

You Are The Course Book 2 – In Practice

Teaching English for one year
without a course book

This material accompanies the following podcast:

Teaching English without a Course Book – Week 5 (25:45)

In this podcast, we look at a series of Input Lessons on the topic of Sentence Stress Rules.

My new book – You Are The Course Book 2 – In Practice – is now available to download for free here: <https://purlandtraining.com/free-books/>

You can download the first volume of *You Are The Course Book* for free here: <https://purlandtraining.com/free-books/>

Keywords: English, ESL, EFL, ESOL, free, download, teaching, teach, teacher training, learn, study, improve, material, course book, planning, grammar, speaking, pronunciation, listening, reading, spelling, phonics, improvisation

Feedback would be welcome! If you have any feedback for Matt, please contact him here: <https://purlandtraining.com/contact-us/>

Input Lesson #5 – Sentence Stress Rules (w/c 06.05.13 –Week 5 of the syllabus)

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Topic: sentence stress rules – not guessing or random; not a mystery!

E.g. sentence 1 = 20 syllables; 7 are stressed; how to get the right stressed? Not too many, not too few. What are the odds?

Material:

- Sentence stress rules – handout
- Some sentences to work on

Lesson outline (90 mins):

I explained that if I picked up a random book I would be able to read the text out loud, even though unfamiliar, because the sentence stress rules are deeply embedded in my brain. Students have to learn them. It is not impossible or random, as some think. You can use logic and follow the rules.

I dictated the first four sentences from *Talk a Lot Elementary Book 1* Work sentence blocks (random sentences); I checked spelling and meaning – translation. More problematic than I had thought (at Elementary level).

We found content words and stress in the first sentence on the board together. Rules elicited naturally as they came up, e.g. suffixes and one-syllable words.

They did the same together as a group with the next two sentences; we checked them together on the board.

I gave the handout and we went through it together. Most of the rules are by now familiar to SS. They have *discovered* them, rather than being told them.

Confident of the method, I asked one student to pick a random book from the bookshelf, one a page, and the last a sentence (short). I wrote it on the board; we did the same process and added numbers for the rules. Me: “We can do this with any sentence. It’s not a magic show!”

SS do the same for the fourth sentence on their page together and add numbers to show the rules.

We examine stressed vowel sounds, and what would happen if they were wrong. Lech’s reading was so good I exclaimed: “That’s music to my ears! Because it sounds like English.” He beamed. The others did well too.

HW: Find sentences and do this process – practise adding the numbers and sounds and read aloud.

Variation – find out SS’s reasons for sentence stress BEFORE telling them the rules:

1. Mark stressed syllables in the four given sentences = random?
2. Tell me which ones and why you’ve chosen them
3. My teaching bit – why stress is important
4. SS write the four sentences on the board – with stressed syllables
5. We go through them one by one; check them, and elicit the rules so that they will know for other sentences
6. We read the rules on the handout
7. SS try the next sentence(s):
 - i. underline content words
 - ii. mark stressed syllables
 - iii. write the number of the rule by each stress
 - iv. write the stressed vowel sounds

Some observations from a student:

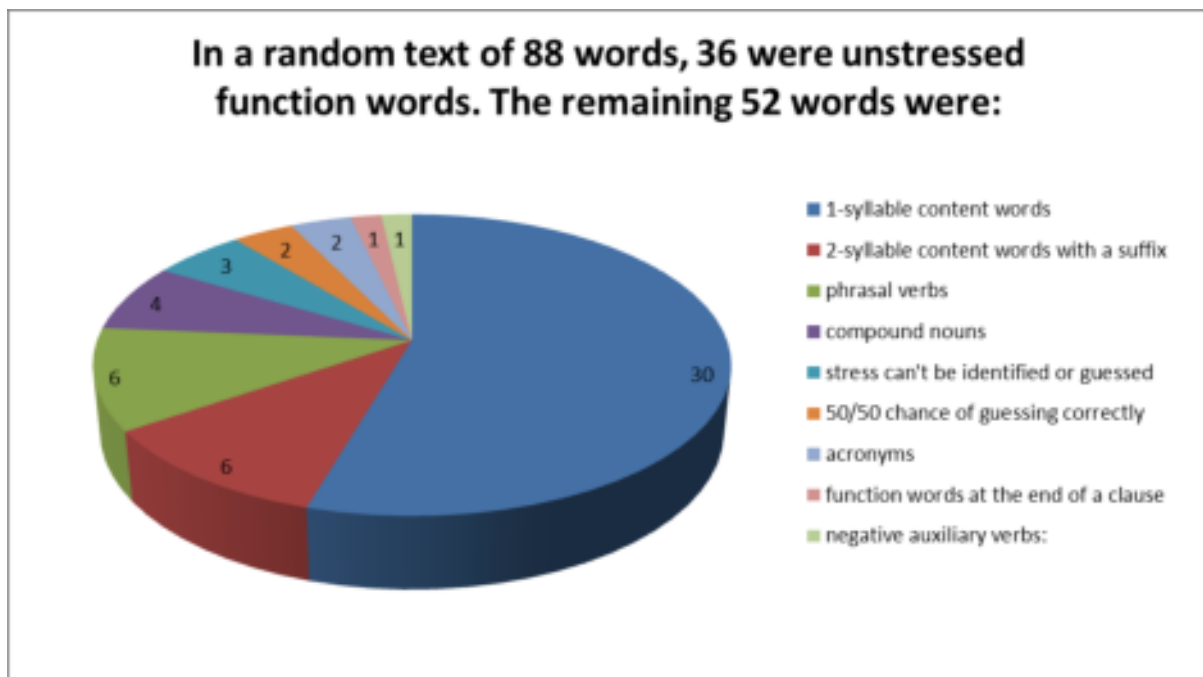
M.:

“That’s why it is hard to understand when listening to English!” (I.e. because the function words are swallowed)

“American English is easier in this respect.”

He hasn’t learned sentence stress anywhere before... like all my students!

Clues to working out sentence stress:



Try categorising the words in a short text, as above, and compare your results.

Talk a Lot

Work

Sentence Blocks:

- 1.** (*Present Simple*) Gerry hates working part-time for his dad's furniture business.
Who

- 2.** (*Present Continuous*) Helena is hoping to get promoted at the end of the year.
When

- 3.** (*Past Simple*) When Greg worked for Dell he had to do plenty of overtime.
What

- 4.** (*Past Continuous*) Edward was updating his CV because he wanted to apply for a new job.
Why

- 5.** (*Present Perfect*) My friend Jo has been unemployed since last August.
How long

- 6.** (*Modal Verbs*) You need to ask your manager for a pay rise as soon as possible!
What

- 7.** (*Future Forms*) I'm going to visit that new employment agency about temporary work.
Where

- 8.** (*First Conditional*) Dave will have to work very hard if he wants to have a successful career in sales.
What

How to Find Stress in a Sentence

Don't panic! English stress is not such a mystery! If we follow some simple rules, we can find the stress in most sentences quite easily.

Content words: main verbs, phrasal verbs, adjectives, adverbs, numbers, wh- question words, and negative auxiliary verbs

Function Words: pronouns, auxiliary verbs, prepositions, articles, determiners, conjunctions, quantifiers, verb "be" as a main verb

Function words are not usually stressed, so we can ~~cross them out~~ and focus on finding stress in content words. Choose any sentence in English. Give each word a number according to the following criteria:

Content Words, e.g. ...

| ID: | Type of word: | What we know about the stress: | Examples: |
|-----|---|---|---|
| 1 | one-syllable words (many words) | we stress the whole word | book; house |
| 2 | two-syllable words with a suffix | we stress the first syllable; this is logical, because suffixes are not usually stressed | teacher; playing |
| 3 | two-syllable verbs | we often stress the second syllable, but not in every case | arrive; receive |
| 4 | compound nouns | we usually stress the first syllable | suitcase; something |
| 5 | negative auxiliary verbs | we usually stress the first syllable | didn't; couldn't |
| 6 | phrasal verbs | we stress both parts (if two parts; if there are three parts it varies) | wake up; sit down; get ready |
| 7 | acronyms | we stress the final syllable | BBC; UN |
| 8 | function words at the end of a clause (e.g. prep./pron./aux. verbs, etc.) | we usually stress them – usually one syllable, so we stress the whole word | something to live for; that's his |
| 9 | other words with suffixes that obey a suffix rule | the stress is on the suffix or just before the suffix, e.g. -ion | stress is always before -ion; -ese and -eer are always stressed, etc. |
| 10 | other words where the stress can't be identified or guessed | we have to learn the stress individually, while looking for patterns continually; note it down in a stress notebook | opportunity; particular |

1) My friend Jo has been (unemployed) since last August.
 (1) e (1) eu PPP prefix (3) suffix? (1) ar (10) or t-ed d-

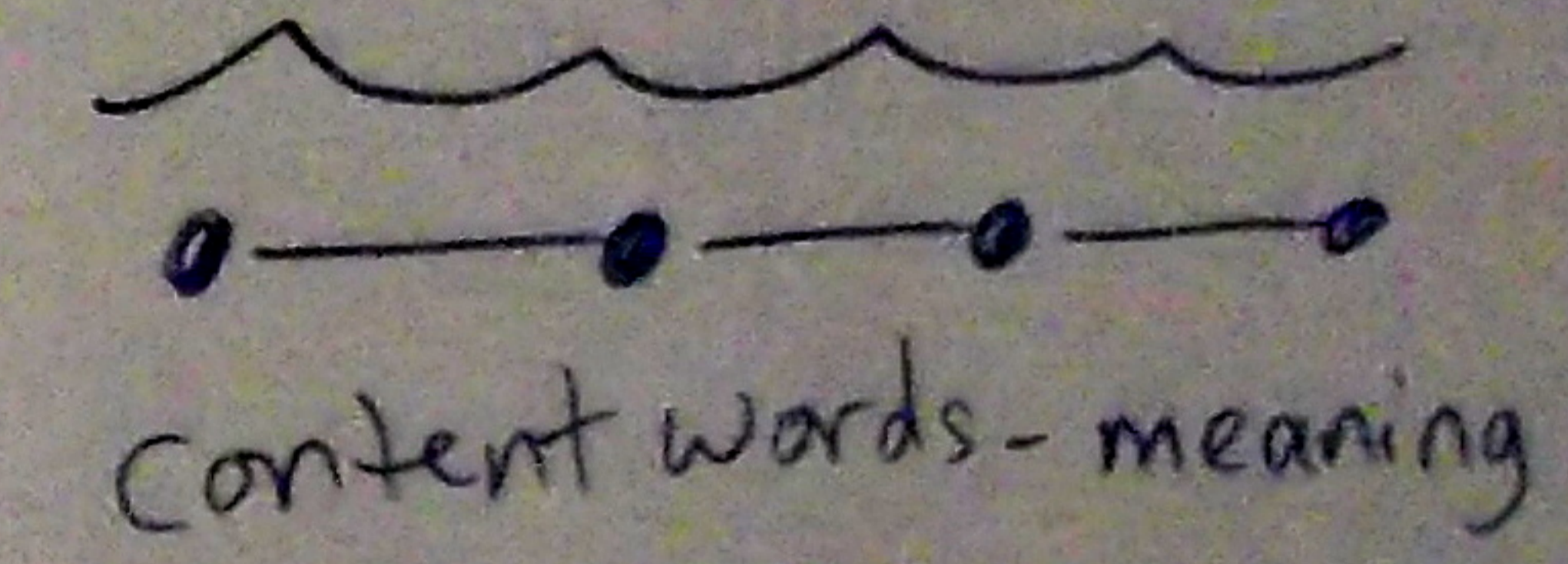
Logical! 10 05.13 Em
 Use logic! Input Lesson 5
 Sentence Stress Rules

Genny (hates) working part-time for his clad's
 suffix 1 syllable suffix ? 1 syllable

furniture (business) promote
 picture)

The dog was sitting in the garden
 crucial for meaning
 stress-timed language
 syllable-timed language
 75% - 1st syllable - French
 2-syllable verbs - 2nd - Japanese

2) Helena is hoping to get promoted at the end of the year.



3) When Greg worked for Dell he had to do plenty of overtime function words - grammar
 e er e oo e eu (sand spine) compound noun = 1st

acronyms = last k zi

4) Edward was updating his CV because he wanted to apply for a new job
 e (o) ei (i) ee (ee) (ee) o ai oo o

Talk a Lot

4.30pm
10.05.13.

Work

Sentence Blocks:

1. (Present Simple) Gerry hates working part-time for his dad's furniture business.

Who

I hear it - sometimes I'm sure

why?

I hear it

I hear it

I don't know

I just feel it

we don't stress suffixes

2. (Present Continuous) Helena is hoping to get promoted at the end of the year.

When

one syllable word - stress whole word

I hear it like that

like working - suffix rule

I hear it like that

3. (Past Simple) When Greg worked for Dell he had to do plenty of overtime.

What

heard in the past + remembered it

1 syll word

1 syll word

suffix rule

1 syll

I hear like that

4. (Past Continuous) Edward was updating his CV because he wanted to apply for a new job.

Why

checked in dictionary I hear it

1 syllable word

I hear it

I hear it

I hear it

sounds like that

5. (Present Perfect) My friend Jo has been unemployed since last August.

How long

PART 2:

1

1

4

1

2