

## Abstract

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In his *A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary* (1791), the English orthoepist John Walker observed that English borrowings from Latin, either directly or via French, tend to preserve the Latin stress pattern when the syllable count remains unchanged (e.g., *o* 'pinio → *o* 'pinion). This paper revisits Walker's claim within a diachronic framework, testing it on a corpus of approximately 35,000 Latinate words traced from Classical Latin (CL) through Vulgar Latin (VL), Gallo-Roman (GR), Old French (OF), and Middle English (MidE) to Present-Day English (PDE).

Our results not only confirm Walker's principle but also extend it: even when syllable count changes, be it via syncope, vowel reduction, or affixal restructuring, stress often still mirrors that of Latin, albeit not in its immediate source form (e.g. *compārābilis*, *sensibilis*), but in an earlier, shorter etymon (e.g. 'compārō, 'sentīō; see also Bejta 2003). Thus, PDE 'comparable, 'collocate, 'temperament, and 'sensible (antepenultimate stress in RP) mirror the Latin stress of 'compārō, 'collōcō, 'tempērō, and 'sentīō, rather than that of the longer derivatives *compā'rābilis*, *collō'cātus*, *tempērā'mentus*, and *sen'sibilis*. The following table contains further examples:

CL - PDE	Latin etymon - CL - PDE
oratio - o'ration	audīō - audībilis - 'audible
asperitas - a'sperity	volvō - vōlūbilis - 'voluble
argillaceus - ,argil'laceous	dēpilō - dēpilātus - 'depilate
anxius - 'anxious	infātūō - infātūātus - in'fatuate
ardūus - 'arduous	argūō - argūmentum - 'argument
barbārus - 'barbarous	ostendō - ostensīvus - o'stensive
stūpendus - stupendous	argūmentōr - argūmentātīvus - argu'mentative
āmentia - a'mentia	fātum - fātālis - 'fatal
fōlium - 'folium	nātus - nātālis - 'natal
radiū - 'radius	hospēs - hospītālis - 'hospital
consōnans - 'consonant	partīcūla - partīcūlāris - par'ticular
ābundans - a'bundant	mēmōria - mēmōriālis - me'morial
corpulens - 'corpulent	arbōrēa - arbōrēālis - ar'boreal
appārens - ap'parent	mānūs - mānūālis - 'manual
ādōlescens - ,ado'lescent	clēricūs - clēricālis - 'clerical
thesīs - 'thesis	tertia - tertianus - 'tertian
nēcrōsis - ne'crosis	ēlōquens - ēlōquentia - 'eloquence
incūbus - 'incubus	jūdicium – jūdicīarius - ju'diciary

Building on these findings, we explore historical explanations for certain morphophonological rules of PDE pronunciation as formulated by Duchet in his book *Code de l'anglais oral* (1994). In particular, we address the long-standing puzzle of why stressed /i/ remains short in words containing any of the stress-imposing <i + vowel> suffixes, such as -ious, -ient, -ia, -ion, etc., as in *opinion*, *religious*, *ambitious* despite long vowels in analogous contexts, such as in *prostration*, *commotion*, *ablution*. We argue that developments in Vulgar Latin during the Gallo-Roman period (c. 58 BCE - 476 CE) provide a plausible account of this anomaly.

In sum, in our paper, and in our proposed talk, we intend to show and exemplify how Walker's observation, when extended through evidence from syllable structure, morphophonological processes, and contact history, reveals a deeper and more pervasive phonological inheritance from both Classical and Vulgar Latin than has hitherto been recognized.