

Talk a Lot

Focus on Connected Speech

Analysis of Discussion Words in Elementary Book 2

(Reference: *Talk a Lot Elementary Book 2*, pp.147-151)

Aim: to identify word stress in each of the discussion words in Book 2. *Note: all of the words are nouns.*

Summary

Of the 407 discussion words in Talk a Lot Elementary Book 2, there are:

- 146 words with 1 syllable

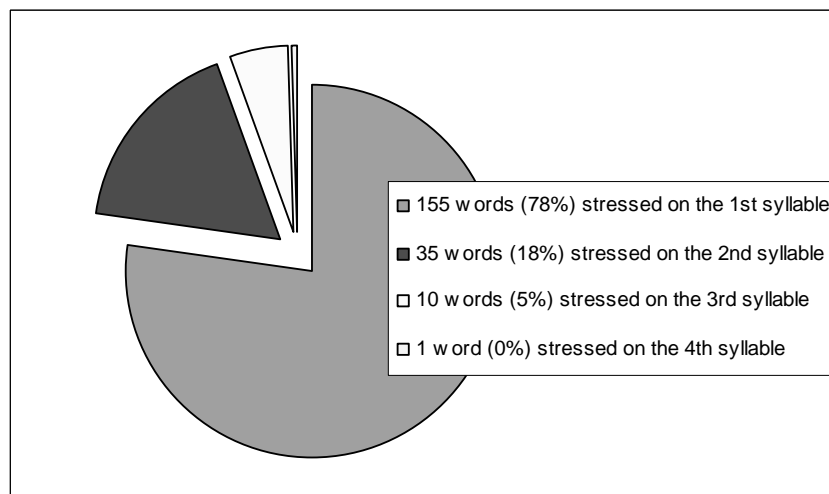
We can discount these because we know where the word stress falls – on the whole word.

- 60 phrases

We can discount these because we are looking at the word stress of individual words. If you wanted to, you could look at these phrases separately and analyse the word stress of the words, both separately and together.

There are 201 individual words with two or more syllables

- 155 words which are stressed on the 1st syllable (78%)
- 35 words which are stressed on the 2nd syllable (18%)
- 10 words which are stressed on the 3rd syllable (5%)
- 1 word which is stressed on the 4th syllable (0%)



Discussion Words

155 words (78%) stressed on the 1st syllable

including 32 compound nouns (in boxes), which we know are usually stressed on the 1st syllable

accident, **animal**, **ankle**, **arson**, **audience**, **autumn**, **badminton**, **ballet**, **baseball**, **battery**, **birthday**, **blackmail**, **boxing**, **bridesmaid**, **butterfly**, **caterpillar**, **championship**, **childhood**

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chorus, classical, coffin, colour, commentator, countryside, cricket, criminal, crocodile, cyclone, dashboard, desert, DJ, dolphin, driver, drizzle, eighty, elbow, elephant, engine, fifty, final, finger, fingerprints, flooding, flower, football, forest, forty, friendship, funeral, goldfish, guitar, hailstones, handbrake, handcuffs, hazard, headlights, hockey, hundred, hurricane, indicator, insect, instrument, jury, keyboard, kidney, labour, lion, liver, lizard, mammal, marriage, menopause, midwife, mistress, monkey, mountain, murder, muscle, music, musical, nature, nightclub, ninety, number, oboe, ocean, octopus, orange, orchestra, organ, panda, passenger, pedal, player, pregnancy, prison, punishment, purple, rabbit, racquet, radio, rainbow, raincoat, reservoir, river, rugby, sailing, saxophone, season, seatbelt, seven, seventy, shoplifting, shoulder, singer, sixty, skeleton, skiing, snooker, snowman, spider, stadium, starfish, stereo, stomach, summer, sunblock, sunglasses, sunset, suntan, suspect, swimming, teenager, temperature, tennis, terrorism, thirty, tiger, tortoise, trumpet, twenty, valley, victim, violence, volleyball, weather, wedding, widow, windscreen, winner, winter, witness, yellow, zebra, zero

35 words (18%) stressed on the 2nd syllable

accelerator, affair, appeal, arrest, athletics, biography, conductor, defendant, detective, divorce, eighteen, eleven, employment, engagement, environment, fifteen, fourteen, geography, giraffe, gorilla, musician, nineteen, Olympics, performer, piano, prediction, redundancy, sixteen, solicitor, supporter, thermometer, thirteen, tsunami, umbrella, violin

10 words (5%) stressed on the 3rd syllable

adolescence, automatic, hippopotamus, kangaroo, referee, anniversary, seventeen, separation, education, graduation

1 word (0%) stressed on the 4th syllable

qualification

Suffixes

See p.13.6 for an analysis of suffixes in discussion words from Book 2.

Discussion words that are not stressed on the first syllable

The 46 words which are not stressed on the first syllable can be categorised into five groups. It would be wrong to state that these kinds of words will never be stressed on the first syllable, but it's possible to see some patterns that can be helpful to keep in mind when looking for word stress in a group of vocabulary words:

1. Nouns that come from a verb (10)

accelerator (verb: accelerate), appeal (verb: appeal), arrest (verb: arrest), conductor (verb: conduct), defendant (verb: defend), detective (verb: detect), divorce (verb: divorce), performer (verb: perform), solicitor (verb: solicit), supporter (verb: support)

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2. Foreign words that haven't yet conformed to the 1st syllable drift in English (10)

giraffe, gorilla, piano, tsunami, umbrella, violin, Olympics, hippopotamus, kangaroo, thermometer

3. "-teen" numbers which can be stressed on either syllable, depending on the context* (7)

thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen

**Note: if we were counting: "Thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, etc." we would stress the numbers on their first syllables, but if we were using a number in isolation, e.g. somebody asked us "How old are you?" we would naturally reply "Nineteen", with the stress on the second syllable, rather than "Nineteen".*

4. Words which conform to their own suffix rule* (16)

**See p.15.4 for more on this*

For example:

Rule 1: the stress is always on the syllable before the suffix:

- employ-ment, engage-ment
- educa-tion, gradua-tion, qualifica-tion, predic-tion, separa-tion
- adolesc-ence
- annivers-ary
- automat-ic, athlet-ics
- geog-raphy, biog-raphy
- music-ian
- redund-ancy

...or Rule 2: the stress is always on the suffix:

- refer -ee

5. Uncategorisable – i.e. the stress is just like that for no apparent reason (3)

affair, eleven, environment

Summary of Method for Finding Word Stress in Discussion Words

- Take away one syllable words
- Take away phrases (e.g. "post office")
- Identify words with suffixes
- Identify words that are compound nouns
- Notice that most words are stressed on the first syllable
- Look for patterns within words which are not stressed on the first syllable (see 1-5 above)