

OŠPÁYE 4

STRESS

Stress, or the tendency of some syllables to be accentuated within a word, varies significantly from language to language, and gives each particular tongue its characteristic sound and flow. To see this, say the following sentence out loud, with the capitalized syllables stressed (this is the default stress pattern for English)

the daKOTa LANGUage has MANy DIFFerent
VERBal forms to exPRESS NUances in MEANing

And now, pronounce it again in the following manner, with the stresses placed on the wrong syllables.

THE dakoTA languaGE has maNY diffERent
verBAL forms to EXpress nuANces in meaNING

Its almost hard to do! When learning Dakota, keeping in mind how silly English sounds when you put the *aCCENT on the wrong syLLABLE* helps to see how important the correct placement of stress can be.

What is stress good for in language, other than giving each a distinct flow? Oftentimes stress is used to distinguish between two otherwise identical words; for example the English noun *OBject a thing*, and the verb *obJECT*, as in "*Your honor, I object!*". In fact, distinguishing nouns from verbs with identical pronunciations is a common use of stress in English; consider the following sentence

I am going to record a new record
and present it to him as a present.

Try saying that with the stresses reversed! From these examples, we can see that stress in English is a property which must be learned for each word individually (as two words can be identical in all other ways, except for stress). And in general, this much is true in Dakota as well. Although Dakota stress is much more regular than English stress, it is still often unpredictable and is even used to differentiate otherwise identical words from time to time, as the examples below make clear.

wíyaka	wiyáka	zíča	zičá	mága	maǵá
feather	sand turkey	squirrel	field	goose	

These kinds of cases will need to be learned individually while learning vocabulary, much like stress in English. However, when modifying words through affixes or compounding, stress behaves very regularly in Dakota, and there are simple guidelines to follow.

PLACEMENT OF STRESS

Exceptions aside, a Dakota word typically has only one stress, and it usually falls on the second syllable. (This is rather unusual across the world's languages). Some examples of this default pattern appear below.

wašíču	okáǰniǵe	špaŋyápi	dakhóta
He is white.	He understands it.	They cooked it.	He is Dakota.

hená	makhá	wakháŋhdi	itóškaŋškaŋ
those things	earth	electricity	television

In one-syllable words, the stress is forced to go on the first syllable (as there is no second syllable for it to fall on!), but moves to the second if affixes are added

k'ú	wičháŋk'upi	šá	šawákiye
He gave her it.	We gave them it.	It is red.	I made mine red.

In multisyllabic words which are stressed on their second syllable, adding suffixes does not change the position of the stress but adding prefixes or infixes causes the stress to move so that it ends up on the second syllable of the final word.

wašté It is good.	špaŋyé He cooked it.	sdohánj It crawls.
yuwášte He corrected it.	wašpánje He cooked.	hdusdóhanj He pulled his own.
wičhákičiyuwašte He corrected it for them.	wašpáŋuŋkičičiye He cooked for us.	uŋhdúsdohanjpi We pulled our own.

In most verb conjugations, the stress moves to the second syllable as the pronouns are infixed.

sdodyé He knows it.	sdodwáye I know it.	sdodyáye You know it.	sdod:úŋje You & I know it.
------------------------	------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------

This continues to happen even as many, many affixes are attached:

špaŋyé He cooked it.	špaŋwáye I cooked it.	wašpánwičhauŋkičičiyapi We cooked it for them.
-------------------------	--------------------------	---

However, there are exceptions to this general trend. As contractible words can never be accented on their last syllable, if the original core is bisyllabic and contractible, the stress is forced instead to fall on the first syllable.

sápe It is black.	kúze He is lazy.	háŋske She is tall.	kháte It is hot.
----------------------	---------------------	------------------------	---------------------

However even in these words, when affixes are added so that the second syllable is allowed to be stressed, the stress jumps to the second syllable

masápe I am black.	nikúze You are lazy.	uŋháŋskapi We are tall.	omákhate I feel hot.
-----------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------	-------------------------

Like in Dakota, adding affixes to words in English often causes stress to shift from one syllable to another, consider the words *reFER* and *REFerence* for example. However in English it is much more random; the stress of *offEND* does not shift when modified in the same way to give *offENCE*, and other affixes do not change stress at all, think *deNY* versus *deNial*.

Of course there are exceptions to the stress-second rule; some affixes come with stress built in, so that the stress moves to that affix and stays there regardless of conjugation. The most prominent of these is the prefix *wó*, which is attached to the beginning of a word and always carries the stress. Some examples are below:

The prefix *wó* is usually a contraction of *wa+o* or *wa+yu*

<i>ohóda</i>	<i>wóohoda</i>	<i>anáwizi</i>	<i>wóanawizi</i>
He respected her.	respect	He is jealous of her.	jealousy

The stress stays on the prefix *wó*, even if the word is further modified by conjugations.

<i>wóhdake</i>	<i>wówahdake</i>	<i>wóyahdakapi</i>	<i>wóuŋkčihhdakapi</i>
He spoke.	I spoke.	You guys spoke.	We spoke to eachother.

There is an even more general pattern where stress can become fixed on the first syllable of a word: if a word has second-syllable accent but is then contracted so that the first and second syllables merge together; the accent appears on this (new) first syllable and stays there regardless of conjugation. A common spot this is seen is words beginning with *é*. This often results as a contraction of the sequence *ai* or *aki*, for example in the word *éthi*, to camp. Below are some of its conjugated forms, all with initial stress

<i>éwathi</i>	<i>éyathi</i>	<i>éuŋthipi</i>	<i>éthi</i>
I camped.	You camped.	We camped.	He camped.

And furthermore, some other words which begin with the contracted syllable *é*, for reference.

<i>ésdodye</i>	<i>épathaŋ</i>	<i>épazo</i>	<i>énažiŋ</i>
He learned it there.	He touched it.	He pointed.	They stand in a group.

Reduplication, or the doubling of one of the syllables of a word, is a very common process in Dakota and can affect stress in different ways. The usual pattern is just like for other conjugations; the stress shifts in the new word so that it lands on the second syllable.

šá	šašá	ptécedaŋ	pteptécedaŋ
It is red.	They are red.	It is short.	They are short.

This happens even when the original word was a contracting word, having first-syllable stress

sápe	sab:sápe	théča	thek:théča
It is black.	They are black.	It is new.	They are new.

This pattern continues to hold for most active cores. If the core in question had second-syllable stress to begin with, so does its reduplicated form. Furthermore, the stress continues to remain on the second syllable after conjugating the reduplicated form.

iňá	iwáňa	iňáňa	iwáňaňa
He smiled.	I smiled.	She laughed at him.	I laughed at him.

But, if the original active core had initial stress to begin with, the stress remains on the first syllable even after reduplication (this happens with either one-syllable words, or contracting words):

psíčA	psípsičA	ǵópA	ǵóp:ǵopA
It jumped.	It jumped	He snored.	He snored.

And then, there are some words which are just exceptions in and of themselves. The core expressing walking, *máni*, has initial stress in its plain form, but the stress nevertheless moves during conjugation

máni	mawáni	mayáni	maúŋnipi
He walks.	I walk.	You walk.	We walk.

And the following words have initial stress, even though they do not fit into any of the patterns mentioned above. Unlike *máni*, however, the stress in these words remains initial even after conjugation.

óha	ómaha	ókiye	ówičhawakiye
It stuck to him.	It stuck to me.	He helped her.	I helped them.
úňšike	úňmašike	úňtuŋye	úňtuŋwičhaye
He is pitiful.	I am pitiful.	She hurt him.	He hurt them.
ópha	óyapha	ówapha	ówičhapha
He went along.	You went along.	I joined her.	He joined them.

STRONG AND WEAK STRESS

Words derived from basic words by the addition of affixes only have a single stressed syllable in Dakota, as we've seen above. However when a word is a compound of two or more other full-fledged words, the result may have two stresses, one stronger than the other. We will call these two stresses the strong and weak stress, respectively. Strong stress will be marked by an acute accent (*á*) as we have been doing all along, and weak stress by a grave accent (*à*). The marking of secondary stress is not usually done in writing; two distinct markings are used here just for clarity.

In Dakota, when two words (each of which have their own stress) are compounded together, the first word in the compound gets the strong stress and the second word gets the weak stress. Some examples are below.

šúnjka+thánjka	čhéǵa+thánjka	máza+ská	maŋká+ok'á
dog+big	kettle+big	metal+white	skunk+dig
šúnjk:thànjka	čhéǵ:thànjka	mázaskà	maŋkáok'à
wolf	a big kettle	money	to dig for skunks

MARKERS AND STRESS

Markers, the little particles that often follow cores in Dakota (for example, *kte*, *šni*, *kiŋ* etc) are never stressed.

In English, the default pattern is to have strong stress on the first syllable and weak on the third; for example *academia* and *informàtion*

šúŋka kiŋ	mištíŋme šni	ophéyathuŋ kte	wašté ħčē
the dog	I did not sleep.	You will buy it.	It is really good.

While the markers like the above are written as separate unstressed words, it is conventional to write two markers, *pi* and *daŋ/da*, as suffixes on the preceding word. When these are attached to a one syllable word, it gives the appearance of a two syllable word with initial stress, when in fact we simply have a single-syllable word stressed normally (i.e. on its only syllable) and an unstressed marker.

káŋ+pi	káŋpi	tké+pi	tképi
to be old + they	They are old.	to be heavy + they	They are heavy.

These two markers are ordered *pi-da* when occurring together. For example *hok ída* has *hok ípida* as its plural form.

STRESS, PITCH, & CONTRACTIONS

Dakota vowels are usually short when pronounced, but contraction can lead to long vowels from time to time. Specifically, when two syllables that have the same vowel in them contract, the resulting vowel is pronounced with a longer duration than it would have otherwise been. If this contraction happens to involve whichever syllable carries the stress in the word; the resulting long vowel will vary in pitch, from either low to high or high to low.

Pitch on a long vowel most often arises when a glide (one of the consonants *w,y,h*) or a glottal stop is deleted from between two identical vowels. In writing long vowels are denoted by following the vowel in question with a colon, and a long vowel with rising pitch will be marked with the acute accent (for example *é: í:*), whereas one with falling pitch will be marked with the grave accent (like *à: ò:*). Of course, this is all much easier to see when given some examples.

kéye	miíhakah	čhaŋháŋpi	wayáwathokšu
kè:	mì:hakah	čháj:pi	wá:thokšu
He said it.	behind me	sugar	school bus

Other times, two distinct vowels can merge into a single vowel; with a sound lying in-between the two original vowels. This happens in the following two cases: when the sequence *aye* contracts, it becomes the

More concretely, if the first vowel involved in the contraction is stressed the pitch will start high and drop, and the reverse respectively.

vowel *æ*, which is pronounced like the vowel in the English word *cat*. Additionally, the sequence *awa* is contracted to a vowel which sounds much like the combination *oa* in the English word *boat*, which will be written *ɔ*. These contractions follow the exact same sort of pitch-accent as above:

iyáye	wakhányeza	mitháwa	awáčhiŋ
iyæ:	wakhæ:za	mithò:	ó:čhiŋ
He left.	child	It is mine.	He planned to do it.