

VII. PHONETIC SYMBOLISM¹

7. 1. The principle of sound symbolism is based on man's imitative instinct which leads us to use characteristic speech sounds for name-giving. We may imitate things which we perceive through our senses (Direct Imitation). We may also use speech sounds to express feelings (Expressive Symbolism). We cannot tell which is primary as the wish to give vent to our feelings seems as natural as our desire to render adequately what we perceive with our senses. We will call these expressive morphemes symbols.

7. 2. As for direct imitation, we imitate by speech sounds what we hear, i. e. noises, sounds. As, however, noises and sounds are often accompanied by movements (as in *whish, swish, dash, tap* etc.), these also come to be denoted by symbols. By extension, even the originator of a sound may be characterized by the use of a symbol (e.g. *pom-pom* 'kind of machine-gun'). Strictly speaking, there is direct imitation of sounds only when we render our own vocal sounds or those of others. The sound then stands either for the position the mouth assumes or for the sound produced in the respective position. In *baul*, the *b* renders the softened explosive opening of the lips, while in *baa* 'bleat' the *b* renders the opening of the sheep's mouth. The initial *p* of *peep* imitates the movement little birds make when opening their beaks for a cry. Initial-words are all renderings of the position of the mouth: *ba ba, ma ma* etc.; initial *m* forms almost exclusively words of this kind.

7. 3. With regard to expressive symbolism we note that sounds are often emotionally expressive: /l/ is suggestive of the subjectively, emotionally small and therefore frequent with diminutive and pet suffixes (-*ling, -let, OE -icel, G -lein, L -icellum, -iculum*). Initial /f/, /p/, less so /b/, often express scorn, contempt, disapproval, disgust: *fish, pooh, ph, fe, foh, fough* (cp. the exclamation *fiddlesticks, I don't care a fig*, contemptuous words such as *fiddle-faddle, fogle-fangle, G p, pah, puh, F fe, L fu*). Only certain sounds lend themselves to being used as emotionally expressive symbols. The sounds [k], [g], [d] for instance, are not used at all, [t] rarely.

Initial symbols and word families

7. 4. In the word lists below we can see how word families are characterized by certain initial symbols: /sw/ is characteristic of a group denoting swinging movement, /kr/ begins many words expressive of unpleasant noises, and so

¹ H. Hilmer, *Schallnachahmung, Wortschöpfung und Bedeutungswandel*. Halle 1914. — J. Reinius, *Onomatopoeische Bezeichnungen für menschliche Wesen, besonders im Deutschen und Englischen. Studier i modern språkvetenskap utgivna av nyfilologiska sällskapet* 4. Stockholm and Uppsala 1908. — O. Jespersen, *Langage* ch. XX. — O. Jespersen, *Symbolic value of the vowel i* (*Linguistica*, Copenhagen 1933, p. 283 ff.). — M. Grammont, *Traité de phonétique*. Paris 1933 (pp. 377 ff.).

forth. Some of the symbols are originally imitative symbols whereas others have developed as the result of word blending. While /kr/ is found in many languages with words denoting harsh or unpleasant noises because of its suggestive character, the sound [sw] in itself contains nothing suggestive of the concept 'swinging movement', but is obviously a secondary result, more or less incidental, of several words, as *sweep*, *swing*, both OE, and OE *swengan* beginning with this sound. With words denoting sound, the imitative principle has probably a great share in the development of initial symbols, as with /b/ and /p/ which demonstrate an explosion of breath by the sudden parting of the lips and therefore seem to be the most natural rendering of what the ear perceives as an explosion outside. We imitate, in instinctive parallelism, an explosion of sound in the outside world by a movement of our speech organs producing a similar result. The symbols /t/ and /d/ are frequent with words denoting striking or knocking against something. They may be imitative after the movement of the tongue: the tip of the tongue strikes against the teeth or alveoles and is withdrawn with an explosion. Initial /g/ is almost only used with words denoting noises coming from or connected with the throat.

7.5. To what extent sound symbolism is creative in the names of concrete, non-acoustic things is difficult to tell. Certain sound combinations, as *k. p.*, *k. b. t. p* for protuberant forms (hill, knob, boss, wart, pimple etc.), as in *knob*, *knob*, *top*, *tip*, testify to the tendency. We can hardly tell what the symbolism of these sounds is due to, but we cannot possibly deny the phenomenon. We shall, however, not treat the subject here, first because the problem is rather one of general linguistics, secondly because of the impossibility so far of finding out what the symbolism is based upon. The reader is referred to the book by H. Hilmer.

7.6. Many words have in the course of time developed sound-symbolic character. In wf we can only be concerned with such symbolism as has been at work in the coinage of a word, so secondary sound-symbolism is excluded here.

7.7. Jespersen (La 20. 6) points out "a natural association between high tones and light, and inversely between low tones and darkness". Despite *Edark*, *G dunkel*, *L obscurus* and a few other examples which Jespersen gives I am skeptical as to the validity of the principle. What about *night* (formerly pronounced with [i]), Gr *nyx* 'night', *L lux*, *lumen* 'light'? And if Jespersen refers to *gleam*, *glimmer*, *glitter* against *gloom*, it must be said that *i* does not denote the light but the smallness of it. That *i* is expressive of smallness (seen emotionally) is not denied here.

7.8. We will now look at the various symbols, beginning with final consonantal sounds:

/p/, /t/, /k/, at the end of a monosyllabic word and preceded by a short vowel are expressive of quick, abrupt, short-stopping or explosive noises resp. rapid, short or short-stopping movements. From OE are recorded *knock*, *pick* (through vs *pickung* 'puncturing'), *crack*, *hit*, *tuck*. ME are *clack*, *flack*, *hack*, *kack*, *peck*, *smack*, *snack*, *zap*, *zap*, *whop*, *pop*, *slip*, *clap*, *flap*, *chip*, *nap*, *pat*, *hit*, *fit*. More recent are *tick* 1440, *snap* 1495, *quip* 1532, *click* 1581, *quack* 1617, *slap* 1632, *whack* 1719, *plap* 1833, *plap* 1846.

7.9. /b/, /d/, /g/, phonetically the voiced counterparts of the preceding group, are semantically also variants of the preceding symbols. The sharpness of the noise resp. the impact is dulled, blunted, softened, and the movement is either slowed down or drawn out. These voiced variants are less frequent than the voiceless plosives. From OE is recorded dial. *trod* sb 'tread', ME are *throb*, *bob* (cp. *pop*), *dab* (cp. *tap*), *tug* (cp. *tuck*), obs. *nib* 'pinch' (cp. *nip*). Newer are *pod* 1530 'prod', *pod* 1562, *pad* 1594 'dull sound of steps' (cp. *pat*), *thud* 1513, *did* 'dab' 1609, dial. *dad* 'beat' 1661, *clug* 'sound of oil engine when running slowly' (var. of *chuck*).

Opposition of voiced and voiceless final is not, however, a regular derivational pattern.

7.10. /m/, /n/, /ŋ/ at the end or in the middle of a word express continuous vibrating sounds. OE are *hunder* (OE *punor*), arch. *chirn* (OE *cyrnan*) 'roar, chatter, warble', *hurnian* 'whine', *whine* (in OE only used for the whizzing noise of an arrow), *groan*, *grunt*, *sign*. ME are *hurn*, *gruntle*, *rumble*, obs. *bumble* 'buzz, boom', *clink*, *ink*, *inkle*, *inkle*, *chime*, *dindle* (now So) 'vibrating sound or movement'. Later are *boom* 1440, *ting* 1495, *tang* 1556, *tuang* 1542, *bang* 1550, *clang* 1576, *chink* 1581, *ding* 1582 in sense 'speak with wearying reiteration', *whimper* 1513, *drum* 1541, *thrum* 1553, *grumble* 1586, *ping* 1856 (said of a rifle-bullet, a mosquito etc.), *gom-gom* 'machine-gun' 1899.

In *dangle* 1530 and *dangle* 1590 the sense 'move to and fro' etc. is obviously derived from the idea of the moving bell which sounds *ding-dong*. The ablaut form *dangle-dangle* is first quoted 1598 but may be older.

7.11. /l/ in the middle or at the end of a word imitates and symbolizes continuously vibrating sounds. The frequency of vibration is, however, considerably lesser than that of the /z/ symbol. OE are *chik* (OE *cearican* 'grate, creek, croak'), ME are *chirp*, *chirt* (So), *snore*, *snort*. Then come *part* 1586, *chirrup* 1579, *pur* 1601, *chirr* 'trill like a grasshopper' 1639. Cp. also *sf. er*.

7.12. /l/ at the end of a word symbolizes prolongation, continuation and is chiefly developed in *sf. -le*, but is also found in simple words such as *wail*, *quale* 'shimper', *warble*, *trill*, *goddle*, *part*, *chirt* 'warble' (So), *baul*, *meul*.

7.13. /z/ at the end of a word imitates low toned noises characterized by high frequency vibration, as streaming air, the sound made by a bee, by an approaching grenade, an arrow, and in a few words the hissing sound of sputtering fat or oil. The symbol is apparently not older than ME (OE *hurnian* means 'whine', *hurnian* 'cough'). ME is *buzz*. Later are *whetsee* 1460, *whiz* 1547, *fizzle* 1532, *drizzle* 1543, *huzz* 'buzz' 1555, *fuzz* 'loose volatile matter' (as in *fuzz-ball*: the /z/ is expressive of the whirled about little particles), *fizz* 1665, *sizzle* 1603, *fizz* 1835, *fizzle* 1839.

7.14. /s/ is a weak symbol. *Kiss* is recorded from OE while *hiss* and *miss* are ME. Newer is *buss* 'kiss' 1570 (similar words in other languages, as *L bastare*, *G küssen*, *G dial. Busserl*, *Tu* (= Persian) *guseh*).

7.15. /ʃ/ in final position after a short vowel imitates the voluminous sound of rushing air, gushing water, and hence is used expressively for violent movements, esp. blows which are supposed to be accompanied by a rush of

air. The symbol is not older than ME. The chief forms which occur are /eɪs/, ʌs, aʃ, iʃ/, but we have /u/ in *woosh*. ME are *marsh, dash, crash, flash, gush, flush, bluish, crush, rush*. Then come *plash* 1513, *quash* 1496, *slash* 1548, *clash* 1500, *splash* 1715, *smash* 1778, *squash* 1565, *squish* 1647, *swish* 1756, *slush* 1814, *whoosh* 'sound of something rushing through the air' 1856.

7. 16. The role of the vowels is different from that of the consonants. In direct sound imitation the vowel denotes the pitch, volume, timbre, of the imitated sound. But whether the sound is sharp, cutting, vibrating etc. is indicated by the following consonants.

A high (or thin) tone is rendered by /i/, as in *hiss, swish, whimper, whiney, chick, clip, clink, tick, ting, titter*.

Low pitch is rendered by back vowels, as by /ɒ/ or /ɔ/ in *knock, blob, pop, plopp, flop, plod* / *baud, roar, snore, snort, saw*, by /o/ in *moon, groan*, by /u/ in *hoot, toot, boom, coo, whoop, whoosh, croon, tu-shoo* 'call of an owl', by /əʊ/ in *howl, gowl*.

Indistinct low pitch is expressed by /ʌ/, as in *hum, drum, thrum, bump, plump, flump, bubble, grunt, grumble, gulp, guggle, puff, gush*.

Compare also OE *cūwan* 'caw', *grēman* 'groan', ME *hoot* (= /o/) 'hoot', *hūm* (= /u/) 'hum', *howl* (= /u/) 'howl'.

Clear and distinct sharp medium sounds are expressed by /æ/ (= OE, ME /a/), as in *bang, tang, twang, rap, tarp, slap, pad, crack, clatter, pater, cackle, crash, clash*.

Volume and length of a sound are expressed by a lengthened vowel or diphthong: *hoot, toot, boom, coo* / *moan, groan, drone* / *whine, chime* / *snore, snort, bawl, can, roar, drawl* / *growl, howl, gowl*.

Short noises are rendered by short vowels (see preceding word lists). The sounds occurring today are [e, ɛ, ɪ, ʉ, a]. The EMOE sound [ɪr] has in PE developed into [ɜ(r)] and is no longer expressive of sound. Shortness of the vowel [ɪ] sometimes connotes thinness, as in *cling, tink* a.o. Pitch and volume of sound meet here.

7. 17. With verbs of movement we observe the following tendencies: quick, rapid movement usually goes with short vowels, slow movement goes with long vowels. It is impossible, however, to affirm anything as to the difference between the vowels.

Short vowels, chiefly in combination with final plosives, are used to express rapid movement, as in *hop, hobble, skip, snap, snack, snatch*. Cp. also the above lists of sound words in which many verbs denote sound as well as movement: *tap, rap, pop, plopp, flop* etc.

Apparent exceptions are verbs with the suffix *-er* and *-le*, such as *patter, titter, sizzle, tickle*. The *sfs* express repetition, continuation of short, rapid movements, though secondarily the idea of slowness or length may arise.

Long vowels go with slow or long movement, as in *flour, float, fleet* (cp. *fit* which is obviously its counterpart though it is much more modern), *teeler* (cp. *titter*), *slide, glide*. The long vowels are hardly accidental. We may 'pull', but not 'draw' with jerks. *Water seeps* (or *sipes*, dial.), and *seep, sipe* are perhaps nothing but the lengthened counterparts of *step*, though *seep* is only used intransitively. The preceding observations naturally apply only to such words

as were presumably coined symbolically. I stress this just to counter the possible argument that long vowel is not necessarily combined with drawn out movement (as *more, throw* etc.) resp. short vowel with short, quick movement (as *look, lift* etc.).

7. 18. The imitative principle is often misunderstood or misrepresented. It is commonly thought that an onomatopoeia should be the exact rendering of the corresponding noise. The explanations as to the differences in languages is that "our speech organs are not capable of giving a perfect imitation of all 'articulated sounds' and that therefore "the choice of speech sounds is to a certain extent accidental" (Je La 20. 3, a little differently Grammont TP 377). This is, of course, right, but only partly. It overlooks the fact that an onomatopoeia is not a mere imitation of a sound.

7. 19. Here it is necessary to touch on a question that has been much discussed. Ferdinand de Saussure¹ maintains that the sign is arbitrary, i.e. it is not motivated by the significate, that onomatopoeias are never organic elements of a linguistic system, that they are few in number, and that their coning is to a certain extent arbitrary as well. Charles Bally² modifies Saussure's standpoint, admitting the 'signe motivé par le signifié' for onomatopoeias. This means that an onomatopoeia, say *crash*, evokes the idea of the characteristic noise implied by the word *crash*. This kind of motivation will hardly be called in question, but it has no bearing on word-formation. The point that interests us in wf is to know which particular phonemes are used in a language for the coning of words and what the symbolic value of the respective phonemes is. This will lead us to the question whether a certain idea may not necessarily call for a certain sound; in other words, we will want to know whether there is no motivation of the sign by the significate. I have discussed this point in a paper 'L'étude des onomatopées'³ and tried to show that while certain morphemes are understandable in a certain linguistic system only, there are others which in slight variants are used in many languages.

The foregoing remarks upon symbols and their connection with sound and movement have already shown that to a certain quality of sound there necessarily corresponds a certain linguistic symbol. Vibrating noises can be rendered by nasals, *r* or *z* only, while anything else as a symbol is excluded. A hissing sound will invariably be rendered by some *s* sound, and so on.

7. 20. Onomatopoeias are not coined haphazardly. Their composition is determined by the system of the language to which they belong, which partly accounts for the differences of words for the same concept in different languages. Such onomatopoeias have usually one or more elements in common (E *whisper*, G *flüstern*, Tu *fisilamak*, L *sussurare* etc.) which are those that have imitative character. But there are also elements which differ from one language to another. As every language has its own phonological system, onomatopoeic coning is largely dependent on the phonemes and phonemic combinations of the language. Words with the initial symbol /hw/ which are frequent in

¹ F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, 101—102.

² Ch. Bally, *Linguistique générale et linguistique française*, 127—139, Bern 1944.

³ *Dialogues* I. 124ff. Publication de la Faculté des Lettres d'Istanbul 1949.

English would be impossible in French or German, words with initial /kn/ which are frequent in German are no longer possible in English, and so on.

7. 21. An onomatopoeic word is a compound of several symbolic elements. Take the word *bang*, for instance: the /æ/ renders the sound the slamming of the door causes, the /ŋ/ is imitative of the vibration of the air following it. The /b/ is expressive of the bluntness of the explosive sound (a sharp sound would have been introduced by a /p/, cp. G *päng-päng* 'sound of rifle-shooting'). The initial symbols place a word in a certain semantic group, which is that of the 'blow' class in our case. Words without an introductory symbol, i.e. onomatopoeias which contain one element only, are rare. In Turkish, the crowing of the cock is rendered by /dötrö:/, in German, the braying of the jack ass is expressed by /i-a/.

7. 22. What we call symbols is another aspect of what is traditionally termed the question of roots. There are many IE or Germanic 'roots', in dictionaries listed as **glim*, **glim*, **glis*, **glant* etc., etc. I have preferred not to speak of roots but of symbols, i.e. I have split up the roots into their components because in my opinion roots are not indivisible units, but are composites just as much as *fl-ash*, *fl-ick*, with modification of the vowels or the consonants.

7. 23. New words may be derived by internal change, chiefly ablaut alternation (as *tip* from *tap*). The principal method, however, is that of symbol blending. The analysis of the expressive values of various speech sounds as given above (7. 21) should not lead us to think that an expressive word is formed by just putting together several expressive sounds. As a matter of fact, it is only two morphemic elements that play a relevant part: the initial symbol, i.e. the consonant(s) preceding the vowel, and the final symbol, i.e. the vowel and the final consonant(s).

7. 24. If we take the word *flap* 'dare' 1594, we find that its coining was suggested on the one hand by other words with the initial morpheme (here called 'symbol') *fl*-, as *flick*, *flit*, *flap*, *flash* (all ME) and on the other hand by words with the final symbol *-ip*, as *hop* 'hop' 1250, *skip* 1300, *whip*, orig. 'move the wings briskly' 1250, *rip* 1477, all expressive of brisk, quick movement. Through several of the simple symbols appeal to us at first sight to be imitative or expressive, it should be noted that most simple symbols, and all compound symbols, are nothing a priori, but have developed morphemic character from the more or less accidental grouping of semantically related words. In *fl*- there is nothing to suggest flying or flowing movement, but in the co-existence of *flou*, *flæd*, *flutter*, *fly*, *flæ*, *float* (all OE) lies the germ of all the new words expressive of movement which were coined in ME. The symbol *-ip*, through the short vowel combined with the following plosive, is in itself a more convincing expression of the concept 'brisk movement'. But this is a mere coincidence and does not involve a principle.

7. 25. Eugene Nida¹ rejects the morphemic value of such initials as *sl*, *fl* on the ground that they do not occur . . . with forms which occur in other com-

¹ E. Nida, *Morphology*. The descriptive analysis of words. Ann Arbor. University of Michigan Press 1949, p. 61.

binations. The argument holds good insofar as, indeed, symbols have not the standing of words, prefixes or suffixes which are full morphemes and combine into bimorphemic units (*tea-pot*, *un-do*, *child-hood*). Symbols differ from full morphemes in that they combine into units which are not syntagmas in a grammatical sense, but monemes (one-morpheme words). This is a feature that expressive words have in common with other types which are usually treated in word-formation: blending of non-expressive words (type *model* from *motorist hotel*) and manufactured words (type *NATO* from North Atlantic Treaty Organization). This reservation granted, it is hardly possible to deny the morphemic character of expressive symbols. Zellig S. Harris¹ seems inclined to admit them on account of meaning correlation in some words, but basically he holds the same argument Nida uses. A paper by Dwight L. Bolinger² is much nearer the ideas set forth here. But while I regard morphemes as Saussurean signs, i.e. phonetic-semantic entities, and restrict the morphemic character of initials and finals to symbol-coined words, Bolinger carries the principle much farther, tentatively considering as morphematically related also such words as *sh/utter* and *m/utter* (with the same morpheme *u*), as he calls it, phonestheme *utter*), *b/low*, *b/reak*, and *b/reat* (with the morpheme *b*). On the other hand, as he has not limited the morpheme character of such elements to expressive words, he finally sees himself compelled to dismiss these elements from strict morphematic analysis. The initial symbol must be considered the determinant while the final symbol is the determinatum.

7. 26. According to whether the initial (as /fl/) or the final (as /np/) is considered, symbolic coinings form an alternative or a riming group. We shall treat the initial symbols first. As pointed out in 7. 24, they are morphemes occurring with a group of semantically related words. The initial /bl/, for instance, introduces many words that stand for the idea 'blow, swell': /sp/ is initial with many words expressive of the idea 'spit, reject', and so on. Some of the symbols are obviously of imitative origin, as /b, p, m/ which partly stand for the opening of the mouth or the position of the lips; /g, k, hw/. Others seem to be of emotionally expressive origin as /ts/, /dz/, (partly) /p, f, m/. With the majority of symbols, however, the morphemic value appears to be the secondary result of grouping, as we have already pointed out.

General remarks on initial symbols

7. 27. The *s*-groups need special mention here. Absence or presence of initial *s* before liquids and stops seems to connect a few words in the Indo-European languages. *E slime* and its Germanic cognates are probably related to *L linnus*, *G schmelzen* (OHG, MHG *smelzen*) and its cognates apparently belong together with *E melt*. *E smelt* 'melt', first recorded 1543, may be a loan from Dutch, but it may equally well represent a more recent variant of *melt*. Old

¹ Zellig S. Harris, *Methods in structural linguistics*. Univ. of Chicago Press. Second Impression 1955, 177—178 and 193—194.

² Dwight L. Bolinger, *Rime, Assonance, and Morpheme Analysis*. Word 6. 117ff. 1950. Cf. also Morton W. Bloomfield, *Final root-forming morphemes*, *American Speech* XXXVIII. 158—164, 1953.

Greek had *myxōn* beside *myxon*, *myxraina* beside *myraina* (both fish names), *myxizō* beside *myxizō* 'anoint, perfume', *smilax* beside *milax* 'yew tree', *mygeros* beside *mogeros* 'miserable, wretched', *smitros* beside *mictros* 'small, little' (the derivative *smitros* 'miser, niggard' has no by-form without *s*). We know nothing about the origin of the variation. The *s* may originally have been imitative of the sound accompanying a movement (cf. *med/smed* where the process of fusing metal, for instance, would suggest such an idea). One might also think of an emotively expressive origin (cf. *mogeros* / *mygeros* and *mictros* / *smictros*). For English example of word pairs see below 7.83.

7.28. The initial symbols sometimes overlap as do other morphemes. This is especially so when the final symbol is particularly strong. For the concept 'trifle' we have *fiddle*, *triddle*, *quiddle* (with their variants *peddle* and *quiddle*), and *quiddle*, all recorded in the 16th century. The basis may be *fiddle* which attracted the otherwise unexplainable variants. It will be noted, anyhow, that the final symbols, as containing the vowel, are the real 'roots' while the initial symbols have the modifying character which prefixes have with radicals. This will be more clearly understood in the chapter on final symbols.

7.29. Sound-imitative initial symbols frequently have counterparts in other languages: /b/ occurs in OGr *bē* 'the bleating baa of sheep', *bomōs* 'dull noise', L *bombus* 'dull noise' (hence the various 'bomb' words), *bāzire* 'bleat', LL *bombitare* 'hum', ML *boulare*, F *béler* 'bleat', *bombou* 'cry of the owl', *bounn* 'sound of a drum', *bondier* (in Old French = 'resound'), G *burn*, *buns*, *bimmeln* etc. Initial /t, d/ for the concept 'strike aganist' is frequent in many languages, cp. the widely used root *tok* 'strike' in the Romance languages (see Romanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch, von W. Meyer-Lübke, s.v. *tok*), in Turkish the same root occurs in *tolmak* 'knocker' and other words. Initial /k/ with words denoting vocal and other noises is found in OGr *kōzō* 'cluck, click' and other variations of the 'root' *kal* (*kaleō*, *klaō*, *klezō* etc.), L *clamo*, *clangor*, LL *clacca* 'cluck', LL *cloppus* 'name' (apparently from the clapping noise of the limping foot), F *claque* (15th c.), *die-clac* 'clack', *clapper* 'clap', *clapet* 'kind of valve' (1517), G *klack*, *klapp*, *klapp-klapp*, *klatschen* etc. The initial /kr/ also has counterparts in other languages: OGr *krazō* 'scream', *kriō* 'scream, shriek, crack', *krōtalon* 'braggart, a rattle instrument', L *crepare*, **criare* (= F *crier*), F *croquer* 1546, *crie-crac* 'noise of breaking or tearing something' 1520, *cri-cri* = *criquet* 'grasshopper' (12th c.), *croasser* 'croak' 1564, *cri-cri* 'jarring violin', G *krachen*, *kreischen* etc.

7.30. Many of the symbols go back to OE and correspond to symbols in cognate Germanic languages. On the other hand, the symbolic words we use today are chiefly ME or later. This may be so because traditional OE literature refrained from handing down such popular or colloquial words, or just because there were not more in OE. This cannot be decided with certainty. It cannot, however, be denied that present-day speech habits favor such coinings very much. There is the recent AE word *stash away* 'hide away' which is obviously from *stow*, *stach* plus *dash*. The OED has another *stash* 'stop abruptly' 1811, obviously blended from *st* (*op*) and (*d*)*ash*. The initial /sp/ is already Indo-European with words denoting 'spit, reject' (L *spuo*, OHG *spiuwan*, Gothic

spiuwan, OE *spiuwan*), but /spl/ is much later. Through the blending of *sputter* and *plash* we get the word *splutter* 1677 which was later followed by *plash* 1715 and *splutter* 1784.

7.31. To deny the word forming character of initial symbols is hardly possible. Many of the words listed under the respective symbols are usually considered as of uncertain or obscure origin. Now, I am not pretending to furnish a method by which everything unknown is explained as 'symbol-blending'. But if we consider how many words suggestive of the same idea are characterized by the same symbol, it is impossible to deny that the coinage was prompted by the symbol. To say that an initial may introduce a lot of other ideas would not be to the point. Initial *sp* is certainly found in *speed*, *spin*, *spot*, *span* etc. where the idea of symbol is absent. But then, /sw/ in *shout*, *haul*, *goal* is suggestive of a long-drawn and loud sound while in *house*, *mouse*, *loud* etc. there is no such implication. There is no common semantic feature in *speed*, *spin*, *spot*, *span* whereas words with the symbol /sp/ have a common semantic denominator.

Initial symbols

7.32. /p/ is the voiceless variant of /b/. Directly imitative of the parting of the lips in the rendering of some vocal sounds, it may also be used for strictly explosive vocal sounds, and finally be expressive of explosive noises in general. OE are *pyllan* 'puff', *peinan* 'pound' (apparently from the sound), *piprian* 'blow the pipe'. Later are *pipe* 1250 = *peep* 1460 'cry of young birds', *puff* 1225, *pur* 1620, *puwl* (said of a brook) 1586, *pipit* (a bird) 1768, *pop* 1386, dial. *paish* 1362, *pat* 'dab' 1400 sb (vb = 1567), *patter* 1394, orig. 'reite prayers', representing *pater* = *pateroster*, but at the same time an onomatopoeia, *panng* 1526 (obviously symbolic for 'shot' — like *pann*, cp. G *ping* for the sound of a rifle shot), *pad* 'dull sound of steps' 1594 (obviously a variant of *pat* and *bat*), *pitler* dial. 'make small sounds, as a grasshopper' 1592, *ping* 1886, *ping-pong* 1900, *pom-pom* 'machine gun' 1899.

Words denoting movement in which the original character of sound-imitation has more or less disappeared are *pick* (OE in sense 'to puncture'), *peck* 1382, and *pop* 1386.

The sound [p] is emotionally expressive in *piddle* 'trifle' 1545. The word is probably a variant of *fiddle* which is recorded with the same sense in 1530. Abiant variants are *peddle* (in the now obsolete sense 'trifle'), and *peddle* 'trifle, dally' 1545.

7.33. /pl/ is found with several words conveying the idea of dull impact, chiefly in connection with water. The symbol does not seem to be older than ME: *plung* 13...; (*plunge* 1374 is fr. OF *plungier* which is itself partly onomatopoeic), *plash* 1513, *plod* 'walk heavily' 1562, *plop* 'drop into water without splashing' 1833 = *plap* 1846. AE is *plodge* 'walk in mud or water, plunge' (ADD) which is obviously a blend of *plod* and *plunge*. *Pluff* 'strong puff' 1663 is Scotch.

7.34. /pr/ is the initial symbol of a number of words with the basic meaning 'prick', as *prick* OE, *prickle* in obs. sense 'a thing to prick with' OE, *prong*

'totter' (ADD), all words expressive of unsteady movement. No vb **tot* is recorded in OED, but there is an adj *totty* 'unsteady, shaky'.

7.42. /tr/ introduces a number of words with the basic idea 'tread'. OE are *tread*, *trod* sb, *trap* (prob. orig. sound imitative). Later we have *tramp* 1388, *trample* 1382, *trip* 1386 (the OED gives OE *triper*, *triper* as its etymon), the word is prob. nothing but the ablaut variant of *trap*, as the sense 'cause to fall' also points out), *troll* 1377 'stroll', *trudge* 1547. *Trot* is app. OE *troter*.

7.43. /st/ is an old IE symbol that has formed many words with the basic idea 'stand' and 'step' which are common Indo-European property (OGr root *sta-*, L root *sta-* etc., in English represented by such words as *stand*, *step*, *stead*, *stay* etc.). Apart from this common stock, English has only a few new formations, as *stumble* 1325 (see *-umble* 7.81), *stamp* 1200 with variant *skomp* (the word is not recorded in OE, but the ablaut form *stempan* 'stamp' is). Both words are obviously mere sound imitations with the symbol /st/, and as the initial symbol is common in Indo-European languages, it is no wonder that parallel words should be found in so many languages; see the entry *stamp* in the OED. The OED establishes asterisked OTeut. forms for the word. Newer are *stodge* 'stuff, gorge' 1674 (for the symbolic value of *-odge* see *-udge*), *stash* (*st-* plus *-ash*), AE (H. Melville a.o.). OED has another *stask* 'stop abruptly' 1811 which is a blend of *st(ay, stop)* plus *-ash*.

7.44. /str/ forms several groups with the initial: the 'stride' group is represented by *straddle* 1565 = dial. *strodde* 1607, perh. ablaut variants of *striddle* 'straddle' etc. 1530 (the latter is either a frequ. of *stride* or back-derived from *stridding*), *stroll* 1603 (the second element is that of *roll*, *loll* etc.).

Struggle 1386 is prob. a blend suggested by *strive* and obs. *tugle* 'tug'. *Strum* 1775 was suggested by *strike*, while the final is that of *drum*, *thrum*.

7.45. /d/ introduces words denoting the sound produced by a stroke against a body. The sounds, however, are not sharp or smart as with /t/ words. Exs are *din* OE, *dash* 1290, orig. 'strike, smash', *damp* 'fall heavily' 1300, *dab* 'soft blow' 1300 (cp. *tap*), its frequ. *dabble* 1557 'paddle, bespatter' (sense influenced by *drabble*), the ablaut variants *dib* 1609, *dibble* 1622, arch. *ding* 'knock, hammer' 1300, *ding-dong* 1560, dial. *dod* 'beat' 1661.

Like /t/, initial /d/ is found with a few words expressive of unsteady movement which are often variants of /t/ words: north. E dial. *diddler* 1375 'quake, quiver' = dial. *dither* 1649 = *diddle* 1632, its ablaut variant *dodder* 1617, dial. *daddie* 'walk totteringly' 1787 = STE *doddle* 1653.

As the *ding-dong* of the bell is connected with the idea of swinging movement, the formation of words suggestive of swinging movement is made possible: *dangle* 1590, *dandle* 'move lightly up and down' 1530 (cp. MF *dancin* 'tittle bell' and *se dandiner* 'swing about one's body, swagger').

In *dingle* 1440 'tinkle; ring; tingle (as with cold or pain)' = *dingle* 1573 there is only the idea of sound, resembling the one caused by the ringing of a bell.

7.46. /dr/ introduces many words with the basic meanings 'drop' and 'drive', as OE *dræosan* and *dræsan* 'fall', *dræimian* 'drain', *dragan* 'drag', *dreifian* 'drive', *drōs* 'dross', *draught*, *dravn*, *drive*, *drop*, *drīp*, *drain* (all OE).

Drop 1300 and *drags* 1300 are prob. Norse words, *drag* 1440 may be a northern English variant of *dravn*. *Druggle* 1513 is the frequentative of *drag* with the semantic influence of *drabble* 1400 (which seems to be a loan from Low German). Variants of *drop* are *drīb* 1523 (obs. as a vb, but used as sb), *dribble* 1565, *drizzle* 1821. With another final we have the symbol in *drizzle* 1543. *Drown* 1300 may come from the /dr/ of *drink*, *drench* and *down*.

The symbol is seldom used with words denoting sound. There is OE *dræam* 'music, melody' (—1330). Modern are *drum* 1540, *drawl* 1597 (at the same time suggesting *draw* and the final symbol *-awl*), the OED assumes Du or Low German origin).

Drool 'drive!' 1847 is explained as a 'contracted form of *drive!*' (OED), but the explanation does not sound convincing. I have none to offer myself.

7.47. /k/ is chiefly found with words denoting vocal sounds, as in the Indo-European root, *kal*, *kla* (OGr *kalō*, L *clamo* etc.). OE are *call*, *cow* (after the sound), *kiss*. OE *cēo* 'jackdaw' is now *chough* and means 'crow'. More recent words are *cackle* 1225, *cough* 1325, *cuckoo* 1240 (imitates the cry of the bird. The word need not be considered a loan from French, as the OED has it; it was coined anew from OE *geac* as was G *Kuckuck* fr. OHG *gauh*, MHG *gouch*), *cow* 1589, *cow* 1670. In north. E dialects we find /k/ (instead of southern [ts]) in *knick* 'gasp for breath' fr. OE *cincian*, *kinkecough* 'whooping-cough'.

For dial. *cack* 1436 the OED assumes L *cacare* as the etymon. Kluge (EW) derives G *kackern* from L *cacare*, too, as a jocular student's word. But the word is found in German dialects, and Modern Greek has *kaka* 'excrements'. Are all these words from Latin?

There are a few words denoting movement: *cuff* 'strike with the fist or with the open hand, buffet' 1530 (with the *-uff* of *buff*, 'blow, buffet', cp. G *knuffen*, *puffen* 'prod'; the OED terms the word 'of uncertain origin'; Weckley derives it from F *coiffer*), *kick* 1380 (with the *-ick* of *pick*, *prick*, perhaps at the same time imitative of sound: the first instances of OED occur in such phrases as *kick against the spur* and *kick against the prickle*). The word *cut* (first rec. 1275) is unexplained. Various etymologies have been suggested. It is prob. a symbolic word. Quite similar is the Tu onomatopoeia for the sound of scissors cutting something: *kat kat* (s represents a high back unrounded sound). There is no need to assume an OTeut. root **kut-*, **kot-* (OED).

7.48. /kl/ is a frequent initial with words denoting sound. OE are *clippian* 'call', *clarian* 'clatter', OE *clage* 'bell' probably belongs here, too. Newer are *clack* 1250, *clap* 1225, *cluck* 1481, *clash* 1500, *click* 1581, *clatter* 1556 (var. of *clatter*), *clang* 1576, *clank* 1614, *clamber*, *clamor* 'bell-ringing' 1611, *clam* 'clang of bells' 1674, *clump* 'tread heavily' 1665, *clink-clank* 1790, *clump* 1808 (dial. var. of *clump*), *clump* 'clump' (ADD), *clomp* 'sound of a cork drawn from a bottle' 1848. *Clip* 'cut' 1200 denotes movement after the accompanying sound.

7.49. /kr/ introduces words denoting jarring, harsh, or grating sounds or twisted movement or position. *Crow*, *crane*, and *crack* go back to OE. Later are *creak* 1325, obs. *crook* 'croak' 1325, *crake* 1386, *crash* 1398, *crash* 1400, *croak* 1460, *crackle* 1500, *crick-crack* 'repeated sharp sound' 1565, obs. *crank*

'utter a hoarse, harsh cry' (said of birds) 1565, *crick* 'sound of a grasshopper or the like' 1601, obs. *crunkle* 'cry like a crane' (freq. of *crunkle*) 1611, *crump* 'noise horses or pigs make when eating' 1646, *crunch* (with AE dial. var. *crunch*, *cronch*) 1801, *crank* 'make a jarring or grating sound' 1827, *crank* 'cry of the wild goose' 1878 AE, *crumb* 'sound of bursting bomb or shell' (World War II).

/kr/ is a widespread Germanic initial for words with the basic meaning 'twisted, distorted, crooked' (G *krampt*, *krumm* etc., Du *krampt*, *kram* etc., etc.). OE are *cringan*, *crincan* 'draw oneself together spasmodically', *crank* (as in *crank-steer*). There appear to be two 'roots': *cr-nk* and *cr-mp* in several variants. The word *crumpled* 'crooked, curled' is recorded from 1300 (the full verb occurs in the 16th c. only), obs. *crump* 'curl up' is quoted 1325 and is obviously a variant of *cramp* 1374 (for which the OED, quite unnecessarily, assumes OE *crampe* as the etymon, though the word is itself a loan from L(G)). Another variant is *crimp* 1398 'shrink, curl'. The root *cr-nk* is represented by the before-mentioned *crank*, *cringan*, *crincan*, *cränge* 1225, orig. 'contract the muscles', the predecessor of *cringe* (appearing in the 16th c. only), *crinkle* 1385 with dial. var. *crumkle* 1400, *crankle* 'run zigzag' 1594, *crinkle-crinkle* 'wind in and out' 1598, *Crick* 'spasm of the muscles' 1440 contains the same semantic basis, but has as a second element *-ick* (of *prick*, *pick* etc.) which suggests sharp suddenness.

The idea of twisted movement probably also underlies *creep* OE (Kluge, EW s.v. *kriechen* has the same idea), which was followed by *crawl* 1300 (with the final symbol of *sprawl* (the OED suggests Norse origin), *crowl* 1394 (may be a blend of /kr/ and *couch*). *Crisp* 'curl, twist' is, however, L *crispus* which passed into OE as adj *crisp* and is first attested as a vb in 1340.

7. 50. /sk/ is frequent with verbs implying quick, brisk movement, as *scour* 'rush violently', *skap*, *skit* 'carper, leaper', obs. *scope* 'skip', *scuttle*, *scudde*, *scud*, *scutter*, *soot*, (*heller*-) *skeller*, *skeddiddle*, *scamper*. But the origin and etymology of these words is too uncertain to allow any conclusions as to the word-forming force of /sk/ in English.

English cognates are prob. *skirr* 'run away hastily' 1548 (/sk/ plus *-irr*), *scurry* 1810 (/sk/ plus *-urry*), *scuffle* 'scrambling fight, tussle' 1579 (/sk/ plus *ruffle*, *shuffle*). The OED supposes phonetic symbolism in *scud*; but final /d/ is not connected with the idea of briskness; we should expect a /t/ instead.

7. 51. /skr/ is an initial symbol with words denoting unpleasant sounds or irregular movement. Partly a variant of /kr/, it is OE. Unlike /sk/, however, which resulted in ME [ʃ], [skr] does not everywhere seem to have developed into [ʃr], as several word pairs with [skr] and [ʃr] exist in ME and ModE: e.g. *scree/shrew* (dial.) fr. OE *scraua*, ME *screep*/*schreape* fr. OE *scrapan* 'scrape' (see OED s.v. *scr-*). *Schrick* 'screach, shriek' is not recorded before 1250, but prob. repr. OE **scrice* (*e*) *jan* (as *ditch* fr. *clucc* (*e*) *jan*), with the roots /kr.k/, /skr.k/, cp. OHG *scriuan* = MHG *schriuen* and MHG *kriechen* 'screach, shriek'. A variant of *scrish* is *scrath* 1474. Other words are *screeam* 1200 (the /m/ is symbolic of the vibrating continuation of the sound; there is also the variant *shream* 1230), *screak* dial. 'screach' 1500 (prob. a variant of *creak*, not 'a. ON. *shrákja*' as the OED has it), *screech* 1560 (another variant of *scrish*), obs. *scranach*

'crunch' 1620, with AE dial. variant *scrunch* (ADD), *scroop* 'creek, squeak' 1787 (/skr/ plus *whoop*).

Words denoting movement (with the basis *scrape*, *scratch*) are prob. orig. imitative of sound, as OE *scrapian*, *scrapan* 'scrape', obs. *scrud* 1225 'scratch at a p.' (cp. OHG *kratzon* = G *kratzen* 'scratch'). *Scratch* 1474 is /skr/ plus *crack* 'scratch' (now obs., 1320); *scrud* 1380, orig. 'sprawl' is prob., as the OED also thinks, a variant of *crud*; *scrub* 1595 is the symbol plus *rub*; *scramble* 1586 may be the symbol plus *amble*; *scribble* 'wriggle, struggle' 1806 shows the symbol blended with *wriggle*. *Scribble* 1465 may in part be ML *scribillare*, but its adoption was certainly prompted by the symbolic value of /skr/. Its abiant variant is *scrabble* 'scribble, scrawl' 1537. *Scrawl* in sense 'scribble' etc. (1611) is obviously influenced by them (the OED quotes *scrawl* 'scribble' as a separate verb, though leaving the possibility of identity open).

7. 52. /g/ occurs almost only with words denoting guttural sounds or such as resemble guttural sounds. It is therefore chiefly found before velar vowels. *Gulch* 'swallow or devour greedily' (now obs. in StE) is not recorded before 1225 but is prob. older; the *-ch* seems to point to earlier *-chan*. Later are *gulp* 14.., *gush* 1400, *gaggle* 1399, its abiant variant *giggle* 1509, *gobbler* 'faber' 1577, *gobble* 1680 (said of a turkey cock), *gurgle* 1562 = *gaggle* 1611, *gulle* 'eat greedily' 1654, *guzzle* 'swallow liquor greedily' 1576, *gargle* 1527 (may be infl. by F *gargouiller*). *Gulch* 'ravine, cleft' AE 1850 may be the same as *gulch* vb, the common denominator being that of 'swallow up'. *God sb* 'talk' 1681 and its dial. var. *god* 1695 are prob. derived from *gobble*; whether *god* 'mouth' 1550 is the same word or fr. Gaelic or Irish *god* 'beak, mouth' (OED) is uncertain. *Guff* 'puff, whiff' 1825 is one of the many *-uff* variants, while *guffaw* 1720 with the unusual final sound, is orig. Scotch. *Gong* 1600 is a Malay word.

7. 53. /gl/ is an initial with words expressive of the idea 'light, shine', as *glass*, *gleam*, *gleed* 'live coal', *glisten*, *glow* OE, OE *glōm* 'twilight of the evening', *glare*, *glent* 'gleam, shine', *glimmer*, *glimpse*, *glisken*, arch. *glister*, *glitter*, *glim* 'shine, gleam', *glood*, *gloom*, *gloss*. I am not trying to explain these words which are based on common Germanic "roots" *gl-m*, *gl-t*, *gl-s* with various vowels), but only want to point out the phenomenon of the common initial of the supposed "roots". As an English word-forming element we have /gl/ in 'look' words: obs. *glaze* 1601 (fr. *gaze* plus *glare*, *glance*), *glint* 1440 as the abiant variant of *glent* 13.., *glower* 1500 (*glow*, *glare*, *glance* plus *lower*), *glum* 'look sullen' 1480 as a prob. abiant variant of *gloom* 'look sullen' 13..

7. 54. /gr/ is prob. of sound-imitative origin with words denoting deep-toned, grumbling, inimical or menacing noises, as occurring in OE *grillan* 'give a harsh sound', *grin*, *grunt*, adj *grin* and obs. *grinly* (OE). Later are *growl* (Wycl.), *grumble* 1460, *grumble* 1586, *gruff* 1533 (prob. the symbol plus *-uff* though the word is orig. spelt *grof*). The symbol has been strengthened by loans such as *groin* 1300 (OE *grogner*, *grogner*), *grutch* 1225 (OE *grouchen*). A variant of the latter is the now usual *grudge* 'grumble' 1450. *Grun* 'glum, harsh' 1640 is the symbol blended with *glum*. The word *grouse* 'grumble' 1892, orig. military slang, is unexplained.

The symbol occurs in other languages as well, as in F *grommeler*, *grogner*, *grinder*, *griner*, G *grell*, *greinen*, *grollen* (see KLEW under these words).

Whether the root *gr-p* 'grip' etc. has imitative origin (perhaps after the menacing noise accompanying the action) cannot be decided. MOE variants of *grin*, *gripe*, *grope* (OE) are *grab* 1589, *grabble* 1579, *grapple* 1530. An early variant of another kind is *grasp* 1382, obviously metathetic from **graps*, with the *s* we have also in *gimpe* fr. *glim* (cp. G *klapsen*, *kapsen*, dial. *grapsen* 'grasp').

7. 55. /f/ has not formed any larger group of semantically connected words. It is prob. imitative in *fant* 1250 (with many cognates in other Germanic languages), which was followed by *fizzle* 'break wind quietly' 1552 (this meaning is antiquated now). *Fuzz* 'loose volatile matter' 1600 is an ablat variant of this onomatopoeic root, and *fuss* 1701 may be its voiceless counterpart, the common basis being that of 'a lot of light stuff'. *Fizz* 'make a hissing or sputtering sound' 1665 contains the thin-toned variant of -*zz* which we also have in *stizzle* (1603). *Fizzle* joined *fizz* in meaning about 1850 only. Obs. is *famble* 'stammer' 14. (with the -*amble* characteristic of unsteady movement, see -*amble*) and *faffle* 'stutter' 1570 (both with imitative force of the initial). *Fumble* 1508 is a variant of *famble*, as final -*umble* is a variant of -*amble*, *fuddle* 'tipple, booze, muddle' 1588 has the -*uddle* of *muddle*, *puddle*, but it seems difficult to tell what the initial stands for.

7. 56. /f/ is an initial with words denoting movement, orig. flying or flowing movement, as in *flee*, *fleet*, *float*, *flicker*, *flow*, *falter*, *fly* (OE). Cognates since ME have been pretty numerous: *flit* 1200, *flush* 1300, *fling* 1300 (with the -*ing* of *swing*), *flap*, orig. 'slap' 1330, *flash* 1387, *flack* 'flap, flutter' 1393 (obs. in StE), *flacker* 13. (obs. in StE), *flick* 1447, *fluser* 1422, obs. *flatter* 'float, flutter' 1375 with variant *fitter* 'fit, flutter' 1542, *flit* 1553, *flip* 1594, *flap* 1602, *flurry* 1698, *flump* 1790, *flunk* 1823 (the symbol plus 'funk' 'light sly of'). *Flare* in sense 'shine, glare' is the symbol blended with *glare*, but otherwise the etymology of the word is not clear (it is first rec. about 1550). The sb *flag* 1530 is prob. a variant of *flack* vb.

7. 57. /fr/ can hardly be called a symbol though it is an initial with several symbolically coined words. *Fritz* 1835 and *frizzle* 1839 'make a sputtering noise in frying' are variants of *fizz*, *fizzle* (perh. influenced by *fray*). *Fridge* 'fidget, chafe, rub' etc. 1550 is a variant of unexplained *fidge* 'fidget, twitch' 1575 (partly influenced by *fray*). In *frump* 'sulky; desirive snort' 1553 we have the final symbol -*ump*, but the initial seems arbitrary, unless it is emotionally expressive. *Fribble*, orig. 'falter, stammer, totter in walking' 1627 has the -*ibble* which seems symbolic for small, continuous sounds or movements (*nibble*, *dribble*), but the /fr/ is app. arbitrary. So is the initial of rec. AE *fram* 'pound, beat' (ADD, 1933). I cannot explain *frazzle* 'unravel' etc. 1825 (the OED connects the word with *fasel* 'unravel' for which it has, however, no quotation after 1643).

7. 58. /θ/ and /θr/ have formed a few words, as *thunder* OE, *throw* 1362, *thrum* 1553. *Thud* 1513 is orig. So. with meaning 'gust of wind'; in sense 'thump' it is first recorded 1787.

7. 59. /w/ is an initial symbol with words denoting unsteady, uncertain, to and fro motion. By the side of OE *wagian* 'oscillate, shake' (which resulted in now obs. *waw*), there seems to have existed an intensifying *waggian* which is recorded through *wag* 'shake, oscillate' 1225. Variations of the stem are found in *wiggle* 1225 and *waggle* (recorded 1594, but probably older). *Waddle* (now phonetically isolated) 1592 is explained by OED as a *-le* derivative from *wade*. This does not, however, account for the 'swaying', nor does it explain the absence of the element 'walking through water' which has been the only sense of the word *wade* since ME. I therefore think that *waddle* arose from a blending of *wag* (*waggle*) and *straddle* 1565 (orig. 'spread the legs wide apart in walking'). *Wobble* 1657 is perhaps *waggle*/*hobble* (OED suggests connection with dial. G *wabbeln*) while dial. *wangle* 'walk unsteadily' 1820 is a blend of the /w/ of this group and final -*angle* (as in *dangle*). *Wangle* 'obtain in some irregular way' 1888 is not the same word, though it must have originated in a similar way, probably as *waggle* / *dangle* (*waggle* so that it comes loose, dangling).

7. 60. /wr/ is the *r*-variant of /w/ and occurs with many old words expressive of the idea 'twist, distort', as *wrench*, *wrest*, *wrestle*, *wring*, *wrinkle*, all OE. By the end of the ME period, [wr] had become [r]. The only clear English coinage, however, seems to be *wriggle* 1495 (wr/ -*wiggle*) which OED explains as "a. MLG *wringelēn*".

7. 61. /sw/ is an initial of many words with the basic meaning 'sway, swing', as *sweep*, *swing*, *swingle* sb, OE *swēgan* 'sweep', *swengian* = ME *swengen* 'smite'. It is obviously a variant of /w/ which will explain the etymology of several words. The now dialectal word *swag* 'move unsteadily, sway, wag (the head)' 1530 which the OED cannot explain is prob. a variant of *wag*. *Swag* 1300, orig. meaning 'move', is app. a variant of OE *wegan* 'move' (the modern sense of *sway* appears about 1500). ME and later coinings are *swarp* 'smite, strike' 1350 = obs. *swip* 1205, *swirl* 1425, *swagger* 1590 (freq. of *swag*), *swinge* 'brandish, whirl, flog' 1548 (a variant of older *swengian*), *swash* 1528 (orig. as sb with meaning 'pig-wash', i.e. obviously only a playful variant of *wash*; in other senses associated with the symbol /sw/), its ablat variants *swish* 1756 and *swosh* 1867. *Swank* 'swagger' 1809 is somehow connected with the group, but the etymology is not clear (it may be G *schwanken*, adopted as a slang term). Dial. variants of *sweep* are prob. *swoop* 1544 (cp. OE *swēgan*) and *swipe* 1825.

Suvere is OE *sweorfan* which had, however, the meaning 'file, scour'. The present-day sense is first recorded 1330. The OED presumes that the sense existed in OE "since there is no known foreign source to account for it". The nuance is possibly due to the symbolic force of /sw/ (cp. *he swung aside*, *he swung round*).

Switch is first recorded as a sb in sense 'whip' 1592. The word is app. onomatopoeic, but not suggestive of another English word. It may be a loan from Low German (in my home dialect (Krefeld) we have a word *wiesch* 'whip'; E *switch* may be the *s*-variant of some similar word).

Several /sw/ words have or once had the meaning 'drink, tipple', as *swing* 'drink, liquor' 1548, also as a vb, *swinge* (in sense 'drink' has quotations in the

OED between 1529 and 1649), *swink* (quotations between 1550 and 1590), *swipe* 1825 and *swizzle* 1813. The origin of this nuance is either to be sought in the idea of the movement of the arms when lifting a glass or in the association with the word *swallow* (which is less probable).

7. 62. /w/ is an initial occurring with several words denoting small sounds or small, chiefly twisting, movements. Many words denote trembling sounds of birds or such as are caused by the plucking of an instrument, as *twicker* 1375 = *twiddle* 1863, *tweddele* 1634, *tuang* 1542 (with dial variant *tuank* 1711), *twingle-twangle* 1634, *twet* 1845. Dial. *twattle* 1573 and obs. *twittle* 1577 'babble, tattle' are variants of *tattle*, *tittle* with the /w/ symbol, while *twaddle* 1732 is a variant of *twattle*.

After *twick* and *twick* (which is now dial.) 'pluck', *twinge* 'twitch, pinch', *twinkle* 'sparkle, glitter' OE, *twist* 1340 have been coined *twirt* 1598, *tweat* 1601 (app. the long vowel variant of *twick*; the spelling is no proof that the word was ever pronounced with [æ]: cp. *cleave*, *streak* and *Jesp.* I. 3. 245). *Twiddle* 1540 is orig. recorded in sense 'to trifle, prob. under the influence of *fiddle*, or of *twittle-twattle* 'idle talk'; the senses 'twist, twirl' are quite modern (1676).

7. 63. /kw/ is initial with several words suggestive of the idea 'quake, quiver, shake', as *caecoon* 'shake, obs. quetch', *quake*, *caecoon* = *cauym* 'quern, handmill for grinding grain', all OE, *caecoon* 'quake', *quake* 1225, *quaver* 1430, its abhant var. *quiver* 1490, *quag* 1579 (through *quagmine*), variant of *quake*, *quash* 'shake, crush, quell, splash' etc. 1387 (cp. P. Pl. C. XXI. 64 *The ethe quack and quash*, q. OED s.v. *quash*).

A few words suggestive of harsh bird sounds are introduced by /kw/, as *quack* 1617 = *quackle* 1564—1578, *qu-bird* 'the Night-Heron of N. America' 1789.

7. 64. /skw/ is the s-variant of /kw/. It introduces words expressive of discordant or discordantly eruptive sound, as *squeal* 1300, *squeak* 1547, *squash* 1565 (cp. *quash*), *squall* 'scream discordantly' 1631 (var. of *squeal* which was prob. never [æ] as the spelling variants of the OED seem to point out, so *quall* was coined on the basis [i-c-]), *squash* 1647 (var. of *squash*) and its var. *squidge* 1897, *squitter* 1596, *squirt* 1460 (the symbol plus *spirit*), *squawk* 'cry with a harsh note' 1821, *squawk* 'half suppressed laugh; squeak' 1882.

Words denoting movement are *squirt* (see above), *squabble* 'strangle, brawl' (with -*abble* denoting noise or confusion, see -*abble*, cp. also LG *kabbeln* 'quarrel'), *squair* 1710 (cp. *skirt, whirl*), *squiggle* 1804 (cp. *wriggle*), all implying violent or distorted movement.

7. 65. /h/ occurs with several sound words, many of them exclamations, as *ha, ho, hoop, heh, heigh, heigh-ho, hee-haw, etc.*, *hoot* 1225, *hunn* 1300, obs. *humble hum* 1384, *hiss* 1388, *hush* 1400, *howl* 1450, *hizz* (var. of *hiss*) 'make a whizzing noise' 1583, *hok* 1843.

It is found also with words expressive of sudden, jerky movement, prob. orig. simply imitative of the breath-taking of persons lifting a heavy object with a sudden jerk. Obviously symbol-coined are *hop* OE, its abhant variant *hup* 1250, *hobble* 1300, *hack* 1200, its var. *hag* 1400, their frequentatives *hackle*

1579 and *haggle* 1583 'cut, mangle by cutting', *higgle* 1633 (abhant var. of *haggle*), *hitch* 1440 (with the -*itch* of *twick*), *hug* 1567 (with the -*ug* of *tug*, *rug* 'pull forcibly'), *huff* 1583 'puff, swell' etc.

This initial is frequent in rime-germination, but only with the first-word: *humdrum* 1553, *helter-skelter* 1593, *hubble-bubble* 1632, *hardy-gurdy* 1749 a.o.

7. 66. /hw/ is an initial with words denoting noises of air or breath or forcible movement. Originally it probably renders the sharp sound of breath at the beginning of a vocal sound or of forcible movement and is thus somewhat parallel to /h/. For many speakers, /hw/ is no longer distinct from [w], so coinages of this group would belong in 7. 59. However, even for those speakers /hw/ has graphemic value, which has induced me to treat this initial separately. OE are *whine, whistle, whisper*: later are *whirt* 1290, *whip*, orig. 'move the wings briskly' 1250, *whoop* 1400, *whirr* 1400, *whop* 'cast, strike' 1400, *wheze* 1460 (cp. *sneeze*), *whew* 'whistle' 1475, *whisk* 1480, *whish* 1518, *whimper* 1513, *whiny* 1530 (var. of *hiny* 1400 which is perh. partly fr. F *hennir*), *whizz* 1547, *whif* 'puff, whistle' 1591, *whifle* 'blow in puffs' 1568, *whoop* 1568, *whoo* 1608, *whicker* 'snigger, titter' 1656, *whack* 1721, *whoof* 'gruff cry' 1766, *whang* 'beat' 1684 (Sc.), expressive of sound in StE 1844, *whing* 'move with great force' 1882, *whuff* 'sound of a forcible blast of breath of wind' 1896, *whoosh* 'dull, soft, sibilant sound' 1856, *whoep* 'long-drawn sound of a steel weapon drawn from its sheath' 1891, *whit* 'sound of a bird' etc. 1833, *whing* 'high-pitched ringing sound' 1912 (var. of *whang*).

7. 67. /m/ is found initial 1) with a number of words denoting movements of the mouth, usually accompanied by muttered sounds, 2) with words expressive of or connected with feelings characterized by a particular position of mouth or lips, and 3) with some words denoting animal sounds where the *m* is, so to speak, an anthropomorphic imitation (cp. initial /p/ and /b/). Exs are 1) *murmur* 1400 (which need not be considered "a. F. murmurer" (OED)), cp. also OHG *murmuron*, obs. *murr* 'a form of catarrh' 1420—1756, *mutter* 1388, *mumble* 1362, *mum* 1377, *munch* 1374, *mump* 1586 (partly belonging in 2), at the same time 2) *mop* (in *mop* and *mow* 'make a grimace'), *mope* 'be listless' 1590, (prob. the variant of *mop*, although the OED denies the connection), *miff* 'the of ill-humor' 1623, *Miminy-piminy* 1815 belongs here, /m/ imitating the affected making of a "mouth" (in Turkish there is a similar expression for the same idea: [mɯmɯnɯnɯk] / 3) *mew* 1325 'utter the sound [mjɯ]', *moo* 1549, *mooow* 1632.

Mizzle 'drizzle' 1483 has the final symbol of *drizzle* while the /m/ is perh. that of *mist*. There is only the drawback of chronology as *drizzle* is not recorded before 1543, acc. to OED.

7. 68. /sn/ is initial with words expressive of sound and movement in connection with the mouth, nose or face. The starting-point is such words as OE *snof*, *snifung* 'mucus of the nose', *snigan* 'snite, clean the nose'. *Snout* is not recorded before 1220 but must have existed in OE as the denominal verb *snigan* shows. The following are recorded later: *snatch* 1225 (the symbol plus *catch*), *snack* 1300 (the symbol plus -*ack*), *snap* 1495 (the symbol plus final symbol -*ap*), *sniff* 1340, *snore* 1330 (as a vb 1400), *snort* 1366 (with in-

tensifying *sf*, as in *grunt*, *fant* etc.), *snok* 1388 'mucus of the nose, snuff of candle' (in OE repr. through *gesnoc*), *snivel* 1325 (in OE repr. by the vs *sniflung*), *sneeze* 1499 (certainly not "due to misreading or mispuncting" (OED), but an adjustment to the symbol /sn/ from OE *snosana*), *sneer* 1553 (plus *jeer* 1553, see initial /dz/), *snuff* 1527, *snarl* 1589 which is the intensive of obs. *snar* 'snarl, growl' (1530—1596), *snicker* 1694, its variant *snigger* 1706, *sniggle* 1815, *sniffle* 1819. *Snip* 1586 is either the *s*-variant of *nip* 1393 or the ablaut variant of *snapp*; *sneep* 'nip, pinch' 1588 may be a dialectal variant of the same. *Snick* 'snip, nick' 1700 is the *s*-variant of *nick* 1523, influenced by *snip*.

7. 69. /sl/ is initial with many words expressing falling or sliding movement, as *slide*, *sladder* OE, OE *sléfan* 'cause to slip' = ME *slieven* (—1513). With the /sl/ of these were coined *slither* 1200 (var. of *slidden*), *slew* 1410 (var. of *slawe* fr. OE *sléfan*), *slip* 1300 (see -*ip*), *slouch* (1556 through *slouch-earred*, though other verb forms occur much later; the word is possibly a blend of the symbol and *crouch* 1394), *slump* 1677 (see -*ump*).

The same initial occurs with words denoting a falling blow, as *slay*, *slaughter* OE, OE *slitan* 'slit, split'. Symbol formations of this class are *sit* 1205, *sling* orig. 'hurl, throw' 1290 (see -*ing*), *slash* 1382 (see -*ash*), *slap* 1632 (see -*ap*), *slam* 1691 (see -*am*), *slag* 1853 'strike hard' (the symbol plus *flag*).

A third group of words contains the basic idea 'slimy, slushy matter', repr. by *slime*, *slough* 'muddy ground', *slip* 'soft, semiliquid mass, curdled milk' etc. OE. *Slap* 'muddy place' etc. 1400 is a var. of *slip*; *slobber* 'slime, slush' 1400 is another variant. Later are *slub* 'sludgy mud' 1577 (dial.), *slush* 1641, *sludge* 1641 and its var. *slutch* 1669 'slush, mud', *slosh* 1814, *slippy* 'splashy, semiliquid' 1727.

7. 70. /r/ in OE also /hr/, introduces a number of words expressive of loud, noisy or noisily vibrating sounds, as OE *hrætele* 'rattle', *hrētan* 'rout, snore', *rārian* 'roar'. In *ring* fr. OE *hringan* the idea of 'clear sound of hard metal' is the earliest recorded. The initial has chiefly formed words with the first nuance, but there are also a few coinages denoting a crisp or hard sound. Exs are *rap* 1340, *ram* 1330 (see -*am*); the OED thinks of der. fr. *ram* 'male sheep'), *rattle* 1384, *rattle* 1398, *rattle* 'speak in a rapid, confused manner' 14...; obs. *rough* 'cough' 13...; *ruckle* 'rattle in the throat' 1530 (the OED assumes Scand. origin), *rat-tat* 1774, *rub-a-dub* 1787 and *row-down* 1814 (as an imitation of the sound of a drum), *row-de-dow* 'din' 1848, *razzle-dazzle* 1890.

Rash 'dash, rush' 1400 has the final symbol -*ash* while the initial may be that of *run*. *Rush* 1375 seems to be a variant of *rash*, one of the earliest meanings is that of 'rush, dash' (for parallels of this ablaut op. *dash* 13... = *dash* 1290, *lash* 1330 = *lash* 1330, *crush* 1398 = *crash* 1400). The OED derives the word from OE *rūser* which, according to Bloch, is *ru* *reusare*. The *s* repr. [z], and if Anglo-French has the form *rasher* this is obviously so because sound symbolism has played a part. Thus, there seem to be two elements, OF *ruser* plus the symbol -*ash* in obs. sense 'drive back, force out of position', and *rash* = var. of *rash*. Cp. also final symbol -*ash*. *Rip* 'cut, pull, tear' etc. 1477 appears to contain the final symbol -*ip*, but the initial is not clear.

Rollick 1826 is possibly a blend of *romp* 1709 and *rollick* 1538. The word *racket* 1565, orig. 'disturbance, loud noise, uproar' etc. is explained by the

OED (s.v. *racket* sb.³) as 'prob. onomatopoeic'. As for *rack*, it might be symbolic, but the -*et* cannot be accounted for. Derivation from Gaelic *racaid* (which the OED thinks is itself derived from the English word) is more plausible.

7. 71. /s/ is an initial with several words expressive of frictional noise, chiefly such as are caused, by the intake of breath or the sipping, dripping or trickling of liquids, as *suck*, *sqig*, *suck*, *sup*, *sop*, *stipe* 'ooze, drip' etc. OE. Later symbol words are *sod* 1200 (prob. a var. of *sop*), *sip* 1386 (another var. of *sop*, or of *sup*, all representing the same 'root'), *seep* 'ooze' 1790 AE (variant of *sip* with the long vowel expressive of the slow oozing). Hissing noises are expressed in *ss* 'hiss' 13... (now AE and E dial.), *sizz* 'burr, brand, hiss, sizzle' 1700, *sizzle* 1603.

Souse 'heavy blow, thump', as a vb 'strike' etc. 1480 may be an echo word, as the OED supposes, but it is not suggestive of English symbols. It has possibly helped in the coining of *sock* 'beat' (*souse* plus *knock*) 1700.

7. 72. /z/ is an infrequent initial. *Zigzag* 1712 is a loan from French. English coinages are *zip* 1875 (see -*ip*), *zoom* 'make a continuous low-pitched, buzzing sound' 1886, in aircraft slang also with meaning 'aircraft's steep climb' 1917. ADD quotes *zoom*, *zune* 'go or run fast with a hum or buzz' 1886.

7. 73. /ʃ/ has not been very productive. Obs. *shag* (1380—1572) 'toss about, shake' and *shog* 'shake, rook, jolt' 1388 are variants of *shake* OE, as is prob. also *shock*. In sense 'move swiftly and suddenly' the latter is obs. now. The OED quotes it as *shock* v.¹ against *shock* v.² 'collide' etc. which is rec. from 1576 and for which the OED assumes *F choquer* as the etymon while it leaves the question of etymology open for *shock* v.¹ Both senses are, however, explainable from *shock* var. of *shake* (though influence of *F choquer* is probable, at the same time). OE *scacan* is somewhat parallel: it meant 1) 'move quickly, flee', 2) 'quiver, quake, tremble', trans. 'flourish, brandish, wave'. *Shamble* 'walk unsteadily' (17th c.) is prob. *shake* plus -*amble* (see -*amble*). The OED derives the word from *shamble* 'stool' via *shamble legs* (1607); but why should the legs of a shambling tremble or be unsteady? Obs. (exc. dial.) *shawl* 'stumble, shamble' 1400 is possibly *shake*, *shamble* plus *fall* 1225, *quat* 1300.

The initial is emotionally expressive in the exclamation (sb, vb) *shoo* 1483 (used to frighten or drive away birds or poultry).

7. 74. /ʃ/ is obviously emotionally expressive, like its variant /dz/. It introduces various words expressing sound—the vocal sounds of small animals, esp. birds, metallic or glass sounds, human sounds, and a few others. The words denoting movement are originally imitative of the accompanying sound. The symbol is not older than ME. The historical basis of the sound is OE palatal [k], as in *cearcian* 'chink', *cirman* 'chink' (? *cēowan* 'chew'), *cēo* 'jackdaw', now *chough* 'crow'.

ME and later symbol coinages are *chatter* 1225, its ablaut var. *chiter* 1386, *chat* 1440, *chit-chat* 1710, *chop* 'crack' 1325 with ablaut var. *chup* 1330 and *chop* 1362 (*chop* 'jaw' 1555 is prob. the same word, after the sound), *chime* 1340, *chink* 1581 (used of metal or glass), *chirp* 1440 = *chirrup* 1579 = *Sc. chirt* 1386, *chirr* 'trill like a grass-hopper' 1639, *Sc. chirt* 'warble' 1818, *chuck* 'cluck' 1386, *chuckle* 1598, *cheep* 1513 (chiefly *Sc.*, used of birds and mice),

chipper 'twitter, babble, chatter' AE 18., obs. *chii* 'name of a bird' 1610, *chiff-chaff* 'name of a bird' 1780, *chink* 'ft of coughing' 1767, *champ* (with AE var. *clomp, chank*) 'chew' 1530, *chug* 'sound of oil-engine etc. when running slowly' 1897. *Chuck* 1583 is a variant of *shock* (the original form is *shock* with the /ts/ perh. influenced by *chin*; the earliest quoted sense is 'give a gentle blow under the chin'), *chuff* (for sound of engine).

7. 75. /dz/ is the voiced variant of /ts/. It is app. emotionally expressive (the initial occurs in Turkish, for instance, with symbol coined words; also in Old French). No coinages occur before about 1300. *Jangle* 1300 'chatter, babble; dispute, wrangle' appears to represent OF *jangler*; the symbol *-angle* is not suggestive of the senses; with meaning 'jingle harshly' (1494) the word is, however, a var. of *jingle* 1300. Then come *jabber* 1499 'gabble' etc. (the *-abber* offers some difficulties as the symbol has formed no other words, except the more recent *gabber*; it is, however, prob. a variant of *-abble*), *joll* or *joll* 'toll (a bell), bump' 1520, *jumble* 1529 (orig. 'make a rumbling noise'), *jump* 1511 (originally denoting the accompanying noise; cp. the exclamation for a fall into water in Turkish *cump* (pron. [dzump]) 'plump', *jar* 'make a harsh grating sound' 1526 (cp. *gnar, snar*), *jug* 'imitation of one of the notes of the night-ingale' 1523 (cp. *chuck, chug*), *gibber* or *jibber* 1604 (ablaut var. of *jabber*), *jam* 1706, *jazz* 1918 (Judah A. Joffe in WORD 3. 105/106 derives the word from F *ga jase*. Many etymologies have been suggested, but if Joffe is right, the word received the symbol /dz/. The French word has [z], a fact which the author seems to have overlooked).

There are a number of words implying jerky movement, as *jug* 'pierce, prick' etc. 1440, also as a sb in several variants of the semantic basis 'sharp projection', *jog* 1548 'shake with a jerk' (cp. *shog*), its frequ. *joggle* 1513, its ablaut variant *jig* 'lively dance' etc., also as a vb (1560), *jiggle* 1836 'move backwards and forwards', *jigger* 1867 'make a succession of rapid jerks', *jigget* 1687 (inf. by *fdget*) 'jig, hop, skip about', *jerk* 1530, *yink* 'jerk, quick turn' 1700 (in second world war used for maneuvering aircraft) / *job* 1490 with var. *job* 1825 'stab, prod, poke' etc., *job* 'pull a sail' 1691. *Jounce* 1440 is prob. formed with the /dz/ of the above sound group and the *-ounce* of *bounce* 1225. Many etymologies have been offered for the word *jeer* 1553. It may be a blend of *jeer* 1400 'jeer, sneer' and *jest*. *Jest* sb (ft. OF *geste*) developed the following senses: 'feat, tale of a feat, idle tale, jeer'. The vb *jest* 1526 means 'jeer'.

7. 76. /j/ is a frequent initial with words expressive of vocal sounds, as *yell*, *yelp*, *yeet*, *yeak* 'sob, hiccup, belch' OE. Later are *yo-ho* 1300, *yow* (excl.) 1440, *yowl* 1450, its var. *yawl* 13.. (cry of pain, grief, distress), *yawp* 'yelp, cry harshly' etc. 13.., *yammer* 1481, *yarp* 'bark sharply' 1668, *yowl* 'bark' 1682, *yaffle* (a dial. name of the green woodpecker), *yah* (excl. of disgust etc.) 1812, *yaw-haw* 'yuffaw' 1836, *yaw-yaw* 'talk affectedly' 1854, *yoho* (excl. to call attention) 1769, *yowles* (fox-hunting cry urging on the hounds) 1774, *yooop* (sound of convulsive sobbing) 1848, *yow* 'cry of a cat or dog' 1820, *yep* 'a call to urge a horse' 1690, *Yip* 1440 in sense 'cheep as a young bird' is termed 'obs. or dial.' in OED, but the word is alive in AE with meaning 'yelp', acc. to OED first rec. 1907. Its variant *yipe* is not rec. in OED or Spl., but the word is common in AE. *Yatter* 'gabble, chatter' is not recorded before 1866.

Final symbols: rime derivation

7. 77. Rime plays a great part in language, as has been observed in connection with the coining of geminated words (see VIII). But its part is obviously more important than has hitherto been recognized. In this chapter I shall deal with rime as having played a part in the derivation of symbolic words. Words may be derived from others as their riming counterparts, distinguished from them by the initial only.

I have arranged the material according to spelling. The alphabetical order makes the reading of it more convenient as there is no established order in the sequence of phonetic symbols. Most of the words listed are also treated under their respective 'initial symbols' in a more detailed manner.

7. 78. **-ab**: *dab* 1300, *stab* 1375 Sc, 1530 StE, *jab* 1825 (strike, thrust).

-abble: *babble* 1230, *rabble* 14.. 'speak in a rapid, confused manner', *gabble* 1577 'talk volubly'.

-ack: *crack* OE, *brack* 1200 'noise, outcry' (obs.), *clack* 1250 'chatter, prate, chuck, cackle', *snack* 1300, *smack* 1530 orig. 'kiss noisily', *thwack* 1530 'beat soundly', *quack* 1617 (said of ducks), *whack* 1719 'thwack' etc., *flack* sb 1823 'slap, blow' (dial.).

-addle: *straddle* 1565 'stride about' etc., *paddle* 1530 'walk in shallow water' (obviously a variant of *paddle*), *waddle** 1522.

-aggle: *draggle* 1513 (see /dr/) attracted *daggle* 1570 on the analogy of *dabble*/*drabble*.

-am: *lam* 1595, *clam* 1674 'clang of bells', *slam* 1691, *jam* 1706, *flam* 1796 'signal of drum', (partly) *ram* ME, *wham* 'slam, bang' AE, not in OED or Spl.

-amble: expressive of unsteady to and fro movement may have originated in the loan *amble* 1386. Later are obs. *famble* 14.. 'stammer, stutter' (var. of *fumble*), *wamble* 1420 'turn and twist the body about' (now dial.), *scramble* 1526, *scamble* 1539, orig. 'scramble' = *shamble* 1681 'walk unsteadily', *ramble* 1620 'wander, travel'.

-amp: *stamp* 1200, *tramp* 1388, *clump* 1530 'chew'.

-ang: *pong* 1526, *bang* 1550, *twang* 1542, *tang* 1556, *clang* 1576, *spang* 1513 (Sc and north. BE 'spring, leap', orig. used of the bow or arrow), *whang* 1684.

-ank: *clank* 1614, *spank* 1727, *crank* 1827 'jarring sound'.

-ap: *clap, tap* 1225, *chop* 1325, *flap* 1330, *rap* 1340, *snap* 1495, *swap** 1350, *slap* 1632, *yap* 1668, *plap* 1846.

-ar: *gnar* 1496 'snarl', obs. *snar* 'snarl' 1530, *jar* 'make a harsh, grating sound' 1525.

-arl: *snarl* 1589 (L extension from *snar*), obs. *gnarl* 'snarl' 1593.

-ash: *dash* 1290, *lash* 1330, *flash* 1387 (orig. chiefly said of water), *pash* 'dash, smash' 1362, *crash* 'gnash, dash, smash' 1400, *slash* 14.., obs. *rash* 'dash' 14.. (chiefly Sc), *gnash* 1496, *clash* 1500, *plash* 1513, *swash** 1528 'fall of a heavy body', and *squash** 1565, *gash* 1565, *quash** 1609 H, *bush* 1641 (orig. used of a hen, then generally 'strike with a heavy blow'), *splash* 1715, *smash* 1778.

- at: bat sb 'stick' 1205, vb 'strike' 1440, *pat* 1400, *chat* 1440, *rat-tat* 1774, *spat* 'start up sharply' etc. AE 1809, *splat* 'pat, slap, spat' 1941 (ADD).
 -atter: *clatter* OE, *chatter* 1225, *batter* 1325, *patter* 1394 (at the same time representing *pater* 'paternoster' = 'recite prayers'), *hatter* 'bruise with blows' 1450 (now So and north. B dial.), *smatter* 'prate, chatter' 1440, *splatter* 1784, *gatter* 'chatter' 1866.
 -attle: *rattle* OE (in *hrætelgyrt* 'rattle-wort'), *tattle* 1450, *prattle* 1532, *twattle** 1573 (no longer in this group).
 -awl: *sprawl* OE, *scrual* 1300, *scrual* 1380, *sprawl* 'spit coarsely' 1598 (arch.), *drawal* 1652 H (words for drawn-out or clumsy movement). Sound-words are *grawl* 13... 'cry of pain, grief', *brawl* 1375, *bawl* 1556, *drawal* 1597.
7. 79. -eak: *creak* 1325, dial. *shcreak* 1500, *squeak* 1547, dial. *peek*, *peak* 'squeak' 1808.
- eep: *peep* 'cry of young birds' 1460, *cheep* 1513.
 -eer: *fleeer* 1400 'jibe, jeer, sneer' (prob. a Scand. word, cp. dial. *flue* 'grim' (see OED *fleeer* v.), *sneer* (see initial /sn/) 1553, *jeer* 1553 (see initial /dz).
 -eeze: *sneez* 1499 (see initial /sn/), *wheeze* 1460.
 -ick: *pick*, *prick* OE, *kick* 1380, *tick* 1430, *flick* 1447, *nick* 1523, *click* 1581, *snick* 'click' 1700, *crick* 'sound of a grasshopper' 1601 (perh. also in sense 'spasm of the muscles' 1440).
 -iddle: is found in several words denoting 'trifle' of which the basis may be *fiddle* which in this particular sense development is first recorded 1530. Other words coined after it are *piddle* 1545, *tiddle* 1560, *twiddle* 1540, *quiddle* 1567, *diddle* 'sing without distinct utterance of words' 1706, *diddle* (away) 'trifle (away), waste' 1826.
 -iff: *sniff* 1340, *whiff* 'puff, whistle' 1591, *tiff* 'outburst of temper' 1727, *missiff* 'buff, tuff, petty quarrel' 1623, *biff* 'blow' 1890 (ADD), obs. *tiff* 'drink, sip' (influenced by *tipple*), cp. also *squiffy* 'drunk' 1874. The common denominator is 'noise of breath or liquor'.
 -iggle: the symbol is found with words expressive of small, continuous movements or sounds, as *wiggle* 'wobble, waggle, wriggle' 1225, *wriggle* 1495 = *squiggle* 1804 = *seriggle* 1806, *sniggle* 'snicker' 1815.
 -ing: as imitative of sound it underlies *ring*, *sing* OE, *ding* 'knock, hammer' 1300 (arch.), *ping* 1886, *whing* 1912 'word for a highpitched ringing sound'. Words denoting movement are *swing* OE, *sing* 1290, *fling* 1300, *whing* 1882 'move with great force or impetus'.
 -ingle: *jingle* 1300, *tingle* 1388, *dingle* 1573.
 -ink: *tink* 1382, *clink* 1386, *chink* 1581.
 -ip: *clip* 'cut' 1200, *whip* 1250, orig. 'move (the wings) briskly', *hop* 1250, *skip* 1300, *nip* 1393 (variant of obs. *gnip*, *knip*), *tip* 1466, *flip* 1594, *snip* 1586, *flip* 1594, *zip* 1875. The common denominator is 'quick movement'. Some words are at the same time ablaut variants of words with other vowels and are thus doubly connected.
 -irl: *whirl* 1290, *swirl* 'whirlpool' 1425 (orig. So), *chirl* 'warble' 1818 (So).
 -irr: *whirr* 1400, *skirr* 1548 'move hastily, make a whirring sound', *chirr* 1639 'trill like a grasshopper', *squirr* 1710 'cast with a whirling motion'. All express quick movement or whirring sound.

- irt: *squirt* 1460, *flirt* 1553, orig. 'fling', *spirt* 1570 (cp. -urt).
 -isk: *whisk* 1480, *frisk* 1519 (the initial perh. from *frick* which is not recorded before 1563 but may be older; cf. OE *frician* 'dance'), dial. *fish* 1596 'caper, frisk'.
 -iss: *miss* 13...; *miss* 1388.
 -it: *spit* OE, *sit* 1205, *hit* 1200, *hit* 1450, *skit* 1611 (quick movement). Cp. also F *vite* (the earliest recorded form *vise* is a different sound-symbolic 'root'). The symbol /yt/ or /it/ is used in Bavaria, Denmark and Sweden to denote great quickness of movement or disappearance.
 -itch: *twitch* OE attracted *nitch* 1440, *pitch* 1205, all suggestive of jerky movement.
 -iver: *quiver* 1490 joined *shiver* 1200 (orig. *chiver*, of unexplained etymology, the [ʃ] is 15th c., prob. after *shake*), the underlying idea being that of 'tremble, shake'. It is possible that *fliver* 1912 is a blend of -iver and *flunk*, the original meaning of the word is 'fail, bungle'. The sense 'cheap, shaking motorcar' also fits in semantically.
 -izz: *whizz* 1547, *fizz* 1665, *sizz* 1700, *frizz* 1835 denote similar noises. The root of *bizzard* 1829 may be the same symbol plus the initial /b/ of the 'blow' class.
 -izzle: expresses continuous quietly sputtering noises, as of rain or fat in a pan: *mizzle* 1483 (the *m* from *mist* perh.) and *drizzle* 1543 (see initial /dr/) denote light, continuous rain (see OED s.v. *mizzle* v.¹ with a few LG and Du. exs to which may be added LG *fasseln* (pron. [z]). The noise of sputtering fat is expressed in *sizzle* 1603, *frizzle* 1839, *fizzle* 1859 H.
7. 80. -oan: *groan* OE seems to have attracted *moan* which is recorded as a sb 1225. The verb is recorded much later (15th or 16th c.). The OE vb *mænan* 'moan' developed the deverbal sb *meane*, recorded 12...; last quoted in OED in a 19th c. text. The deverbal sb *groan* is not recorded before 1300 (as *gran*, *gron*), chiefly in cb *give a groan*. *Moan* sb is also chiefly found in phrase *make (one's) moan*, beside which the phrase *mean (one's) moan* is frequent in the 14th c. The drawback of my explanation is that *moan* is older (1225) than *groan* (1300); but perhaps this is merely due to an incidental gap in the existing material.
 -ob: *sob* 1200 (perh. a variant of *sop*) attracted *therob* 1362.
 -od: seems to be imitative of sound, underlying *pod* 1562, *prod* 1535 (with the initial of the 'prick' class), dial. *dad* 'beat' 1661, *pod* 'prod, poke' (now dial.) 1530.
 -odge: is perh. a variant of older *-udge*, conveying the idea of heaviness, stuffiness: *podge* 1638 'walk heavily and slowly' (see -od), *stodge* 1674 'gorge, stuff' (see initial /st/), *podge* 1833 'short, thick and fat p. or animal', also used for things, its derivative *podgy* 1846.
 -oll: sound words are *knoll* 1379 'sound of a bell', *toll* 1452, *jowl*, *joll* 1520 'toll (a bell), bump (the head)'. Expressive symbolism underlies *toll* (as Ekwall, English Studies 28, 108 shows, the word must have existed before 1100), *troll* 1377 (see initial /tr/; usually derived fr. OF *troller*, see OED

¹ Cf. O. Jespersen, *Lehrbuch der Phonetik*, 89.

- troll* v.), its variant *stroll* 1603 (see initial /str/). The word *roll* 1375 is, however, OF *roler* (which passed into German also).
- om p: seems to occur only as a variant of -amp as I see it in the American word *stomp* 'beat down forcibly', as with the foot (see Asp 30. 287, 1955).
- onk: has formed the words *hork* 1843, *cronek* 'cry of the wild goose' 1878, perhaps also *conk* 'break down, give out, fail' 1918. The first examples recorded in OED refer to the dying of an airplane motor (*my engine began to conk a bit*).
- oom: *boom* (in this form 18th c.) 'buzz, make a deep, resonant sound' etc., *zoom* 1892 'make a low-pitched buzzing sound'. In aircraft slang *zoom* denotes the sudden steep climbing of the plane (first rec. 1917). *Boom* in sense 'boom of business' (1879 U.S.) is prob. the same word, the noise of booming was perh. connected with the noise of production machinery as the outward sign of the 'boom', just as the doubled activity and consequently doubled noise of the engine is indicative of the sudden climb of the plane.
- oop: *whoop* 1400, *roop* 'hoarse sound' 1674, *scroop* 1787 'creak, grate', *cloop* 1848 'noise of a cork'.
- op: *pop* 1386, *whop* 1400 'cast, strike' (prob. fr. the sound), *flap* 1602, *plap* 1833.
- ore: *blor* 1440 'a violent blowing', *snore* 1330 'a snort'.
- ouch: *couch* 1330 which is F *coucher*, attracted *crouch* 1394 and *slouch* (see initials /kr/ and /sl/).
- ough: *cough* 1325 = obs. *rough* 13...
- ounce: sound-initiative is *bounce* 1225 (in form *bunzen*; cp. *bum*, *boom*, OE *þūnian* 'pound', G *bunns* etc.) which seems to have attracted *ounce* 1440.
- owl: *growl* (Wycl.), *howl* 1450, *gowl* 1450.
7. 81. -udder: *shudder* 1310 (from the Germanic root *staud*) attracted *dudder* 1658 'shudder, shiver' (ablaunt variant of *dudder*).
- uddle: the final occurs in several words which defy etymological explanation, as *cuddle*, *fuddle*, *huddle*, *muddle*, so we cannot say whether the words are symbol-coined. But *fuddle* 1588 'confuse with drink' seems to be responsible for the sense development of *muddle* 'wallow in mud' to 'stupefy with liquor' 1687 H.
- udge: the starting-point of the symbol seems to be *grudge* 1450 'murmur, grumble, be reluctant, envy' which is the variant of now obsolete *grutch* 1225 (= OF *groncter*, *groncher*, which is likewise onomatopoeic). Some-what later recorded is the word *drudge* (1494 as a sb, 1488 as a vb) which may be a blend of the symbol and *dree* 'labor' (OE *drægagan*). *Trudge* 1547 is the symbol with the initial /tr/. The symbol is obviously emotionally expressive of heaviness, unpleasantness or the like. Though *grudge* is not recorded before 1450, it may be older, which would account for *snudge* 'soil, smirch' 1450 as the symbol extension of *smud* (which in form *smot* is recorded as far back as 1387). *Snudge* 1545 'miser, niggard' may be from *snop*, *snatch* (money) plus the symbol. *Sludge* 1649 may be the symbol extension of *slub* 1577, *slush* 1641 (see initial /sl/). There are, however, other words in -udge which do not appear to belong in the group (as *nudge*

- 'push with the elbow', *fudge* 'fadge, fit in' etc., *snudge* 1633 'remain snug and quiet'). A variant of -udge is app. -odge with a similar emotional value (see -odge). Words in -odge are newer which would point to the influence of the symbol -udge. *Pudge* 1808 is a by-form of *podge* 1833 'short and thick p. or thing'.
- uff: is an onomatopoeic variant of -iff and symbolic of an outburst of breath, air or smoke: *puff* 1225 (perh. the var. of OE *pyffan*), *buff* 'burst into a laugh' etc. 1297 (obs. exc. dial.), *huff* 'puff, swell' etc. 1553, *snuff* 1527 (the OED supposes Du origin), *whuff* 1896 'puff' = So *fluff* 1818 = So *huff* 1513 = So *pluff* 1663, *quff* 'puff, whiff' 1825, *chuff* (denoting the noise of an engine or machine) 1921.
- The sb *buff* 'blow, stroke' 1420 is obviously onomatopoeic for the sound accompanying the blow (either the sound of breath or more probably the wind-like sound of the blow), as in G *pufl* 'blow'. The sb *blow* 1460 shows as similar development. Though the OED reflects the etymology, the word is certainly the same as the vb *blow* (of wind). That the sb *blow* 'blast' is recorded later is no serious argument. The analogy of F *soufflet* (fr. *souffler* 'blow') is an exact parallel. That *soufflet* is first rec. in sense 'instrument for blowing' (see Bloch s.v. *souffler*) does not prove the proposed etymology wrong. No one will derive one sense from the other, but both meanings have separately sprung from the idea 'souffler-blow'. A rime-variant of *buff* is *cuff* 'strike' 1530 (with the initial of *kick*).
- Bluff* 1674, orig. recorded as a vb with the meaning 'blindfold', seems to belong here. It is possibly a variant of *buff* (a name given to the blindfolded player in the game of 'blind man's buff'), rec. 1647, with the bl- of *blind*, *blindfold*. The original sense would then be 'make a blindfolded buff of a p.'.
- uffle: the etymology of *ruffle* 1300 'crumple' etc. is not clear. With the underlying idea of 'untidiness, disorderliness' it may have coined *shuffe* 1532, orig. 'put together in a hasty, disorderly manner' (as a blend with *shore*), of which *scuffe* 1579 in same sense in the /sk/ variant (see initial /sk/). The sb *scuffe* 'scrambling fight' 1606 is a semantic variant of the basis.
- ug: is a symbol with words denoting pulling movements. *Tug* 1225 (first with the spelling *toggen*, since 1300 *tug*) is prob. a variant of *tuck* 'tug, pull' (sense now obs.), recorded with this meaning since about 1300; the latter is the short vowel variant of OE *taccian* 'ill-treat' etc. (i.e. the basis taken in an abstract sense). *Stug* 1400, orig. meaning 'shudder, shiver' has the initial of *shrink*; *wug* 1300 'pull forcibly' is the north. BE and Sc variant of the symbol with the initial of *rock*, OE *roccian*. *Hug* 1567 is the symbol plus the initial /h/ of exclamations (see initial /h/). *Lug* 13... 'drag, pull' seems to belong here, but I cannot account for the initial [] (the OED supposes Scand. origin, but there is no old Scand. word to support the etymology). *Chug* 1897, denoting the sound of an oil-engine etc. when running slowly, is a var. of *chuck* but at the same time suggests the jerky movement of the motor.
- um: a symbol for vibrating sounds has formed *hum* 1300, dial *bum* 'hum loudly' 1450, obs. *bum* 'beat, thump' 1579, *drum* 1540, *thrum* 1553, *strum* 1775, *turn* 1830.

-umble: is symbolic of indistinct humming or rumbling noises, as in *mumble* 1362, *rumble* 1384, obs. *humble* 'hum' 1384, *jumble* 1529, orig. 'grumble'; obs. *drumble* 'mumble' (1579—1596), *grumble* 1586 (see initial [gr/]).

Tumble 1300 is the frequ. of OED *tumbion* 'tumble, make somersaults'. With the basis of 'tumbling movement' it attracted *stumble* 1325 (see initial [st/]; the OED supposes Scand. origin), *fumble* 1508 (see initial [f/]), *plump* 13... *jump* 1511, *thump* 1537, *bump* 1566, *crump* 1646 'noise of horses or pigs when eating'; *clump* 1665 'tread heavily', *slump* 1677, *hump* 1790, *wump* 1897 'throb; sound of fall'.

It is emotionally expressive (of displeasure) in *lump* 1577 'be displeased' = *mump* 1586, *hump* 1673 'ill-humor', *frump* 'cross, old-fashioned woman' etc. 1817 (as a vb in sense 'put in a bad humor' 1862, in obs. sense 'sulk' 1693), *lump* 1577 'look sulky' (with the [l/ of *low*, *lower*; in early quotations *lump* and *lower* form a set group), *drump* 'sulk' 1875 = dial. *glump* 1746 (with the initials of *grunt* resp. *glum*, *gloom*; *glumpy* 1730 is StE). In plural form are used *frumps* 'sulks', obs. *humps* and *grumps* 'slights and snubs'.

-unch: is imitative of sound in *much* 1374 (see initial [m/]) and *crunch* 1801 (see [kr/]). There are many concrete sbs with the basic meaning 'jump' matched by counterparts in -ump (*bunch*, *hunch*, *lunch*, *clunch* / *bump*, *hump*, *lump*, *clump*): I do not deny their symbolism, but I would refer the reader to my remark above (7. 5).

-unk: obs. *funk* 'spark' 1330 attracted *spunk* 1536 (with the initial of *spark*), 'spark', also 'tinder, touchwood' of which *punk* 1707 is the s-less variant. *Funk* 'finch' c 1740 is unexplained (first quoted as Oxford slang), but *funk* 1823 is a blend of it and the symbol [h].

-url: is symbolic of prolonged vibrating, dull sounds (cp. *hurrr* 'make a dull vibrating sound' 1398 and [l/ (7. 12). It has coined *hurrl* 1300 and *purrl* 1586.

-urry: the first recorded word of this group is *hurry* c 1590. The basis is obviously -*urr* as in *hurrr*, the buzzing noise standing for the idea of agitated activity. I cannot, however, explain the -y. The word attracted the gemination *hurry-scurry* 1732 from which *scurry* separated as an independent word (first inst. 1810) and *flurry* 1698.

-urt: *spurt* 1570 is *spit* plus the vibrational -*urr* (as *spit* 1582 is the simple r-variant of *spit*), followed by *blurt* 1573 (see [bl/]). Today, -*urt* and -*urt* are graphic variants of the same symbol.

-ush: is a variant of -*ash*; it has formed *flush* 1300, obs. *lush* 'dash, strike' 1330, obs. *dash* 'dash' 14th c., *wash* 1375 (the word is generally considered to be AF *wassher*, var. of *russer*), *quash* 1400. Obs. *flush* 13... 'strike violently' is prob. OF *frusser*. The initial [fr/ in English does not form words of this class, but *crush* 1398 is the symbol plus initial [kr/ (the OED derives it from OF *croissir* which has, however, the meaning 'gnash the teeth'). *Blush* 1325, orig. 'look' does not appear to belong here. The symbol is emotionally expressive in *tush* 1440, an exclamation of impatience. *Push* fr. OF *pusser* may have been influenced by the symbol, the [ʃ] is otherwise difficult to account for.

-ustle: is originally imitative of sound, the -*le* symbolizing continuation, as in *rustle* 1389. The sense 'move rapidly' is first rec. 1586 in OED, and *bustle* c 1560 is perh. a var. of obs. *buckle* 1545 (fr. *buck* 1300) after it. *Hustle* 1684 is perh. *hurry* plus the symbol (the OED derives it from Du *hussen*, *hutselen* 'shake, toss'). In recent AE the words are all synonymous.

-uzz: imitative of sound it has formed *buzz* 1398 = *huzz* 1555 = obs. *fuzz* 1676. In a semantic variant it underlies *fuzz* in obs. sense 'make drunk' (so that the head buzzes), in another *fuzz-ball* 1597 (the accompanying motion being predominant). Its frequentative is *fuzzle* 'intoxicate' 1621 which is obs. in BE but is recorded in AE with the variant *wuzzle* (see ADD s.v. *fuzzle*).

Word-coining through ablaut modification

7. 82. The derivative principle here is sound symbolism as expressed by the root vowel. As many words are cross related, a good many will be found to have been mentioned in the chapter 'Initial Symbols'. Others have been treated under 'Final Symbols' as they enter the group of a final symbol at the same time (e.g. *tong* as a variant of *ting*, but also joining other words with the final symbol -*ang*).

The most frequent ablaut pattern is /i - e/, corresponding to older /i - a/. Next comes /i - u/. But there are also other types as our examples show. Which word of the ablauting group is presumably original can usually be told from OED, but it should be noted that earlier or later occurrence of one or the other vowel is incidental to the derivative process (*tip* is more recent than *tap*, but *ficker* is older than *flacker*). Some roots have more than two ablaut variants.

/i - æ/ *chitter* 1386 / *chatter* 1225 / *clap* 1200 / *clap* OE, *clitter* 1528 / *clatter* OE, *dab* 1609 / *dab* 1300, *flack* 1447 / *flack* 'flap' 1339, *flicker* OE / *flacker* 13... / *giggle* 1509 / *goggle* 1399, *gryp* OE / *grab* 1589, obs. *gryppe* 1591 / *grapple* 1580, *higgle* 1633 / *haggle* 1583, *jibber* 1824 / *jabber* 1499, *pribble* and *prabble* are first recorded as a pair 1598, *scrutch* 1250 / *scrutch* 1474, *scribble* 1467 / *scribble* 1537, *snyp* 1586 / *snap* 1495, *ting* 1495 / *tang* 1556, *tip* 1466 / *tap* 1225, *tittle* 1399 / *tattle* 1481, *whing* 1912 / *wahng* 1844.

/i - u/ *dryp* OE / *drop* OE, *hip* 1250 / *hop* OE, *fig* 1588 / *jog* 1548, *jiggle* 1836 / *joggle* 1513, *sep* 1386 / *sep* OE, *tip* 1225 / *top* OE (OED denotes the obvious connection between the two words), *tit* 'term for a small object' 1548 / *tot* 'small child' 1525.

/i - e/ *chinch* 1570 / *clench* 1250, *glint* 1440 / *glent* 13... / *pick* OE / *peck* 1382. /i - u/ historically speaking, we have the alternation in *sniffle* 1631 / *snuffle* 1883, *spirt* 1582 / *spurt* 1570, *spittle* 1603 / *sputtle* 1633, *tick* 1440 / *tuck* 13... (now dial., chiefly Sc, 'beat the drum'; see 7. 29; OED derives it from ONF *toquer*).

/a - æ/, corresponding to earlier /o - a/: *clack* 1481 / *clack* 1250, *dash* 13... / *dash* 1290, *flutter* OE / obs. *flatter* 1375, obs. *lush* 1330 = *lash* 1330, *rattle* (now dial.) 1400 = *rattle* OE, *sputter* 1598 / *spatter* 1582 (the former has auditory, the latter rather visual connotation), *splutter* 1677 / *splatter* 1784. Cf. also *blaster* 1434 and *blast* 1300. The verb *paddele* 1530 is obviously

a variant of *puddle* 1440, while *rugged* 1330 seems to belong to *rugged* 1300.

/æ-ɒ/ *chomp* 'chew' 1530 = A dial. *chomp*, *gabble* 'jabber' 1577 / *gobble* (said of a turkey cock) 1680, *jab* 1825 = *job* 1490, *plap* 1846 = *plap* 1833, *splash* 1715 = *splash* 1818, *tot* 'child' = A dial. *tot*, *tot*.
/ɪ-ɒ/ occurs in *tush* / *tosh* (exclamation), *puddge* / *podge* 'short and thick person', *putter* / *potter*.

Quantitative differences of vowel underlie *crack* OE / *crake* 1386, *scrish* 1250 / *screech* 1560, *titter* 1400 / *teeter* 1846, *sip* 1386 / *seep* 1790, while *twick* 'twich' OE / *tweck* 1609 belong here only synchronically. A similar quantitative-qualitative opposition relates *quiver* 1490 to *quaver* 1440.

Many expressive roots have several variants: *clitter* 1528 / *clatter* OE / *clatter* 1556, *clack* 1581 / *clack* 1250 / *cluck* 1481, *blab* 1656 / *blab* 1536 / *blot* 1607, *chip* 1330 / *chap* 1325 / *chop* 1362, *crick* 1601 / *crack* OE / *crake* 1386 / *croak* 1460 / *crack* 1325 / obs. *crook* 1325, *diddler* 1375 dial. = *daddler* 1483, obs. exc. dial. = *dodder* 1617, all meaning 'shake, tremble', *diddle* 'cheat' 1806 = *daddie* 1886, *titter* 1374 / *totter* 1200 / *teeter* 1846, *fitter* 1542 / obs. *fatter* 1375 / *futter* OE, *spittle* 1480 / *spottle* (obs. exc. dial.) OE / obs. *spittle* 1422.

Phonic variation of the root implies the changes in content outlined above (7.8—10. and 16.—17.). Cf. *chitter* and *chatter*, *clip* and *clap*, *tip* and *top*, *driv* and *drop*, *hip* and *hop*, *jug* and *jog*, *sep* and *sop*, *tip* and *top*, *tit* and *top*.

However, not all of the words exist on the same synchronic plane, as the list shows. Some are obsolete. A few are dialect variants of StE forms with a vowel of slightly different acoustic qualities (cf. *putter*/*potter*, *chomp*/*chomp*, *stamp*/*stomp*). Others seem to have had restricted currency anyway (as *clitter*, *di*, *flack*, *flacker*, *haggle*, *jibber* a.o.). But in general, the expressive principle itself does not seem to be bound up with certain periods as are other phonemic or morphological patterns, so I have thought it legitimate to group abiant variants together.

Word coining through prothetic s

7.83. We have already referred to the modification of roots by means of a prothetic *s*. We give here some more examples: *scrag* 1567 which the OED cannot explain is obviously a variant of *crag* 1300; *scrach* 1474 is a variant of obs. *crack* 1320; obs. *scraval* 'sprawl' 1380 is a variant of *craval* 1300; *scrunch* 1825 is a variant of *crunch* 1801; obs. *scringe* 1608 is the variant of *cringe* OE. The *Sc* word *slump* 1718 for which the OED assumes a LG etymon is nothing but the variant of *lump* 1300; dial. *sqenach* 1535 is the variant of *quenach* 1200; *squash* 1665 is the variant of *quash* 1387; obs. *sqeasny* 1583 is the variant of *queasny* 'squeamish' 1459; *sqelch* 1620 is the variant of *quelch* 1659; *snick* 'snip, nick' 1700 is the variant of *nick* 1523 (infl. by *snip*); *snip* 1586 is the variant of *nip* 1393 (or a variant of *snip*); *speer* 1866 is an American and English dial. variant of *peer* 1591 (perh. influenced by *spj*).

There is no denotative semantic difference between the variants; the prothetic *s* seems to be merely playful. At any rate, the opposition *s* ~ zero has no derivative value synchronically.

Variation through voicing resp. unvoicing of the consonant(s)

7.84. We find many pairs of words that are differentiated formally by the opposition 'absence of voice ~ presence of voice'. But the opposition is not a derivative principle. A very few words are used synonymously, while others, marked as such (at least in part), are not synonymous for one and the same speaker. *Snicker* 1694 and *snigger* 1706 are pretty synonymous, so are *smutch* 1530 and *smudge* 1430. The difference is often one of dialect only or of earlier and later usage (if this historical difference was not also one of dialectal variation, which it is impossible to tell). *Hack* 1200 is matched by *Se hag* 1400, *sludge* 1649 by dial. *slutch* 'mud, mire' 1669, *loss* 1506 has a dialect variant *doss* 1583. The Old English word *springan* 'shrink' is also represented by the form *springan*, *huck* 13.. and *hug* 1225 are often used interchangeably in early documents, according to OED, and *springle* 1502 is now rare or archaic for *springle* 1400. Original *grutch* 1225 changed into *grudge* 1450. But the partial synonymousness which dictionaries give for some pairs will not be felt by one and the same speaker: *grabble* 1579 is hardly used for *grapple* 1530, nor is *sniffle* 1819 interchangeable with *snivel* 1400 (as in *snivelling coward*), and *totter* 1200 is the common word while *dodder* 1617 is hardly known except in such expressions as *a doddering fool*. *Haggle* 1583 is commonly used with the meaning 'bargain' and is different from *hackle* 'hack, cut roughly, mangle' 1579.

The semantic differences between *sop* and *soh*, *tap* and *dab*, *pat* and *bat* also show that, though the sound value of voiced and voiceless consonants is made use of in the coining of expressive words, the opposition 'absence of voice ~ presence of voice' has no derivative relevancy, i.e. no grammatical standing (cp. 7.9)¹.

¹ My manuscript had long been completed when I read H. Wissemann, Untersuchungen zur Onomatopöie. The book covers similar ground insofar as it investigates, by way of experiment, the general problems of the coining of onomatopoeic words. It deals only with what I have called 'direct imitation' (Schallnachahmung). As for the value of speech sounds and several general principles, Wissemann has arrived at results similar to my own, while in other respects (for instance the treatment of initial symbols) our interpretations differ. See my review of the book in Indogermanische Forschungen 64 (1959) 183—187.