

Dual – Counting Foot Structure

In this paper I propose to build the foot on two levels, moraic level and syllabic level, for English. Previously, the moraic trochee (Mester 1994; Hayes 1995) or the syllabic trochee (Halle & Vergnaud 1987; Burzio 1994; Halle 1998; Hammond 1999) has been assumed for English. However, all syllabic trochee theories require devices, such as H&V's Accent Rule, Burzio's [Hσ], Halle's Main Stress Rule, and Hammond's WEIGHT-TO-STRESS, to consult moraic structures in order to guarantee that heavy syllables receive stress. Put another way, the moraic level is used implicitly in syllabic trochee theories. Furthermore, given the standard assumption that a minimal word is a foot, syllable counting theories predict that the minimal word in English should be defined only in terms of the syllabic trochee. However, a disyllabic minimal word requirement is plainly inadequate. One would have to further stipulate that monosyllabic words are allowed, but only if they contain two moras. This allowance for bimoraic minimal words can be taken as evidence that English is also a mora-counting system. On the other hand, a mora-only theory is not sufficient: Hayes' (1995: 123) moraic trochee theory must refer to syllables in order to guarantee that moras belonging to a single syllable cannot be separated into two different feet, i.e., to preserve syllable integrity. This suggests, then, that English needs both moraic and syllabic levels.

Assuming the dual counting foot and applying Foot Binarity and Weight to Stress I will show how all possible stress patterns of English are accounted for. Examples of dual-counting foot structures are given bellow.

	x		x		
σ	[σ	σ]	[σ	σ]	S-head
L	H	L	H	H	S-foot
	a	gen	da	gam	bit
m	[mm]	m	[mm]	[mm]	M-foot
	x		x	x	M-head

As can be seen above, in dual-counting foot structures all acceptable feet are of the form [Hσ] : [HH] and [HL]. In addition, the dual-counting foot theory yields three degrees of stress: a syllable stressed on the syllabic and moraic levels, like *gen* of *agenda*, a syllable stressed on the moraic level, like *bit* of *gambit*, a syllable with no stress on either level, as *da* in *agenda*.

References

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