

Degree 3, (English Honours)

Paper – VIII

Section – 2

Lecture- 2 (final)

Subject- **Linguistics**

Suprasegmental Features

Stress

When four levels of stress are identified they are usually classified as follows: -

Primary stress: indicated by a half straight bar¹

Secondary stress: indicated by ^

Tertiary stress indicated by '

Weak stress: the symbol ~ is accepted, but often it is omitted entirely to indicate weak stress.

If three levels of stress are identified, they are classified as follows: -

Primary stress: indicated by,

Mid stress: indicated by ^

Weak stress: indicated by ~ or the symbol may be omitted.

Most British linguists and phoneticians, however speak of two word accents ... primary accent and secondary accent. Primary accent is marked with a vertical bar above and in front of the syllable to which it refers, secondary accent with a bar below and in front of the syllable.

For example, in the following disyllabic words, the first syllable receives the primary accent.

'table **'doctor** **'writer** **'mother** **'apple** **'dentist** **'author**
'father

In the following disyllabic words, the primary accent is on the second syllable:

a'bout **all'ot** **ca'nal** **a'llow** **es'tate** **ga'rage**

In the following trisyllabic words, both primary and secondary accents have been marked:

'edu,cate **'recti,fy** **under'stand** **'cal,culate** **'recog,nise**
decom'pose

The accentual pattern of English words is **fixed**. That is, the **primary accent** is always on a particular syllable for a given word.

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