

relationship of its parts; it may also have a distinctive function in that it opposes words of comparable sound structure (and identical spelling). Such word oppositions (for the most part disyllables of French origin) may or may not involve phonemic changes of quality.

(1) A relatively small number of words exhibit oppositions of accentual pattern which are manifested mainly by a *shift of pitch or stress prominence*, with slight variations of quantity. In situations where the prime signal of prominence—pitch—is not operative, the oppositions are either totally lost or are inefficiently marked by stress alone, or are maintained by an exaggeration of the quantity variation. Thus, there being no significant qualitative change, the noun and verb forms of the following words are normally distinguished primarily by the situation of the pitch-prominent syllable: *discount, import, impress, incense, increase, inlay, insult, offset, overhang*—pitch prominence on the first element for nouns, on the second element for verbs. In other cases, some speakers may make a reduction or obscuration of the vowel quality in the first syllable in the case of the verbal form, e.g.:

	Noun/Adjective	Verb
<i>abstract</i>	/ˈæbˌstrækt/	/əbˌstrækt/ or /əbˌstrækt/
<i>accent</i>	/ˈækˌsɛnt/ or /ækˌsɛnt/	/əkˌsɛnt/ or /əkˌsɛnt/
<i>digest</i>	/ˈdaɪˌdʒɛst/	/daɪˌdʒɛst/ or /dɪˌdʒɛst/
<i>torture</i>	/ˈtɔːˌmɛnt/	/tɔːˌmɛnt/ or /təˌmɛnt/
<i>transfer</i> ¹	/ˈtrænzˌfɜː/	/ˈtrænzˌfɜː/ or /trɛnzˌfɜː/
<i>transport</i> ¹	/ˈtrænzˌpɔːt/	/ˈtrænzˌpɔːt/ or /trɛnzˌpɔːt/

(2) More commonly, the change in accentual pattern is manifested mainly by a shift in pitch prominence together with a related variation of quality. Often, the qualitative change takes the form of a reduction of the unaccented vowel of the first element of the verbal form to /ə/ or /ɪ/; less frequently, by a reduction of the vowel in the second element of the noun/adjective form, e.g.:

	Noun/Adjective	Verb
<i>absent</i>	/ˈæbsɛnt/	/əbˌsɛnt/
<i>combine</i>	/ˈkɒmˌbaɪn/	/kəmˌbaɪn/
<i>compress</i>	/ˈkɒmˌpres/	/kəmˌpres/
<i>concert</i>	/ˈkɒnsɛt/	/kənˌsɛt/
<i>conduct</i>	/ˈkɒnˌdʌkt/	/kənˌdʌkt/
<i>consort</i>	/ˈkɒnˌsɔːt/	/kənˌsɔːt/

¹ Also with /træn-/.

	Noun/Adjective	Verb
<i>contract</i>	/ˈkɒnˌtrækt/	/kənˌtrækt/
<i>contrast</i>	/ˈkɒnˌtrɑːst/	/kənˌtrɑːst/
<i>convict</i>	/ˈkɒnvɪkt/	/kənˌvɪkt/
<i>desert</i>	/ˈdezət/	/dɪˌzɑːt/
<i>export</i>	/ˈeksˌpɔːt/	/ɪksˌpɔːt/
<i>frequent</i>	/ˈfriˌkwɛnt/	/frɪˌkwɛnt/
<i>object</i>	/ˈɒbdʒɪkt/	/əbˌdʒɛkt/
<i>perfect</i>	/ˈpɜːfɪkt/	/pəˌfɛkt/
<i>permit</i> *	/ˈpɜːmɪt/	/pəˌmɪt/
<i>present</i>	/ˈpreznt/	/prɪˌzɛnt/
<i>proceeds</i>	/ˈprəʊˌsiːdz/	/prəˌsiːdz/
<i>produce</i>	/ˈprɒˌdjuːs/	/prəˌdjuːs/
<i>progress</i>	/ˈprəʊˌɡres/	/prəˌɡres/
<i>project</i>	/ˈprɒˌdʒɛkt/	/prəˌdʒɛkt/
<i>protest</i>	/ˈprəʊˌtest/	/prəˌtest/
<i>rebel</i>	/ˈrebl/	/rɪˌbɛl/
<i>record</i>	/ˈreˌkɔːd/	/rɪˌkɔːd/
<i>refuse</i>	/ˈreˌfjuːs/	/rɪˌfjuːz/ ¹
<i>segment</i>	/ˈsegˌmɛnt/	/segˌmɛnt/
<i>subject</i>	/ˈsʌbdʒɪkt/	/səbˌdʒɛkt/
<i>survey</i> *	/ˈsɜːˌveɪ/	/səˌveɪ/
<i>August</i>	/ˈɔːɡɛst/ (n.)	/ɔːˌɡɑːst/ (adj.)
<i>minute</i>	/ˈmɪnɪt/ (n.)	/maɪˌnjuːt/ (adj.)

(* In these words, the opposition of /s:/ and /ə/ in the first syllable amounts to an opposition of vowel quantity; it is to be noted that the verb *to survey* may have the same accentual pattern as the noun in the particular sense of 'to carry out a survey'.)

Several disyllables do not conform to the general noun/verb accentual pattern distinction or exhibit instability, e.g. *comment* /kɒmˌent/ for both noun and verb; *contact* /ˈkɒnˌtækt/ (n.) and /kənˌtækt/, /kɒnˌtækt/ or /kənˌtækt/ (v.); *detai* /ˈdiːˌteɪ/ (n.) and /dɪˌteɪ/ or /diˌteɪ/ (v.); *contrast* has a verbal form /kɒnˌtrɑːst/ in addition to the more usual form given above. In all these cases, and in that of *dispute*, already mentioned, the noun form is tending to supersede the verbal pattern.

¹ The noun and verb forms of *refuse* differ also in the final consonant and the resulting variation of vowel length of /u:/.