

## The distribution of English vowels and glides, and the representation of diphthongs in Strict CV Phonology

The distribution of short and long stressed vowels in English (RP) is almost complementary: short vowels cannot occur in an open syllable, except for words like <city>, while long vowels are ruled out in a closed syllable, except for words like <hoick>. I analyse this restriction in a CV framework, utilising trochaic proper government (Lowenstamm 1996, Rowicka 1999), by requiring the stressed position in English to properly govern an empty position to its right.

Long monophthongs and diphthongs in English have the same distribution, but their representations differ in the CV approach: Ségéral and Scheer (1998) analyse diphthongs as closed syllables. This works for the pattern above, but it encounters the following problems: (1) in stress assignment in verbs, word-finally diphthongs form a natural class with long vowels in attracting stress (e.g. *dený*, *agréé*), as opposed to syllables closed by a single consonant which normally remain unstressed (e.g. *finish*); (2) phonotactic restrictions exist between the melodies constituting a diphthong, whereas no such restrictions apply between short vowels and “codas” proper, despite their identical structure.

The distribution of glides becomes relevant in this context: in English, /j/ and /w/ can precede a vowel, but they cannot occur before a consonant, or at the end of the word. The generalisation thus is that glides in English cannot be followed by an empty V position. Then, however, diphthongs cannot be represented as closed syllables. In this talk, I propose to represent diphthongs in English by spreading the melody of the underlying off-glide to the following V position. The representation of long vowels and diphthongs is thus parallel in that both of their V positions are filled, whereas they differ from “closed syllables”, whose second V position is empty. I will utilise this difference in accounting for their divergent behaviour with respect to stress word-finally. Phonotactic restrictions between the melodies constituting a diphthong can now follow from the proper governing relation contracted between the two V positions (whereas in a “closed syllable” the vowel is in no way related to the following consonant, and therefore no phonotactic constraints apply).

Lowenstamm, J. (1996): CV as the only syllable type. In: J. Durand & B. Laks (eds.): *Current Trends in Phonology: Models and Methods*. CNRS, ESRI, Paris X, 419-41

Rowicka, G. (1999): *On Ghost Vowels. A Strict CV Approach*. The Hague: Holland Academic Graphics

Ségéral, P. & T. Scheer (1998): A Generalized Theory of Ablaut: the Case of Modern German Strong Verbs. In: R. Fabri, A. Ortmann & T. Parodi (eds.): *Models of Inflection*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag. 28-59