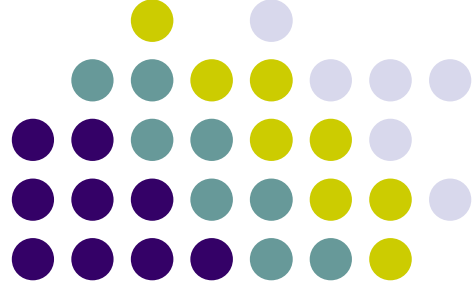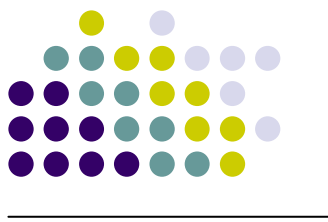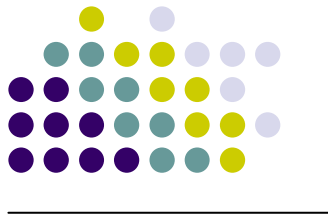# Suprasegmental Phonology

Phonetics and Phonology

Week 10

Andy Bayu Nugroho

Suprasegmental

- refers to those properties of an utterance which are not properties of any single segment.

- features that belong not to any single sound segment, but to groups of them.

Types:

- ❖ **Stress**
- ❖ **Tone**
- ❖ **Intonation**
- ❖ **Length**
- ❖ **Syllable**

Notice that while a language like Chinese makes **full use of tone**, a language like English does not employ this suprasegmental feature. Therefore, your attention is drawn to the fact that the *languages of the world make their own choices* of suprasegmentals.

STRESS

- means the LOUDNESS
- a term applied to words in isolation which have more than one syllable
- It seems certain that stressed syllables are made with more effort than unstressed ones; **the muscles in the lungs seem to expel air more aggressively** than for unstressed syllables.
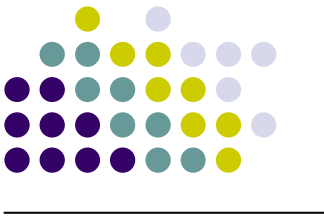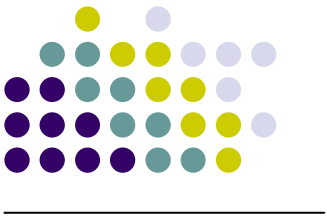
English is considered a **stressed language** while many other languages are considered syllabic.

What does that mean?

In English, speakers give stress to certain words (or more precisely syllables) while other words are quickly spoken.

In other languages, such as French or Italian, each syllable receives equal importance.

Many speakers of syllabic languages do not understand why English people quickly speak, or swallow, a number of words in a sentence. In syllabic languages each syllable has equal importance, and therefore equal time is needed. English however, spends more time on specific stressed words while quickly gliding over the other, less important, words.
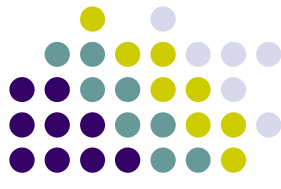
Compare these sentence:

a. They can <u>come</u> on <u>Friday.</u>

b. They can't <u>come</u> on <u>Friday.</u>

● confine /kənˈfaɪn/

● album /ˈælbəm/

● commemoration /kə,meməˈreɪʃən/

The importance of stress

❖Boundary marking
❖Additional contrasts

In normal speech, words and phrases simply do not have little pauses between them. In fact, a spoken sentence will definitely appear like a very long word to a person who is not familiar with the language. In such a situation, stress or prominence can help indicate where the boundaries are. This will make life easier for the listener.

Verb vs noun

convert

/kən'vɜːt/   /'kɒnvət/

contrast

/kən'træst/   /'kɒntræst/

Rules of Stress

- Content and Function Words
- Patterns

Rules of Stress 1:

Content words include:

- (most) principle verbs (e.g. visit, construct)
- Nouns (e.g. kitchen, Peter)
- Adjectives (e.g. beautiful, interesting)
- Adverbs (e.g. often, carefully)

Function words include:

- Determiners (e.g. the, a, some, a few)
- Auxiliary verbs (e.g. don't, am, can, were)
- Prepositions (e.g. before, next to, opposite)
- Conjunctions (e.g. but, while, as)
- Pronouns (e.g. they, she, us)

Rules of Stress 2:
Stress Patterns
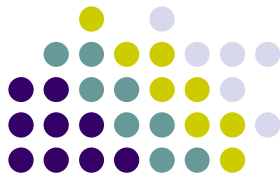
- Monosyllabic words
- Bi-syllabic words
- Multi-syllabic words

SENTENCE	PRONUNCIATION
Jack is from London	/dʒæk əz frəm ˈlʌndən/
Is Jack from New York?	/əz dʒæk frəm njuːjɔːk/
No, he is from London.	/nəʊ hɪ əz frəm ˈlʌndən/
Where is Jack from?	/werəz dʒæk frɒm/

Read more on page 106.

INTONATION

means when, why and how a speaker **chooses to raise or lower or sustain** the pitch of her or his voice at particular points while speaking.

These choices are as much a part of the grammatical system of the language as, say, using the correct auxiliary verb, or remembering when and where to place the person markers (I, you, he/she ...) which tell us who is carrying out an action; who or what is acted upon.

What intonation does:

☞ expressing new information

☞ showing contrast

☞ expressing meaning

☞ showing pronunciation

☞ showing mood or personality

Read p. 114

1. **I** didn't say he stole the money.
2. I **didn't** say he stole the money.
3. I didn't **say** he stole the money.
4. I didn't say **he** stole the money.
5. I didn't say he **stole** the money.
6. I didn't say he stole **the** money.
7. I didn't say he stole the **money**.

Types of Intonation

-