

Module 17

Revision Tests

Sentence stress (Revision)

At sentence level, not all words are stressed. Remember that words in the classes of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs usually carry the primary stress in a normal continuous speech. On the other hand, words that belong to the classes of pronouns, prepositions, articles, and conjunctions are not usually stressed in a sentence. Read these sentences aloud. Ensure you observe the stress pattern.

1. We kept the keys under the box.
2. The students are cutting the grass.
3. Adamu has sold six crates of soft drinks.
4. Aishatu was told to report for work on Monday.
5. Lock the shop before going to the stadium.

Exercise 1

Underline the words that should be stressed in the following sentences:

1. Mr Hassan was full of admiration for his new building.
2. The manager complained about lateness to duty among the staff.
3. Abiodun was discharged and acquitted by the magistrate.
4. The government has introduced a new system of tax collection.
5. The cashier was promoted because of his hard work.
6. The contractor was blacklisted for doing a shoddy job.
7. The policeman is investigating the robbery case.
8. Obi inherited many plots of land from his father.
9. Mrs Benson instructed her driver to fill the car tank before the journey.
10. His father advised him to complete his education before travelling abroad.

Exercise 2

Read the following after your teacher's model.

1. The weather appears to be bright today.
2. Pass the salt to me please.
3. What did you mean to say yesterday?
4. I'm surprised that the Rangers could lose the match.
5. He's still the best coach around.

Section B: Structure

Clauses

Main clauses

In *Functional English* for SS 1 and 2, we learnt about the clause. In this module we shall revise the lesson. English has two types of clauses: main clauses and subordinate clauses. Another name respectively for main clauses and subordinate clauses are independent and dependent clauses. A main or independent clause is a part of a sentence which, if isolated, can stand on its own. Let us see what this means.

- a. Obi is very handsome **but** he is unintelligent.
- b. The governor makes promises **and** he keeps them.
- c. University workers are on strike **so** students are at home.
- d. He earns a lot of money, he dresses very well, **yet** there is never food in his house.

Sentence a. has two clauses.

Obi is very handsome (but) he is unintelligent.

It is possible to make two sentences out of this, thus:

- i. *Obi is very handsome.*
- ii. *He is unintelligent.*

These sentences are complete on their own. They make full meaning. No addition is required to make each sentence sensible. Therefore the clauses that make up the sentence,

Obi is very handsome but he is unintelligent

are two main clauses. We can say the same thing for sentence b.:

The governor makes promises and he keeps them.

Two clauses make up this sentence. They are:

- i. *The governor makes promises.*
- ii. *He keeps them.*

Again, because these clauses can form full sentences when separated, they are called main or independent clauses.

Three main clauses can be found in sentence d.

- i. He earns a lot of money.
- ii. He dresses very well.
- iii. There is never food in his house.

Because each clause is independent, each of them is regarded as an

independent or main clause.

Whenever all the parts of a sentence can form complete sentences on their own as we have seen above, each of those parts is known as a main clause.

Did you notice the words used to link the main clauses in the sentences. The link words are *and*, *but*, *yet*. They are called coordinators. Their presence shows that the clauses involved are main clauses.

Subordinate clauses

Another name for subordinate clause is dependent clause. As the name implies, a dependent clause cannot stand on its own. The word *subordinate* also speaks of something junior. Subordinate or dependent clauses depend on a main clause in order to make complete sense. Below are some examples.

- a. **Even though** Obi speaks very good English, he is unintelligent.
- b. **Because** the governor makes many promises, he can't keep them all.
- c. Lecturers are busy at home **although** universities are on strike.
- d. **Unless** you earn a lot of money, you cannot buy very expensive clothes.
- e. **When** she listened from the safety of her bedroom, she could hear the robbers' footsteps.
- f. They then invited the lady, **who** began to give an account of the accident.
- g. The little hotel **where** the man was arrested was burnt down.
- h. He came at this time **that** he may receive help.

The sentences above are made up of main clauses and subordinate clauses. Can you identify the main clauses in the sentences? The part of each sentence which can stand on its own is a main clause. The parts which cannot stand on their own are subordinate clauses. See the table below.

Column A: Main clause	Column B: Subordinate clause
a. Obi is unintelligent	although he speaks good English
b. He is unable to keep them all	because the governor makes many promises
c. Lecturers are very busy at home	although universities are on strike

d. You can't buy very expensive clothes	unless you earn a lot of money
e. She could hear the robbers' footsteps	when she listened from the safety of her Bedroom
f. They invited the lady	who began to give an account of the accident
g. The little hotel was burnt down	where the man was arrested
h. He came at this time	that he may receive help

All the clauses that make up column A can be regarded as complete sentences. They each make complete sense. They do not need any other clause to make them complete. The same cannot be said for the clauses in column B. If I walked to a friend and said:

*Even though Obi speaks good English

my listener would expect me to complete my sentence. My listener would probably say

Eh, he, what happened?

This response shows that:

“Even though Obi speaks good English” is not a main clause, it is a subordinate clause because it cannot stand on its own. It needs another clause to make full sense. The same thing applies to the remaining clauses in column B.

Did you notice the words used to introduce the subordinate clauses in the examples above? These words are *even though*, *because*, *although*, *unless*, *when*, *who*, *where* and *that*. Others include *which*, and *where*. These words are called subordinators. They reduce the sentence in which they find themselves to a subordinate clause. Any time you see these words in a sentence, know that they are introducing a subordinate clause.

Sometimes you may be required to separate longer sentences into main and subordinate clauses. Let us consider the examples below. We have used slashes to separate the different clauses in the sentences.

- i. Although she studied in England, (SC)/ she held the notion (MC) / that children should speak their mother tongue.(SC)
- ii. Sometimes she would look tired with a labourer's smile,(MC)/ but most often her eyes would look anaemic(MC) / as if she was a nursing mother(SC)/ whose baby did not sleep at night.(SC)
- iii. We can appreciate the seriousness of the problem (MC)/ when we realise(SC)/ that constant electricity is required for the growth of

the economy.(SC)

Main clause(s)	Subordinate clause(s)
1. She held the notion	i. although she studied in England ii. that children should speak their mother tongue.
2. i.Sometimes she would look tired with a labourer's smile ii.but most often her eyes would look anaemic	i. as if she was a nursing mother; ii. whose baby did not sleep at night.
3. We can appreciate the seriousness of the problem	i. when we realise ii. that constant electricity is required for the growth of the economy.

Exercise

- Give 5 examples of main clauses and subordinate clauses.
- In the following sentences identify the type of clauses that are italicised and state their functions.
 - To get her meal *before it turned cold*, Mary had to run.
 - Whatever the governor decides* will be for the best.
 - The judges finally decided *which contestant was the best*.
 - Because 90 per cent of Nigeria's export is oil*, Nigeria's economy is heavily dependent on oil.
 - Her commitment to her parents' family was reduced *when she got married*.
 - What you sow is *what you reap*.
 - Though we lost contact*, she never really forgot me.
 - The president's parents, *who were born in Aba*, speak a little Igbo.
 - The Nobel Prize is a prestigious award *that is presented in areas of peace, literature and science*.
 - The film was shot in Lekki, *where the director lives in a house painted white*.
- Form 10 sentences from the table below.

When the rains began,	everybody	left.
When the police arrived,	they all	sighed.
When the fuel was exhausted,	the students all	hissed.
When the bus arrived,		

Section C: Reading Comprehension

Before reading the passage discuss these first.

- ❖ Do you think our people live long enough?
- ❖ Indeed, do you think mankind lives long enough?
- ❖ Given our relatively short lifespan, what should one aim to achieve?

Now try to read through in three minutes.

Today, official figures make us believe that the average Nigerian lives for fewer than fifty years. This is a sad development, granting that the average Briton, just like his American counterpart, lives for about 72 years while the average Japanese *attains* the ripe age of 75 years. It is the more saddening, given that about a decade ago the figure for the average Nigerian on mother earth was a little more than fifty years. However, because of the scourge of HIV/AIDS, the mean lifespan dropped drastically.

Let us come down to the basics. What can a man achieve within forty-five years before succumbing to the beckons of death? Normally, a man spends some twenty years to develop into a young adult. In his twenties, he tries to *acquire* a profession and settle down to a profitable business. By the time he is squarely on his feet, he is invariably thirty years old. That is when his second struggle begins: that of building up his own family as a father or a mother. Before he completes his family, usually of about four children, he is already forty years old. In most cases, under the most ideal cases, he spends much of his fifties struggling to raise up his children as young school pupils and trainees in the various professions. Ideally, his children would still be in the process of acquiring a profession *when he is going through his fifties and early sixties*. In most cases, his children are not sufficiently weaned from under his care until he himself is in his mid-sixties.

But all that is if he survives the average age of forty-five or thereabouts. Going by the harsh statistics available, he is culled away just before his mid-forties, the very time when he has just *completed* his family, when his youngest child is still a toddler. At about that age, none of his children is much likely to have been completely weaned off his care, when none of them has acquired meaningful independence. When he dies at that age, his dependants are forced to be thrown as burdens on others. What the statistics imply is that the average

Nigerian does not live long enough to see his grandchildren, to benefit from the cares of his children, to see his children in positions of responsibility.

Well, some Nigerians attain the ripe age of seventy. When that happens, we often have all the reasons to rejoice with the family. Today, when I read an obituary of a soul *that has found a rest* at an age of seventy or more, I rejoice that that has not been a wasted life, that the great caller has harvested rightly and has not misfired. I pray to attain the magic age of seventy so that I would have every cause to look around and be grateful for a worthwhile journey.

But then, come to think of it; what is in seventy years? Indeed what is in a hundred years that we should regard it as an *exceptionally* long age? After all, was biblical Enoch not around for 365 years, Lamech for more than 500 years and Methuselah for 969 years? When you think of such patriarchs, the ripe age of 70 years or more pales into obscurity. When one thinks of this, one cannot but wonder why nobody, Nigerian, British or Japanese, today lives as long as any of those patriarchs.

So, what can one do to make the best from his relatively short existence? My *formula* is simple: spend every day to make others happy so that when you are finally called away, you will continue to live in the minds of those left behind. To die and continue living in the hearts of those still around is not to die but to continue a second existence. (635 years)

General discussion questions

1. How do you think the average age figures are obtained?
2. Do you think this passage paints a gloomy picture for Nigerians? Or would you say it merely unveils the facts as they are to make us view ourselves better?

Specific questions

1. From the figures given, what are the average life spans of Nigerians compared with those of Americans, Britons and Japanese?
2. Why did the writer stress that there had been a decline in the expected lifespan of Nigerians?
3. What are the three main stages of a man's life traced by the writer?
4. Why does the writer state that the average Nigerian does not wait to see his children grow old?
5. In what three different ways does the writer describe death?
6. Why does the writer say that even where a person lives to the age of 70 years or more, his life is still short?
7. In what way, according to the writer, should a person prepare to live for ever?

8. For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage: a. *attains* b. *acquire* c. *completed* d. *exceptionally* e. *formula*
9. ... *that has found a rest...*
 - i. What figurative expression is involved here?
 - ii. What does it mean in ordinary language?
10. ... *when he is going through his fifties and early sixties.*
 - i. What is the grammatical name given to the expression as it is used in the passage?
 - ii. What is its function?

Section D: Vocabulary Development

Foreign elements in English usage

In this module, you will learn how some words have come into English from Latin or French. With this, you should be able to understand and use some foreign words and phrases commonly occurring in English usage. Let us consider the following examples:

Foreign elements	English words.
1. ab, abs (from or away from)	abnormal, abstain, absent, absentee, absorbent, abscess
2. ante (before)	antecedent, anteroom, antennal
3. bene (well, good)	benefit, benevolent, benefactor, benediction, beneficent
4. circum, circu (around)	circumference, circumnavigate, circumlocution, circumcision
5. counter (against)	counteract, counter attack, counter point, counter productive
6. de (down from)	depart, deport, degrade, dethrone, destabilise
7. ex (out of)	expel, export, expose, expunge, extend, excel.
8. extra (beyond)	extra-ordinary, extra-sensory, extrapolate, extra-curricular
9. pre- (before)	predict, prevent, premonition, prevalent, precaution
10. sub (under)	sub-normal, sub-way, sub-conscious.

Activity I

Make a list of other foreign elements or prefixes in English usage and the possible English words that can be got from them.

Activity II

List any 10 English words that can be formed from each of the following foreign prefixes:

a. de-	b. ante-	c. bene-
d. circum-	e. counter-	f. extra-
g. pre-	h. sub-	i. ex-
j. abs-		

Activity III

In the box below, some prefixes are listed 1-10. Now using your dictionary, write the meanings of the prefixes in column B, and then write the word/root in column C. Also write the new words in column D.

(A) Prefix	(B) Meaning	Word / root	New word
1. pre	before	natal	prenatal
2. over	_____	crowded	_____
3. sub	_____	conscious	_____
4. extra	_____	ordinary	_____
5. de	_____	populate	_____
6. circum	_____	navigate	_____
7. ante	_____	room	_____
8. ex	_____	president	_____
9. mis	_____	understand	_____
10. bi	_____	annual	_____

Section E: Continuous Writing

Report writingâ€™2

Read the following report made by Mr Osawaru Sunday, one of the tenants living very close to a building that collapsed.

A REPORT MADE BY OSAWARU SUNDAY ON A CASE OF COLLAPSED BUILDING AT UGBOWO STREET, BENIN-CITY ON 15 JUNE 2005.

It is rather unfortunate to make a report of a storey

building that collapsed early in the morning of 15 June 2005. I woke up at 6.00 a.m. and I walked outside to clean and run my car engine before I left for my place of work. There was a heavy downpour between 4a.m. and 5.40a.m. on the same day. I am one of the tenants living in a bungalow opposite the collapsed building. As I was cleaning my car, I was hearing a strange sound as if it was going to rain again. I was wondering why the occupants of the building did not hear.

After some minutes, there was a crack on the wall of the side view of the building. Then followed by another crack on one of the pillars in the front. This time, the landlord's wife who had woken up earlier also got the message. There were eight people inside – a family of five and three extended family members. Others had not woken up from their deep sleep. They did not know what was happening.

Then suddenly, the woman ran out and shouted: “Daddy please come out. Ask the children to come out. The building is about to collapse.” As they heard this shout from outside, they started running helter-skelter around the building. Then within two seconds, the whole building came down. It was a terrible disaster. One of the children was able to escape before the final collapse. The father and two children died instantly. The last child and the two extended family members sustained serious injuries and were taken to the University of Benin Teaching Hospital.

The cause of the collapse was obvious. The materials for the decking were rather inferior. The whole decking was very weak. Secondly, there were not enough pillars to support the building. The available ones were not built with good materials. All these were noticeable as all the materials turned to rubble after the collapse.

It is therefore suggested that the state government sets up a committee to look into the other remote and immediate causes of the collapse. The contractor who handled the building should be prosecuted. I was reliably informed that the building was constructed about four years ago. So, it is too early for the building to collapse. The family should also be assisted as the loss was a colossal one. It was rather pathetic.

Now write your own report on a case of arson and vandalism by students of a secondary school during a riot. This should be about 400 words.