

GUEST LECTURE ON

'The Role of Word Stress & Intonation in Spoken English'

24th January, 2022

Organized by: Department of English



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REPORT

Department of English has organised a Guest Lecture on 'The Role of Word Stress and Intonation in Spoken English' with Dr. Bodipalli Nagaiah, Associate Professor in English, on 24-1-2022 for I year Arts students. The speaker's has emphasized the role and importance of word stress, Word stress is crucial to properly pronounce words in the English language. It means, that in multisyllabic words, some syllables are spoken with greater emphasis than others. If you get word stress wrong, it might be difficult to understand you, as there are several words which sound similar and can only be distinguished by word stress (in spoken language).

English is not a flat language, but one of stresses and varying intonations. And here's how it works: Each word in English is broken into a number of syllables.

Short words like dog, car, box and so on are one syllable words. Meaning each of these words only has one sound. Words such as pretty [*pret-ty*], quiet [*qui-ed*] and export [*ex-port*] are broken up into two syllables.

Then there are words with three, four and even five or more syllables. Think of the words important [*im-por-tant*], realistic [*real-is-tic*] and communication [*com-mun-i-ca-tion*]. Each syllable needs to be pronounced, but some syllables are **stressed** or emphasized on more than others, depending on the word.

Examples:

- In the word 'important', the second syllable is stressed, so it is pronounced stronger and should read *imPORTant*.
- The syllables which are not stressed are called the weak or quiet ones.
- This is not only a difficult concept to grasp for Asian speakers studying English, but generally for all English as a second language students.
- Even if one understands that importance of *word stress*, knowing exactly where to emphasize stress is no easy task.
- The speaker has stressed on the importance of Word stress he has also given certain reasons for word stress being Important.

These are a few reasons:

- Word stress heavily affects the sounds of the vowels in a word. Different word stress can make a word sound completely different.
- Native speakers rely on word stress to identify words. Thus, incorrect word stress patterns can lead to miscommunication between non-native speakers and native speakers.
- Knowing the stress pattern of words will help students to learn and remember the correct pronunciation of words.
- Knowing correct word stress will help students to improve their listening comprehension skills.
- Overall, the skill to stress words correctly will help ESL learners more to converse more confidently in English and enjoy it!

Principal Dr V. Narayana Rao has felicitated the guest at the end of the presentation. Ms. S. Santha Kumari, Senior Lecturer, Mrs. K. Radha, Senior Lecturer, Mr. B. Mohan Teja, and Mr. M. Tilak, Lecturers in English have participated in this Guest Lecture. Around 120 students have participated in this Guest Lecture.