

2012

Conversational English. Session 2: Stress and Stretch



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Participant's Notes



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Session 2: “Stress and Stretch”

This session is intended to assist you with English Pronunciation, in particular stress and intonation which many Malaysians struggle with. Sometimes incorrect stress can hinder understanding to a greater extent than incorrect pronunciation of phonemes.

You will have the opportunity to practice some strategies to make remembering correct stress patterns more easy.

Objectives

You will:

- Learn / revise and apply some general rules about word stress in English
- Use strategies to practice and remember correct stress on longer words
- Select correct word stress pronunciations as part of a fun activity.
- Examine and practise some specific intonation patterns in English.

Materials:

You need:

- Participant’s notes for this session.
- Writing materials.
- Facilitator will give you a rubber band (elastic band) – one per participant

You need to be able to sit at a desk or table to write notes, and also to work in a group or team with other participants.



Notes about Stress Rules

Incorrect Word and Sentence stress can potentially cause greater confusion than simply incorrect pronunciation of phonemes. Take note of the following:

- English words of more than one syllable carry stress on one of the syllables.
- Words that have four or more syllables often also have secondary (weaker) stresses on every second or third syllable.
- Stress can cause a syllable to be pronounced louder, for longer, and at a higher pitch.
- When a syllable is unstressed, its vowel sound is commonly (but not always) reduced to a 'schwa'.

There are rules about stress placement in two or more syllable words. Although there are always exceptions to these rules, they provide a good starting point.

General Rules:

1. Most 2-syllable nouns and adjectives have stress on the first syllable:

e.g. BUT-ter PRET-ty

2. Most 2-syllable verbs have stress on the last syllable.

e.g. be-GIN pro-DUCE

3. Words ending in –ic have stress on penultimate syllable (2nd last).

e.g. STAT-ic real-IST-ic

4. Words ending in –tion and –sion have stress on penultimate syllable (2nd last).

e.g. so-LU-tion ex-PAN-sion

5. Words ending in –cy, –ty, –phy, –gy have stress on ante-penultimate syllable (3rd from end).

e.g. de-MO-cra-cy re-li-a-BIL-i-ty



6. Words ending in –al have stress on ante-penultimate syllable (3rd from end).

e.g. CRIT-ic-al

e-co-NOM-ic-al

phe-NOM-en-al

7. Polysyllabic words (words with many syllables)

These usually have more than one stress i.e. a ‘primary’ (strong) and a ‘secondary’ (weaker) stress.

e.g. in-ter-NA-tion-al

an-ti-bi-OT-ic

8. Compound Words (words made from two words)

If the compound is a noun, stress the **first** part:

e.g. GREEN-house

BLACK-bird

If the compound is an adjective, stress the **second** part:

e.g. bad-TEMpered

old-FASHioned

If the compound is a verb, stress the **second** part:

e.g. under-STAND

over-LOOK



Sentence Auction:

Instructions:

- A sentence that is completely correct is worth RM100.
- An incorrect sentence is worthless. (RM 0)
- Any amount bid on an incorrect sentence will be subtracted from the total winnings.

Words with 2 syllables or more in each sentence will have their stress marked – correctly or incorrectly. There are other errors in some of the sentences.

You have **ONLY RM 800** to bid. You do not have to bid all of it. There are 20 sentences.

Bid on every sentence, but don't bid more than RM 800 altogether. If you 100% sure that a sentence is 100% correct you can bid up to RM 100 on that one sentence. If you are not totally sure, bid on the sentence according to your confidence – RM0 / RM10 / RM20 / RM30 / RM40 ... RM100.

Number	Sentence	Bid	Correct	Incorrect
1	I keep <u>sneezi</u> ng <u>becau</u> se I am <u>all</u> ergy to <u>flow</u> ers.			
2	Sam's job is the <u>distrib</u> ution of <u>lett</u> ers and <u>par</u> cels.			
3	Ali was <u>up</u> set because he saw the <u>arti</u> cle as an <u>ins</u> ult.			
4	There has been a <u>ste</u> ady <u>de</u> crease in the <u>num</u> ber of <u>gradu</u> ates.			
5	<u>Molly</u> had a <u>ve</u> ry bad <u>reac</u> tion to the <u>med</u> ication			
6	The <u>econo</u> mical is <u>suff</u> ering with the <u>glo</u> bal <u>fin</u> ancial <u>cri</u> sis.			
7	<u>Arif</u> wants to do <u>photo</u> graphy when he is <u>ol</u> der.			
8	<u>Hope</u> fully I will get a <u>certi</u> ficate when I <u>com</u> plete this course.			
9	She is <u>over</u> weight because her <u>metab</u> olism is <u>slugg</u> ish			
10	Could you please <u>clar</u> ify your <u>state</u> ment <u>abou</u> t the <u>ab</u> olition of <u>toba</u> cco?			
11	Please don't <u>des</u> ert me, I hate <u>bei</u> ng <u>iso</u> lated and <u>al</u> one.			
12	All of my friends and <u>rel</u> atives will <u>att</u> end the <u>re</u> ception.			
13	Politicians <u>adv</u> ocate <u>exp</u> orts to <u>mul</u> tiple <u>coun</u> tries.			
14	I would like to be <u>pre</u> sent at your <u>se</u> minar.			
15	You should <u>add</u> ress the Queen as "Your <u>Maj</u> esty".			
16	Where did you go for your <u>sum</u> mer <u>vac</u> ation?			
17	The boss <u>in</u> formed me that he would <u>in</u> crease my pay.			
18	This <u>pic</u> ture <u>epi</u> tomises the work of our <u>com</u> pany.			
19	My son is <u>stud</u> ying <u>soci</u> ology at <u>uni</u> versity.			
20	Don't poke the <u>tig</u> er <u>bec</u> ause you will <u>ant</u> agonise it.			
	Total each column			
	Correct total minus Incorrect total			

