

Stress-wise Ending Letters

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Abstract

We aimed at finding a reliable word part that help predict the placement of stress within a word. Common suffixes like -ese, -ic, -ion are useful, but the number of such suffixes is small, insignificant, therefore known suffixes in all do not give much help. Stress-wise ending letters, or SWEL for short, would be the alternative which helps predict word stress. The idea SWEL and some relating notions or symbols were introduced and defined.

Some sequences of final letters such as 'x', 'ique', 'esque', 'imal', 'olent', 'inous', 'itude' or 'mittance', 'stitute', 'rogate', 'mony' or known suffix like -logy, '-ese', '-ion' have specific characteristics:

- Their spelling is well-defined (with a definite number of letters and distinct position of letters).
- They belong to a well-defined part of speech.
- They usually have a definable meaning.

A sequence of ending letters when meeting the conditions mentioned above will be written, spelt, pronounced and transcribed in the same way in different words. As regards the matter of transcription, the total number of all symbols (vowels, consonants, separators and stress marks included) and their positions are the same in different words of the same ending sequence. A sequence with such characteristics can be called 'ending letters'.

Many ending letters are indicative of stress placement. Words with stress-wise ending letters, as many as possible, were collected by means of wildcard search, then the stress of each word was ascertained. We also gather words from sources such as: Greek, Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, Anglo-Saxon to ensure the reliability and objectiveness. We set up lists of facts and findings and then drew conclusions. Almost all findings could be set down in lists with figures and numbers. Conclusions could be written in the ordinary way, i.e. sentences, or in formulae by means of symbols.

Lists of facts and findings were made out. We suggest some stress-wise word groups such as words with ending bases (verbs, nouns and their derivatives). Some other kinds of SWEL were introduced.

The idea SWEL is more comprehensive and more useful in finding stress placement. SWEL also has many other applications in the field of spoken English and in lexicography.