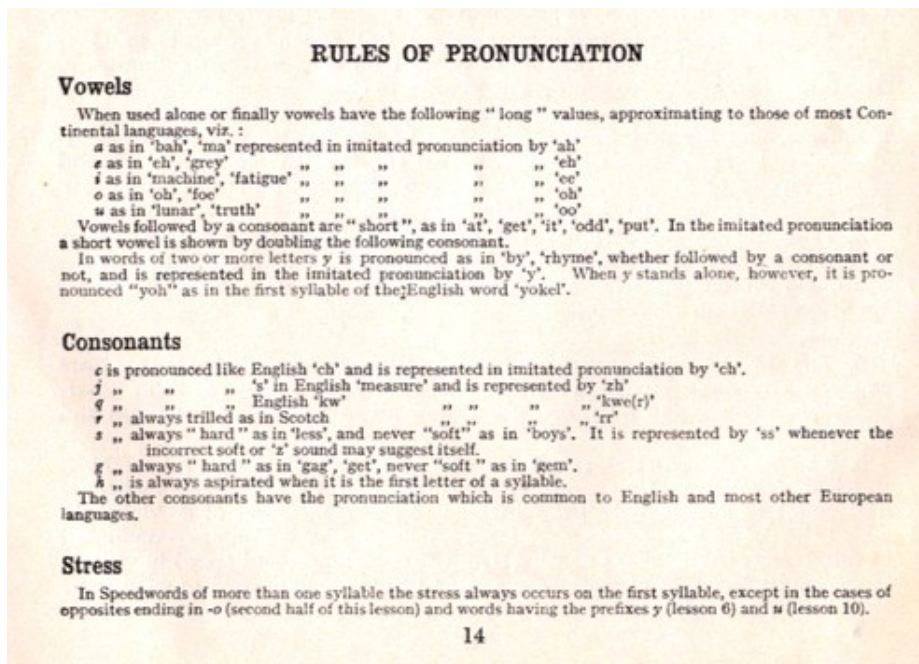


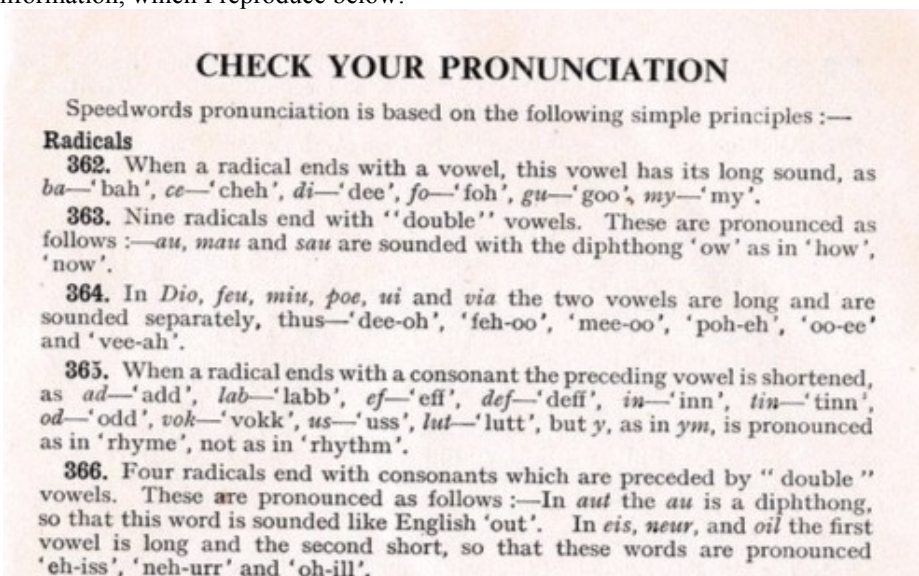
Dutton Speedwords Pronunciation

As typos or omissions either on my part or on Richard Kennaway's Conlang web-page '[Dutton Speedwords Pronunciation](#)' have appeared elsewhere online as Dutton's rules, *it is best to go back to what Dutton himself actually wrote*. On page 14 of "Dutton World Speedwords" (Third edition, July 1946) we find:



I have assumed that Dutton means the long sounds to be pure vowels and not diphthongized ones of southern English 'Received Pronunciation', i.e. are [a:], [e:], [i:], [o:] and [u:] respectively. The 'short a' is probably meant to be the northern English and Midlands [a] rather than southern English [æ].

On pages 23 and 24 of "Dutton Double-Speed Words Companion to Text-Book" (Third Edition, July, 1946) we find further information, which I reproduce below:



Note: In the 1951 version of Speedwords, *lab* "work" was replaced *ra*, and *neur* "nerve" was replaced by *ner*.

Single-letter Speedwords

367. Because of their high frequency these have special rules of their own which are made clear severally in the full alphabetical tabulation which follows.

For convenience I append these at the end of this document.

Suffixes

368. Vowel suffixes have their long values but are preceded by *consonantal* 'y' when following another vowel, as *axa*—'axah', *mua*—'moo-yah', *afe*—'affeh', *gree*—'greh-yeh', *adi*—'addee', *ado*—'addoh', *atu*—'attoo', *dau*—'dah-yoo', *emy*—'emmy' (diphthongal 'y' as in 'by').

369. The suffixes *-c* and *-n* are always pronounced in full, viz., 'choh and 'unn' respectively, and they do not therefore shorten the preceding vowel. Instances are *lec*—'lehchoh', *gan*—'gah-yunn'.

370. *-d* does not shorten a preceding vowel because its addition does not alter the intrinsic meaning of the Speedword to which it is added, as *ged*—'gehhd', *nod*—'nohd', *mad*—'mahhd'.

-d follows naturally after the "soft" consonants *b, g, v, l, m, n* and *r*, so that, for example, the words *lobd, egd, savd, fuld, amd, gend* and *gard* are pronounced exactly as they are spelt.

But after the "hard" consonants *c, f, k, p, s, t* and *x*, as well as *d* itself, it is difficult to articulate 'd' clearly and therefore the full syllable 'edd' is added, as in *acd*—'achedd', *ofd*—'offedd', *ukd*—'ukkedd', *epd*—'eppedd', *lasd*—'lassedd', *atd*—'attedd', *axd*—'axedd' and *add*—'adedd'.

371. As the *-z* suffix does not change the meaning of the Speedword to which it is attached, a preceding vowel is not shortened, so that, for example, *dez* is pronounced 'dehz', *boz*—'bohz', and, of course, *ryz*—'ryz'. After consonants the dull 'e' sound is inserted, as, *acz*—'ache(r)z', *lesz*—'lesse(r)z', *ozz*—'ozze(r)z', *manz*—'manne(r)z', etc.

372. As the *-r* suffix also does not change the meaning of the Speedword to which it is attached, a preceding vowel is not shortened, so that, for example, *far* is pronounced 'fahrr' and *stur* 'stoorr'. After consonants the dull 'e' sound is inserted, as *labr*—'labb(e)rr', *juvr*—'zhunn(e)rr'. Care must be taken that the pronunciation of *-r* after a vowel does not cause confusion with an existing radical. Thus the word 'maker' must be rendered *maer* so as not to conflict with *mar*—'marriage', and a 'judge' must be rendered *juer* so as not to conflict with *jur*—'law'. (*Maer* and *juer* are of course pronounced 'mah-yerr' and 'zhoo-yerr', with consonantal 'y'.)

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373. The 'thing' suffix *-m* shortens the vowel it follows, e.g., *dam*—'damm', *ymim*—'ymimm'. The full syllable 'om' is pronounced after all consonants, as, *berm*—'berromm', *odm*—'oddom', *tegm*—'teggomm'.

374. All other consonant suffixes, viz. *-b, -f, -g, -k, -l, -p, -s, -t, -v, -x*, shorten a preceding vowel (except of course *-y*), e.g., *paf*—'paff', *peg*—'pegg', *brik*—'brikk', *del*—'dell', *dop*—'dopp', *ris*—'riss', *gut*—'gutt', *suu*—'suuv', *lox*—'lox' (like English 'locks'); but *ryt*—'ryt' (like English 'right'). The consonant suffixes *-f, -v* and *-x* always, of course, follow vowels. When the remaining consonant suffixes *-b, -g, -k, -l, -p, -s* and *-t* follow a previous consonant the single letter is added if it can be articulated without difficulty; if not, the full syllable *-ib, -ig, -ik, -il, -ep, -is* or *-et* is added, but it should be noted that although *-s* can be articulated after 'g' and 'k' it is always necessary to add the full syllable *-is* to avoid confusion with the suffix *-x*, which, of course, has the sound of 'ks'. Examples are:—*bolg, mang, nurg* (all pronounced as spelt), *ozb*—'ozzibb', *papg*—'pappigg', *meig*—'mettig'; *mank, erk, dosk* (pronounced as spelt), *amk*—'ammikk'; *terl, narl* (pronounced as spelt), *axl*—'ax(i)ll', *kohl*—'konn(i)ll'; *selp, garp* (as spelt), *app*—'appepp'; *ofs, fils* (as spelt), *regs*—'reggiss', *aks*—'akkiss' *tess*—'tessiss'; *libs*—'libbiss' *aft, belt, amt* (as spelt), *agt*—'aggett', *hott*—'hottett'.

Read 374 with care. Some online pages regarding Speedwords pronunciation do have errors on the pronunciations of these suffixes.

Note also: *man* "man" was replaced in 1951 by *on*, and *hot* "hot" was replaced by *he*.

Two-letter Suffixes

375. The two-letter suffix *-st* is always sounded 'ist', whether following a vowel or a consonant, as, *rist*—'ree-ist', *sanst*—'sannist'.

376. The other two-letter suffix *-za* is always pronounced 'zah', as *perza*—'perrzah'.

There follow sections regarding 'idea compounds' and accent (word stress).

Idea Compounds

377. The accent in Idea Compounds is on the first component, and when this ends in a consonant the syllable 'ing' (excluding *-st* and *-za*) is sounded between the first and second components, so that '*albe*' is pronounced 'ALL-ing-beh' and '*ut(s)i*m' 'UTT-ing-simm'. When the first component ends in a vowel (or 'y') it is sufficient to sound *ng* only, the vowel retaining its long sound, e.g. *dial* is pronounced 'DEENG-ell' and *rysel* 'RYNG-sell'.

378. On the rare occasions when a compound includes three radicals the syllable '-ish' is inserted between the first and second components. It is then unnecessary to sound '-ing' between the second and third components. When the first component ends with a vowel the sound '-sh' follows the vowel immediately without the interposition of the vowel '-i'. Thus, *opmekav* (anti-aircraft) is pronounced 'OPP-ish-mek-avv' and *ryefmo* (gymnasium) 'RYSH-ef-moh'.

Accent

379. In Speedwords of more than one syllable the accent is placed on the first syllable. For instance, the accent in *axl* (shown by heavy type), is **ax**(i)ll just as in the English word "axle" it is **ax**(u)ll. Similarly *ofi* is **off**ee like the accent in the English word *coffee*.

380. In the following cases, for special reasons, the accent is **not** on the first syllable.

(1) When a Speedword opposite ends in '-o'—*amo*, *axo*, *novo*, &c.—it is most important that the '-o' sound should be clearly heard since it produces the exact opposite to the root. The syllable containing the '-o' is therefore always accented: e.g. *supo* = **sup**oh, where the "o" is accented just as it is in the English word "suppose". This rule also applies even when a further suffix is added to the opposite: e.g. *imo* = **imm**oh, *imof* = **imm**off.

(2) When the 'y-' or 'u-' prefixes are added to Speedwords to produce a verbal variation, the essential meaning is not changed and the normal accent is retained: e.g. *ofi* = **off**ee, *uofi* = un**g**offee, *yofi* = **y**-offee; *imof* = **imm**off, *yimof* = un**g**immoff, *yimof* = **y**-immoff.

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The prefix *y-* forms the perfect participle and *u-* the present participle.

The Possessive Case

Before listing the single letter words, mention should be made of the possessive. In "Dutton Double-Speed Words", Dutton had the habit of using speedwords intermingled with English words in his text, e.g. *I* Speedwords *l* possessive case *e ai* indicated by *u* apostrophe (*b n* 's') ...

I have, therefore, not photocopied the relevant paragraphs but, in order to render them easier to read, rewrite them below with the speedwords replacements being shown between square brackets (except where the speedword is the same in English);

323. [The] possessive case [of] nouns [in] English [is] indicated by means [of the] "apostrophe 's" suffix, [as] - "the boy's head", "a girl's school", "this week's work", etc.

324. [In] Speedwords [the] possessive case [is also] indicated by [an] apostrophe ([but not] 's') & [the] phrases quoted [are accordingly] rendered "*l m(an)t'kap*", "*u femtz'ryui*" & "*c se'lab*." [In speech the] apostrophe [is] given [the] pronunciation 'zy', so [that the above] phrases [are] pronounced 'le(r) mant zy kapp', 'oo femtz zy ry-yoo' & 'che(r) seh zy labb.'

325. [This construction agrees with that of the] Teutonic languages, [but] Latin-derived tongues [would] render [these] expressions by [the] equivalents [of] 'the head of the boy', 'a school for girls' & 'the work of this week'. [This construction is] perfectly intelligible and admissible [in] Speedwords, [exactly] as English [prefers] 'the length of the journey' & 'the colour of the flowers' [to] 'the journey's length' & 'the flowers' colour.'

The paragraphs above give pre-1951 versions of the words for "boy", "head" and "work" (in 1951, "boy" became *ont*, "head" became *ka* and "work" became *ra*).

The "Teach Yourself Dutton Speedwords" books of 1951 and 1971 show that Dutton retained this construction after the adoption of a new root word *zy* which was introduced in the 1951 Speedwords Dictionary with the meaning of "disease". It is inconceivable that Dutton retained the apostrophe and the new word with the same pronunciation. But what pronunciation he gave the apostrophe after 1951 is not known.

Single-letter Speedwords

I give these with the pronunciation as indicated by Dutton in his Pronunciation List on pages 25 & 26 of “Dutton Double-Speed Words Companion to Text-Book”; but I add also the meaning:

Speedword	Pronunciation	Meaning
<i>a</i>	ah	to, at
<i>b</i>	butt <i>(Presumably Dutton meant [bʊt]; it would be very odd if he had had the sound [ʌ] in this one word alone)</i>	but
<i>c</i>	che(r) <i>(i.e. [tʃə])</i>	this
<i>d</i>	de(r)	from, of
<i>e</i>	eh	be, am, is, are
<i>f</i>	froh	for
<i>g</i>	ge(r)	they, them
<i>h</i>	hee <i>(But in 1951, Dutton replaced hid “hide” by hi, so h must have had a new pronunciation, but we are not told what it is).</i>	has, have <i>(as auxiliary verbs to form perfect tenses)</i>
<i>i</i>	ee	in, within
<i>j</i>	zhe(r)	I, me
<i>k</i>	ke(r)	that (conjunction)
<i>l</i>	le(r)	the
<i>m</i>	mitt	with
<i>n</i>	not	not, no
<i>o</i>	oh	on
<i>p</i>	pe(r)	able, can
<i>q</i>	kwe(r)	do (?), question, query
<i>r</i>	re(r)	shall, will
<i>s</i>	se(r)	he, him
<i>t</i>	te(r)	it
<i>u</i>	oo	a, an, one
<i>v</i>	ve(r)	you
<i>w</i>	we(r)	we, us
<i>x</i>	ex	if, whether
<i>w</i>	yoh	was, were
<i>z</i>	zoo	as, then

He should, perhaps, have added:

<i>sh</i>	she(r)	she, her
&	and	and

-e(r), it seems, is meant to represent the shwa sound found in English *the* [ðə], but see paragraph 9 “Dutton World Speedwords” which I give on the next page.

9. When a single-consonant particle is followed by a Speedword consisting of or commencing with a vowel it is pronounced with a **very short** added 'ee' sound for the sake of euphony, as in *l ead*, pronounced 'le ead'. The 'le' sounds like the pronunciation of 'lip' without the 'p' **not** like that of 'leap'. This sound is shown in the imitated pronunciation by one 'e' to distinguish it from the long vowel sound shown (later) as 'ee'.

It is unclear from this whether Dutton means [ɪ] (**very short** added 'ee') or [ɪ] ('lip' without the 'p'). What, however, he almost certainly is saying is that most of these single letter words are followed by the same sound as the *-e* in *the*, which in the early and mid 20th century was commonly [ðɪ] before vowels and [ðə] before consonants in most varieties of English.

But this was clearly a positionally conditioned variation and not a phonemic one; and certainly not so in Speedwords where [ɪ] does not otherwise occur.

Note: In 1951 the older speedword *end* "end" was replaced by *ed*. I had begun to 'correct' my copy with the 1951 versions, as you see above.