Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 3: Latin Prefixes

• **AFFIX**: “a collective term for prefixes, suffixes and infixes”; e.g. intangible

• **PREFIX**: “one or more letters or syllables placed at the beginning of a word to modify its meaning”; e.g. prefix
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 3: Latin Prefixes

- there are two important linguistic processes involved with Latin prefixes: assimilation and vowel gradation
  - **ASSIMILATION**: “the process by which adjacent sounds (usually consonants) acquire similar or identical characteristics,” e.g.
    - *in-* + literate $\rightarrow$ illiterate
    - *ob-* + press $\rightarrow$ oppress
  - the reason for this is to ease pronunciation
  - **EUPHONY**: “the tendency toward greater ease of pronunciation resulting in combinatorial changes, largely due to speed and economy of utterance”
    - e.g. *ad-* + -iteration $\rightarrow$ alliteration
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 3: Latin Prefixes

GO TO EXERCISE IV, p. 40 (Ayers)
Latin and Greek Elements in English
Lesson 3: Latin Prefixes

• there are two important linguistic processes involved with Latin prefixes: assimilation and vowel gradation

  – VOWEL GRADATION: “a change in the internal vowel of a base, often when the base is prefixed,” e.g.
    • re- + CAPT- + -ion > reCEPTion
    • in- + HAB- + -it(e) + -ion > inHIBition
    • the reason for this is that the lack of stress on the BASE leads to a weakening of its sound

  – but vowel gradation can occur for other reasons
    • POND- (“heavy”), e.g. ponderous
    • vs. PEND- (“hang”), e.g. pendant
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 4: Abbreviations and Acronyms

- Abbreviations: know the ones listed in Ayers

GO TO EXERCISE V, p. 46
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 4: Abbreviations and Acronyms

- **ACRONYM**: “an abbreviation that spells a word or pronounceable unit,” e.g.
  - zip (code): Zone Improvement Plan
  - yuppie: Young Urban Professional
  - scuba: Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus
  - nimby: Not In My Back Yard
  - snafu: Situation Normal All Fouled Up
  - posh: Port Out, Starboard Home
Latin and Greek Elements in English

Lesson 4: Abbreviations and Acronyms

• Acronyms: know the ones listed in Ayers

GO TO EXERCISE VI, p. 46