



University Centre Abdelhafid Boussouf **E-** **learning Centre**



English –
MA.2

Lesson Seven: Word syllables & stress

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<i>Institute</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Specialty</i>
<i>Economic Science</i>	<i>Economic & Commercial Science</i>	<i>Master Two</i>	<i>All specialties</i>

Objectives of the lesson:

- The purpose of this lesson is for the learner to understand how many syllables are in an English word and where to, appropriately, place the stress in order to pronounce English correctly.

Word syllables and stress

The English word is divided into syllables, for example, it can be a word of:

1. One syllable: pay, bank, law.
2. Two syllables: today, purchase, money.
3. Three syllables: wonderful, expensive, computer.
4. Four syllables: conversation, American, transformation.

When we pronounce words in English, there is one particular syllable that takes the stress more than the other syllables, and this syllable is different from one word to another depending on how many syllables the word has. Pronouncing words with the right stress will make the pronunciation more natural,

Only vowel sounds are stressed (a,e,i,o,u), which mean, we divide the word according to the number of vowels. For example:

- Money = **Mo**-ney
 - Today = **to**-day
- In words with one syllable, the stress is in the beginning of the word, for example:
- ‘Sleep ‘Pay ‘run ‘house ‘chair
- In words with two syllables:
1. The stress will be on the first syllable if the word is a **noun or adjective**. For example:
 - Party = ‘**par**-ty (noun)
 - Special = ‘**spe**-cial (adjective)
 2. The stress will be on the second syllable if the word is a **verb**. For example
 - Relax = re-‘**lax** (verb)
 - Demand = de-‘**mand** (verb)
- In words with 3 or more syllables:
1. If the word ends in (**ic**), (**tion**) or (**sion**), the stress will be on the second syllable from the end. For example

- Transformation= trans-for-‘**ma**-tion
- Economic= ec-o-‘**nom**-ic
- Permission= per-‘**mis**-sion

2. If the word ends in **(cy)**, **(ty)**, **(gy)** and **(al)** always place their stress on the third from last syllable. For example:

- University = u-ni-‘**ver**-si-ty
- Currency= ‘**cu**-ren-cy
- Emergency= e-‘**mer**-gen-cy
- Biology= bi-‘**ol**-o-gy
- Hospital= ‘**hos**-pi-tal
- inspirational= in-spi-‘**ra**-tion-al

3. If the word ends with **(ous)**, we have 2 cases:

1) If the word ends with **(ous)** and has 2 or 3 syllables, the stress will mostly be on the first syllable, for example:

- Gorgeous= ‘**gor**-geous
- Jealous= ‘**Jeal**-ous
- Fabulous= ‘**fab**-u-lous
- Serious= ‘**se**-ri-ous
- Dangerous=’**dan**-ger-ous

2) If the word ends with **(ous)** and has 4 syllables, the stress will be on the second syllable. For example:

- Anonymous= a-‘**non**-y-mous
- Hilarious= hi-‘**lar**-i-ous

References:

My English Language. (2020, November 3). *Syllables and Stress Patterns in English - Word Stress & Sentence Stress*. <https://www.myenglishlanguage.com/linguistics-language-guide/english-phonology/syllables-and-stress/>