

UOW College Hong Kong / Community College of City University
Student English Enhancement Unit (SEE U)
Daily English Practice

Week 10

#146 How to speak with the right stress in English words

Skills/ Objectives: Reading, Speaking, Listening and Writing Skills

PART 1: Before you read...

Preparatory questions

- Are you aware of the importance of word stress and intonation in speaking English?
- Do you know that the English intonation and stress patterns are very different from those of Chinese?
- What are the rules of word stress and intonation in English?

Vocabulary

- accent: The characteristic way in which a particular social/regional group of people speak a language.
- stress: The stronger force placed on pronouncing a word or syllable in speaking.
- spot on: Exactly right.
- nag somebody into doing something: To force somebody to do something by continuously complaining.
- school-marm: A female school teacher who likes to control other people.
- say something without blinking: To say something without hesitation.

PART 2: Article for Reading

Are you aware of the rules for stress in speaking English? Check them out from the following article written and posted by Brita Haycraft on 9 October 2013. You will benefit and improve yourself:

Why is teaching word stress in spoken English important?

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/teaching-how-stress-words-spoken-english-important>

PART 3: Speaking Skills Practice

In the article quoted above, we actually learn a number of important clues about proper stress use in speaking English. Ask yourself whether you really understand the key points by answering the questions below:

Qt 1: What effect will be caused on the attitude of the speaker if he speaks each word with equal stress in English?

Qt 2: What words should be stressed in speaking English?

Qt 3: What are the less important sounds, a,o and u, compressed into in spoken English?

Qt 4: What wrong meanings can be generated in speaking English if we do not compress the less important sounds of a,o and u?

Qt5 : What are typically the American ways of compressing unstressed sounds in the following sequences: “going to” and “want to”?

The answers to Qt1 - 5 will be provided in the next set of exercises.

PART 4: Listening Comprehension

Watch the following video posted on YouTube to practise listening while learning more about the **use of stress patterns in English**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAIoSYqzGkY&t=54s>

PART 5: Writing Practice

Good writing is often created with the use of good expressions. Did you notice the following well-put sentence in the passage:

“It would be so easy to put life into the students' sentences simply by reminding them to stress the logical words.”

“**To put life into something**” is to make something so interesting that it seems to have become alive. Besides this expression, there are the following expressions with similar meanings:

“**come to life**”

e.g., The movie came to life when the superstar appeared.

“**bring something to life**”

e.g., The author is able to write a story that brought the history of the country to life.