates a type of deontic and dynamic modality, in contrast with epistemic modality.
Recipient (experiencer) the semantic role of the noun phrase which represents the perceiver (the person who experiences) of the action or state denoted by the verb (e.g. *the boy* in *the boy was cold*).
Referential (reference) which aims at the referent, a purely informative aspect of language.
Relation maxim the assumption in conversation that the participants will "be relevant."
Reported speech the words used to report what someone else has said (e.g. *He said that we should wait for the bus here*) = indirect speech.
Rhoticity the pronunciation in English of the rhotic consonant /r/ by English speakers. The presence or absence of rhoticity is one of the most prominent distinctions by which varieties of English are classified.
Rhyme the part of the syllable containing a vowel and any following consonants.
Rhythm the ordered distribution of alternating and recurrent strong and weak elements in the flow of sound and silence in speech and music.
Schwa a low perceptual mid-central vowel /ə/ uttered in an unaccented syllable.
Semantics the study of the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences/utterances.
Sociolinguistics the study of the relationship between language and social features.

Speech act an action performed by a speaker with an utterance (e.g. promising, threatening, and apologizing).

Split infinitive a grammatical construction in which an adverb separates the particle *to* and the infinitive.

Stop (plosive) a consonant produced by stopping the airflow (e.g. /p/, /k/, /t/ are stops).

Stress the emphasis put on a particular word or syllable by pronouncing it with greater force, or on a particular musical note or sound by playing or singing it more loudly.

Stress clash a sequence of two stressed syllables.

Stress lapse a sequence of more than one unstressed syllable.

Stress shift in words with final stress and a preceding "stressable" syllable, the stress can be shifted leftward if the word is followed by another accented syllable, thus avoiding a stress clash (e.g. *'after¸noon 'tea* becomes *'after¸noon 'tea*, the primary stress shifts to the left to avoid two adjacent primary stresses).

Structuralism a method of studying language by examining the structures on which it is based.

Subject the grammatical function of a noun or noun phrase used to refer to the entity which commands the happening denoted by the verb.

Suffix a bound morpheme added to the end of a word (e.g. *happi**ness***).

Suprasegmental involving the melody of spoken language; this includes the description of speech rhythm, and the perception and production of stress placement and word boundaries.

Surface structure the actual syntagmatic arrangement of a sentence/utterance after the application of the utterer's mental operations.

Syllabic consonant a consonant which forms a syllable on its own.

Syntax (syntactic structures) the description and analysis of the structure of phrases and sentences/utterances.

Tactus the rate at which most people clap their hands, snap their fingers, or tap their feet while listening to a song, or more generally to a piece of music.

Tense the grammatical category distinguishing forms of the verb (in English the present and past tense).

Tone pitch contour.

Tone group a stretch of one or more syllables in which the pitch contour (or tone) occurs, also called "intonation group" or "tone unit."

Tonic syllable one particular syllable within a tone group, on which the tone occurs (mostly the last one), also called, "the intonation nucleus" or "the intonation center").

Tree diagram a diagram with branches showing the syllabic constituents of a structure.

Trochaic refers to a metrical foot containing a trochee, that is, a stressed-unstressed sequence of two syllables.

Utterer (utterer-centered) a producer of discourse. Utterer-centered linguistics relates linguistic units to the extralinguistic world, thus defining grammatical meanings with respect to the speech situation.

Velar a speech sound in which there is constriction between the back of the tongue and the velum.
Velum the soft part at the back of the roof of the mouth.
Verb a word used to describe an action or a state (e.g. *see, jump, know* are verbs).
Verb phrase a phrase whose main constituent is a verb.
Vernacular a variety of language spoken by a particular group or in a particular area, displaying marked differences from the standard language.
Vocal folds (or vocal cords) muscles in the larynx which can open (voiceless sounds) or close together and vibrate (voiced sounds).
Voiced sounds speech sounds produced with vibration of the vocal folds.
Voiceless sounds speech sounds produced without vibration of the vocal folds.
Vowel a sound produced through the vocal folds without constriction of the airflow.
Writing the use of graphic symbols to represent language, on paper for instance.

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[1] Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refer to notes.

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