

Preface

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English Phonology

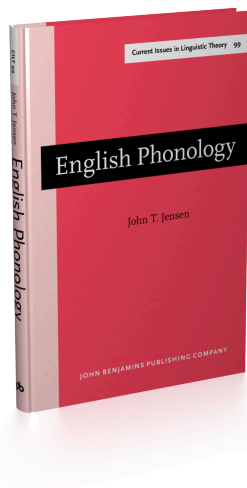
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Preface

This book is intended as an introduction to the major issues in English phonology. While I have tried to be comprehensive, the treatment is by no means exhaustive. The framework is that of generative phonology, in particular metrical, prosodic, and lexical phonology. Some background in phonology is presupposed, including an understanding of the theory of distinctive features and familiarity with rule writing conventions and other notational conventions.

One of my major goals has been to present an internally consistent synthesis of material derived from many sources. One result is that I see syllabic, metrical and lexical phonology as forming a single integrated system unified by a hierarchy of prosodic categories extending from the mora to the utterance. This necessarily leads to considering the metrical system in terms of trees rather than grids, since grids are on a plane separate from the rest of the metrical structure and cannot be integrated into the prosodic hierarchy. Related to this is my rejection of stress-dependent resyllabification and ambisyllabicity in favour of rules that appeal to higher prosodic structure, such as the foot and the phonological word. All accounts that I am aware of that appeal to ambisyllabicity can be reanalyzed in terms of such units. Since prosodic units are required for independent reasons, I conclude that ambisyllabicity is superfluous. I have also strictly applied the lexical model of morphology in that I assume that inflection as well as derivation is performed in the lexicon. This implies that syntactic rules do not manipulate inflectional morphemes in any way: fully inflected forms, regular and irregular, emerge from the lexicon, where they are manipulated by the syntax as wholes. I have also confirmed the role of rule ordering in phonology. While some investigators would eliminate rules and ordering from phonology in an attempt to predict observed phenomena on the basis of representations and constraints, this does not seem to be a feasible approach when dealing with a substantial body of linguistic data from a single language.

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