

# ENGLISH I



WEEK 1 - WEEK 4

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### Guest Lecture

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Prof. Rennet Samson  
Prof. Manjula Rajan

Prof. Sudha Ravi  
Prof. Usha Mahadevan



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**English - 1 (Basic English)**  
**Prof. Rajesh Kumar**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Science**  
**Indian Institute of Technology-Madras**

### **Introduction**

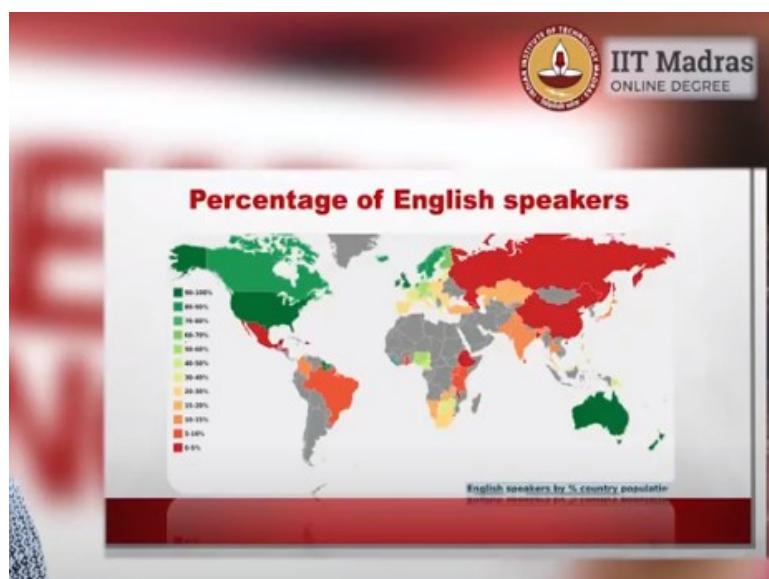
Welcome to this Basic English course for your degree program. My name is Rajesh Kumar. I teach linguistics in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT, Madras. I will be meeting with you throughout this course.

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As we know, English is undoubtedly the most widely spoken language across the world. It is spoken in one form or the other throughout the world.

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When we learn to speak English, we make ourselves accessible to the world, and in turn, the world opens for us.

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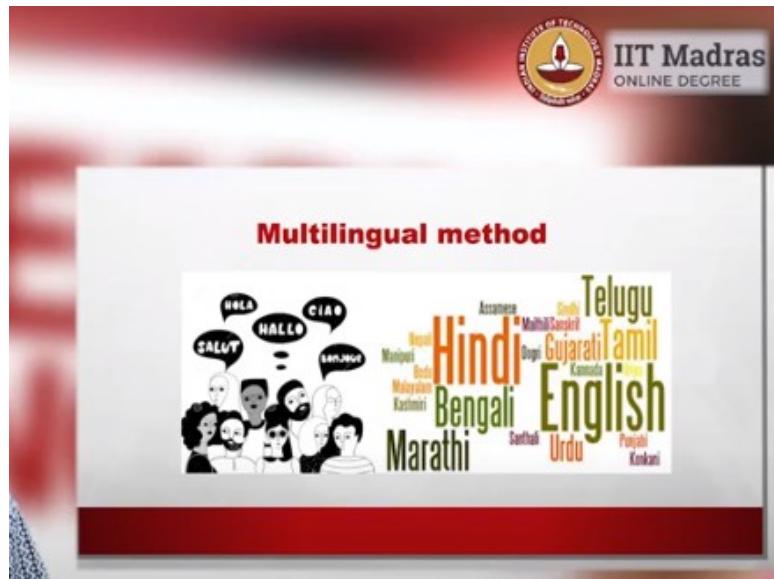
Our ability to communicate with others using English brings us close to success. This communication is important because we use English in most of our functional domains. Academic success, professional success and success in social and personal life is also imperative and contingent upon our ability to use English effectively.

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Our goal in this course is to build confidence in you when you speak English.

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For this purpose, we will be using the multilingual method. The multilingual method means speaking language, the way we communicate normally and naturally.

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For the purpose of achieving this goal, we have a team of colleagues who will help us throughout the course. Allow me to introduce our colleagues to you Dr Leena Anil has a PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Madras. She started her career as a content writer.

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**DR. RENNET SAMSON**

Rennet is an assistant professor at Ethiraj College in Chennai. She obtained her PhD in English language and literature from P.S.G.R.Krishnammal College of Women, Coimbatore. She has more than 15 years of experience in teaching English.



Dr Rennet Samson has a PhD in English Language and Literature and has more than 15 years of teaching experience in different colleges. Currently, she teaches at Ethiraj College in Chennai.

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**DR. MANJULA RAJAN**

Manjula is an excellent chalk-and-talk teacher. Her ability to communicate with the learners makes her a unique asset in the academic domain. With a PhD in English Language Teaching, Dr. Manjula Rajan lends her extensive classroom experience into training and development initiatives.



Dr Manjula Rajan has a PhD in ELT. She brings us content development experience to classroom teaching. She is an effective communicator among her students.

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The slide features the IIT Madras logo at the top right, which includes a yellow circular emblem with a lamp and the text "IIT MADRAS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY" and "IIT Madras ONLINE DEGREE". The main content area has a red and white background. On the left, the name "SUDHA RAVI" is written in bold red capital letters. Below it is a brief biography in black text: "With a sound background in educational theory and extensive classroom experience, Sudha is both a teacher-trainer and content developer. She has a master's degree in English." To the right of the text is a portrait photo of Sudha Ravi, a woman with dark hair and a bindi, wearing a dark blue shawl over a light-colored top.

Sudha Ravi is a teacher trainer and a content developer. She brings her experience again for us to build this course.

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The slide features the IIT Madras logo at the top right, identical to the one above. The main content area has a red and white background. On the left, the name "DR. USHA MAHADEVAN" is written in bold red capital letters. Below it is a detailed biography in black text: "Dr. Mahadevan is a retired professor of English from Hindu College, Chennai. She has a PhD from Bombay University and PGDTE from CIEFL, Hyderabad. She has been an adjunct faculty at Chennai Mathematical Institute, Chennai and a guest faculty in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT Madras. She has about four decades of experience of teaching English Language." To the right of the text is a portrait photo of Dr. Usha Mahadevan, a woman with glasses and a bindi, wearing a green and blue sari.

Dr Usha Mahadevan has more than 40 years of teaching experience. She has a PhD in English from Bombay University. She has a postdoctoral diploma in teaching English from Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages in Hyderabad. She has taught at Chennai Mathematical Institute in IIT Madras as well throughout her career. She brings the best experience for us to build this course.

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**KARTHIKA SATHYANATHAN**

Karthika has an MA in English studies from IIT Madras. She has worked as a Language & Education Consultant with multiple government departments and non-government organisations. Currently she is working as project officer with IIT Madras. Her areas of interest include ELT, multilingualism, multiculturalism and second language learning.

Karthika Sathyathan is an alumna of IIT Madras. She has done her MA in English studies from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences. She has worked as a language and education consultant for many government and non-government organizations throughout the country.

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**PADMINI VAIDHYANATHAN**

Padmini has a bachelors in Journalism & Mass Communication from MOP Vaishnav College, Chennai. She has a Masters' degree in Development Communication from Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi. She has worked as a research officer & project manager with multiple government and non-government organisations. She is currently working as project officer with IIT Madras.

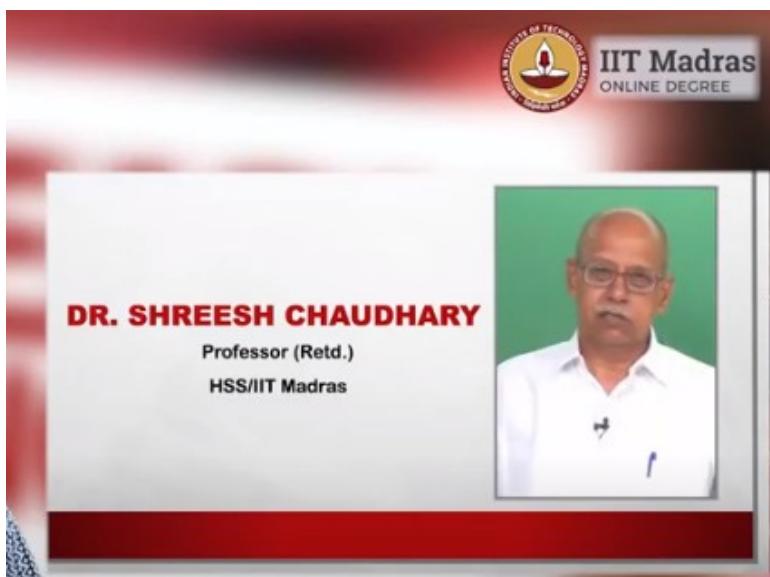
Padmini Vaidyanathan has an MA in Development Communication from Jamia Millia Islamia in New Delhi. We have a team of consultants who will help us build this course regularly.

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Dr Om Prakash teaches at Gautam Buddha University in New Delhi.

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And Professor Shreesh Chaudhary is a retired professor from Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT Madras. We will altogether work on building this course. And we expect help from you in helping you learn English effectively. Welcome to this course again, and thank you.

**English - 1 (Basic English)**  
**Prof. Rajesh Kumar**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Science**  
**Indian Institute of Technology-Madras**

**Lecture - 01**  
**Sounds and Writing Symbols in English**

Welcome to this class. We are going to start learning English. We are going to start talking about learning English. In this class, we are going to pay attention to sounds and writing symbols in English. We need to make this distinction very carefully. But let me start with a general introduction on this and a general introduction on learning in particular.

And you will be able to see why these two things are important and relevant for us to pay attention to simultaneously. The main goal in language learning or at least one of the important things that we need to achieve is to build our confidence. That is, when we speak, we speak to others. When we speak, we think. We think about things, and then we communicate with others.

So, when we are speaking with others, we must sound confident with our content. This happens, that is, we sound confident in the language that we have learnt little later when we know nuances of that language. When we know how those nuances help us learn the language. One more time, for us to sound confident knowing the nuances of language is important, and only then we sound confident and impressive.

Knowing the nuances of language, the details of language, the details about the components of language helps us learn the language fast. When we know things well, our learning shows up. And therefore these nuances are important to keep in mind. In this course, I will keep reminding you about the significance of these nuances for the purpose of learning English.

In this particular case, we are going to learn English, and we are going to be talking about the nuances of English as a language. So I will keep reminding you, time to time about this part. And then we need to be patient because these nuances show up

when we speak. Our efforts in paying attention to nuances for the purpose of learning English will show up when you speak when you communicate with others.

Slowly, incrementally and in a steady fashion, you will see the impact of that in your language. So today, we start with the very basic, which we often ignore. I am going to show you that we all know about this, but we do not pay much attention to this part. So what is it that we know and what is it that we need to pay attention. First important part is writing symbols in English.

What we also know as alphabets are different from how they sound. Understand this part, the way we write a word is not the way they sound, or we speak. In other words, that is not the sound when we speak. We will start with simple examples, and then I will try to stress this part, from time to time.

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English Letter – UPPER CASE and Lower Case

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Upper Case

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N  
O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Lower Case

a b c d e f g h i j k l  
m n o p q r s t u v w x y z



---

So first, look at what are the writings. The 26 characters of the English alphabet are A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, and Zee or Z. I wanted to read these letters to you. We know we are starting with this understanding that you know this part. You do not have to learn this afresh. But it is important for us to read, to pay attention to the part, that this is how these letters sound.

This is how we read these letters. These are the letters that we use in writing English, but when we write a word using these letters, in a word, these letters do not sound this

way. But at this point, please pay attention to another aspect of that. In English, that is in the English writing system, these 26 letters are written in two different ways. One is called upper cases that you have just seen.

This part is uppercase, and this part is lowercase. This is uppercase. This is important. And when you read things written in English, we usually see the first word of a sentence is written with uppercase. This is a conventional way of representing, writing in English. And then rest of the things are written using lower cases. Sometimes we write every first letter of every word in uppercase. So these are certain conventions in writing English.

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### English Rhyme



A	--	Apple	J	S
B	-	Ball	K	T
C	-	Cat	L	U
D	-	Dog	M	V
E	-	Elephant	N	W
F		Fan	O	X
G	-	Girl	P	Y
H	-	House	Q	Z
I	--	Ink	R	

26 Letters



When we learn English as a child, or when you watch children learn English, they learn through rhymes. And you must have paid attention to this from kids or elementary classes or a variety of sources. But this is how they are taught. A for apple, B for ball, C for cat, D for dog, E for elephant, F for fan, G for girl, H for house, I for ink or Indian. I do not want to complete the whole rhyme.

Rather, I would let you do the remaining part. So you see, I have talked about A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H and I. Find it out how this rhyme is discussed and talked about when children learn the language, what they say. When they say A for apple, there are certain words for J K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y and Z. Our purpose here is not to memorize this rhyme.

Our purpose here is to pay attention to a very simple fact that when and what this rhyme is doing. This rhyme is not telling us how to say apple. Rather it is telling us how apple is written. That is, it tells us when we write apple, the first letter in apple is a, like the symbol. The first letter in B, the first letter in a word like ball is letter B. The first letter in a word like cat is C. First letter in a word like dog is D.

The first letter in a word like elephant is E. That is what our attention is drawn to. Otherwise, the first sound in the word apple is not A. Think about this, say the word apple and see what the sound comes as. It is not a; it is æ, apple. It becomes clear when we say ball. The first sound in a word like ball is b, not B. And this is where we start.

This is where we want you to pay attention to in this class today. That, when we say a word like a ball, we say the first sound is b, not B. We write with B, but we say b. So, spelling, that is the spelling of a written word is very different from how the sounds in that word are arranged to say that ball. Spelling is Ball. When we say, sounds are /bal/. In a word like cat, spelling is cat. Sounds are /kat/.

We need to pay attention to this part. And then when you go to dog, sounds are /dag/. Spelling is dog. Similarly, in the elephant, the first letter when we write the word is E, not the first sound. The first sound is e. Likewise, you will notice it throughout the English writing system. And this is true for every word in English. So, we write with these symbols, but we say it differently.

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## UPPER CASE and Lower Case Letters



TEST IMAGES										
UPPERCASE LETTERS										
<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>		
<b>J</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Q</b>	<b>R</b>		
<b>S</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Z</b>			
LOWERCASE LETTERS										
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i		
j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r		
s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z			



We need to keep that in mind. Again, in this chart, you have an English writing system in uppercase and lowercase letters. We are familiar with this. We do not need to worry too much about this part. Nonetheless, our attention to this part is important. This helps us understand the writing system. This helps us read what we write or what is written.

This helps us learn writing, and the distinction between the two helps us remember that we speak differently.

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## English Letters



A a	B b	C c	D d	E e	F f	G g	H h	I i
[eɪ]	[bi:]	[si:]	[di:]	[eɪ]	[eɪf]	[dʒi:]	[h]aɪtʃ	[aɪ]
J j	K k	L l	M m	N n	O o	P p	Q q	R r
[dʒeɪ]	[keɪ]	[eɪ]	[eɪm]	[eɪn]	[oʊ]	[pi:]	[kju:]	[a:/ər]
S s	T t	U u	V v	W w	X x	Y y	Z z	
[eɪs]	[ti:]	[ju:]	[vi:]	[dʌblju:]	[eks]	[wai]	[zed/zɪ:]	



So, this is again a different kind of chart where we see A in uppercase and lowercase and this is how it sounds. This letter sounds as this. B as this. C sounds like this. D

sounds like this. E sounds like this. F sounds like this. So these are the sounds involved in these alphabets, not the sounds they represent when we speak.

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### Vowels Sounds in English



Vowels	
i	pit
e	pet
æ	pat
ɔ	pot
ʌ	but
ʊ	book
ə	mother
i:	bean
ɜ:	burn
ɑ:	barn
ɔ:	born
u:	boon
aɪ	bite
er	bait
ɔɪ	boy
əʊ	toe
au	house
ʊə	poor
ɪə	ear
əə	air

g  
e  
i  
o  
u



We will come back to that as well. Then, when we talk about sounds, we will need to pay attention to two types of sounds. One, they are consonants and vowels. Here, very briefly, I would like to tell you what a consonant sound is, and what a vowel sound is and the difference between the two. A consonant sound is okay let us see how these sounds are produced. The exhaling flow of air is responsible for the production of speech sounds. In other words, we speak by modifying exhaling flow of air in our oral cavity at different parts in the oral cavity, and different types of sounds are produced. So when there is very little or no obstruction in the oral cavity for the flow of air, that is the flow of exhaling air, we get vowel sounds.

And when total or different types of obstructions are created, they are called consonants. So with little or no obstruction, we get vowels. With little or more obstruction in the flow of air, we get consonants. I will come back to the description of consonants and vowels for us to know the distinction between the two for the purpose of speaking very shortly.

But at this point I want your attention to a very simple point, like when we talk about vowels in English, in general from the writing system, we see that vowels are a, e, i, o, and u. These are the symbols which represent vowels in the writing system. But the total number of vowels in English is way more than that. And some of these words are

going to show you how these vowels, what those vowels are and how they sound in different words.

So please pay attention to each one of these words. When we read this it is this first word is called pit. The vowel sound here is short i; i pit. Pet. Here each vowel sound is underlined. So, please pay attention to the spelling of these words as well as how they sound. So, this is pet. Pat. So this is how this sounds. Pot, but. So it is written with u.

Book is represented with this. Doubling of o, book, but it is pronounced as short u, book. Mother, bean, burn, barn. So, all these words represent the total number of available consonant sounds in English. You can count them. They are 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. There are 20 vowels in English. That is 20 vowel sounds.

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### Consonant Sounds in words



1. /p/-	<b>pit</b>	13. /h/-	<b>hot</b>
2. /b/-	<b>bit</b>	14. /l/-	<b>lad</b>
3. /t/-	<b>tab</b>	15. /r/-	<b>red</b>
4. /d/-	<b>dab</b>	16. /w/-	<b>wed</b>
5. /k/-	<b>cab</b>	17. /θ/-	<b>thought</b>
6. /g/-	<b>gab</b>	18. /ð/-	<b>them</b>
7. /f/-	<b>fan</b>	19. /ʃ/-	<b>shy</b>
8. /v/-	<b>van</b>	20. /ʒ/-	<b>treasure</b>
9. /s/-	<b>sad</b>	21. /tʃ/-	<b>chime</b>
10. /z/-	<b>zoo</b>	22. /dʒ/-	<b>jam</b>
11. /m/-	<b>man</b>	23. /j/-	<b>yum</b>
12. /n/-	<b>not</b>	24. /ŋ/-	<b>sing</b>



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Similarly, when you look at consonant sounds in English, you see 24 consonant sounds in English. And this chart shows you how these consonant sounds appear in words like pit, bit, tap, dab, cab, gab, fan, van, sad, zoo, man, not. These words, these sounds are p, b, t, and these are represented in this slant lines /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /f/, /v/, /s/, /z/, /m/, and /n/ and likewise.

So please pay attention to each word where these sounds are represented or where we find these sounds. And you will get to see 24 consonant sounds in English and 20 vowel sounds in English.

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### Consonant Sounds in English



p	b	t	d	f	v	θ	ð
/pɪn/ pin	/bæd/ bad	/tɪn/ tin	/dɒg/ dog	/fʌɪv/ five	/væn/ van	/θɪn/ thin	/ðæt/ that
m	n	ɳ	h	ʈʃ	dʒ	k	g
/mæn/ man	/neuz/ nose	/θəɳ/ thing	/ha:f/ half	/ʈʃə:tʃ/ church	/dʒæm/ jam	/kaind/ kind	/gʌn/ gun

s	z	ʃ	ʒ	l	r	w	j
/seɪ/ say	/zu:/ zoo	/ʃɪp/ ship	/meʒə/ measure	/leg/ leg	/rʌn/ run	/wɜ:k/ work	/jɛs/ yes



This chart of consonant sounds in English again shows you these consonant sounds in different words with the help of a colour scheme.

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### Consonant Sounds



#### DICIONARY PHONETIC SYMBOLS

##### B) CONSONANT SOUNDS

/b/	book	/bʊk/
/d/	day	/deɪ/
/g/	give	/gɪv/
/v/	vast	/vɑ:st/
/ð/	this	/ðɪs/
/z/	zoo	/zu:/
/ʒ/	vision	/vɪʒən/
/dʒ/	jump	/dʒʌmp/
/tʃ/	look	/lʊk/
/r/	run	/rʌn/
/ʃ/	yard	/jɑ:d/

/w/	we	/wi:/
/m/	moon	/mu:n/
/n/	name	/neɪm/
/ŋ/	sing	/sɪŋ/
/p/	path	/pɑ:θ/
/t/	town	/taʊn/
/k/	cat	/kæt/
/f/	fish	/fiʃ/
/θ/	think	/θɪŋk/
/s/	say	/seɪ/
/ʃ/	she	/ʃi:/
/χ/	cheese	/tʃi:z/



With this, I want to draw your attention to yet another part as exercise as a test for you.

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## Words with vowels

aa —  
i —  
ii —  
u —  
uu —  
  
o —  
au —

24 28



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I am writing just 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 vowels here for you. That is aa, i, ii, u, uu, o, and au. I want you to write four words, each with these consonant sounds for you to do the practice. Just pay attention to the words that you know and see where these vowel sounds come in those words. They may come at the beginning of a word; they may come in the middle of a word; they may come at the end of the word.

All you need to do is to find four words, where each one of these vowel sounds is there. That is, you need to have a total number of 24 words with these 6 vowels 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. 7 vowel sounds, 7 vowel sounds, 4 words each, you need to have 28 words for this. Do this exercise. You will get to see the distinction between consonant and vowel sounds.

And today, we want to close this class with the point that what we have tried to cover is just two points. There are two types of sounds. One is consonant; one is vowel sound. They are written differently in English. They are spoken differently. There are 26 characters that we use to write English system in uppercase, with uppercase and lowercase. But when we speak, there are 44 sounds; 20 vowel sounds and 24 consonant sounds. Thank you so much.

**English - 1 (Basic English)**  
**Prof. Rajesh Kumar**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Science**  
**Indian Institute of Technology-Madras**

**Lecture - 02**  
**Speech Sounds (Vowels) in English**

In this class, we will pay attention to sounds in the English language. We know that the way we write English is different from the way we speak. This is in the sense that we write English with the alphabet, which has 26 letters. Those letters, those writing symbols do not completely capture the sounds of the language. So, when we speak, there is more number of sounds in spoken English than the characters in written symbols.

That is to say again; the writing symbols are different from speech sounds. There are 26 characters for writing symbols. We have, we know those symbols as the English alphabet, and they are used to write. When we write a word, we use those letters, those characters to represent sounds. However, there is more number of sounds than letters. There are 26 letters, but 44 sounds.

Out of the 20 of them are vowel sounds, and 24 of them are consonant sounds. So we will take a look at these sounds in a little bit more details to pay attention to their new answers. As we know, paying attention to these details and nuances of the sound system in return helps us understand them in a better way. And then when we use our understanding of these things in a better way, we see the impact of that in our spoken English, and thus, it makes us a confident speaker.

And a confident speaker naturally sounds impressive. So please keep this thing in mind as underlined that understanding these nuances of English sound system. Also, with contrast from the way we speak, the way we use certain sounds from our languages in English is only going to help us understand the way we speak better and sound better to others when we speak.

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## Articulation of Vowel Sounds

	/əp/	/kəp/	a	ə
✓ a	up,	<u>cup</u>		
aa	<u>father</u> ,	<u>sound</u> ,	<u>round</u>	/rəʊnd/
✓ i	in,	ink,	sink,	drink
✓ ɪ ə	clean,	seat,	beat,	feet
✓ u	book,	cook,	look,	
✓ uu	zoo,	boot,	room	
				sit seat



So we will start with vowel sounds with just some examples of vowel sounds and their articulations. So as we know, in writing symbol, we have five letters to represent vowel sounds. They are a, e, i, o, and u. These are lowercase letters. These are A, E, I, O, and U as uppercase letters. But when we speak vowel sounds, we do make a distinction in the following terms.

So please look at these vowel sounds and their distinction and their uses in words. So we say, uh. Then we say a; we also say aa in English. We also use i; then we use long i, ii. Then we use u and then we use long uu. So we say uh, aa, i, ii, u, uu. We are just taking these six examples to show you the contrast that these three pairs can be contrasted in terms of long and short distinction.

In these three pairs, the first one is short; the second one is long. This short and long distinction is in terms of the duration of time that we take in producing these sounds. So for one, first one, we take a shorter duration. For the second one, we take a longer duration. They become apparently visible in words when we use them. And we are going to look at these distinctions.

One more additional point about vowel sounds to keep in mind that vowel sounds are fundamental in making words. We will discuss this in little more details when we are talking about words. But at this point, we are going to be looking at examples of words from English. So simultaneously, it will be important to keep in mind that

vowel sounds are more fundamental to a word than consonant sounds.

What we mean is, a word is made up by mixing both. You know there are 20 vowel sounds and 24 consonant sounds. So if we ignore the small distinction in terms of total numbers, they are almost equal. That is equal in number, equal consonants, equal vowel. Please mind it; we know there are 20 vowels and 24 consonants. They are almost equal.

But vowel sounds are more fundamental, in the sense that we can make a word only with vowel sounds. In other words, to make a word, we must have one vowel sound in that word. Without at least one vowel sound, we do not have a word. This is what it means when we say; vowels are more fundamental for making a word. That is, vowel sounds are more fundamental for making a word.

Also in the same line, please remember, this is true for all languages. This is true for the languages that we speak, such as Hindi, Bangla, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi, or Tamil, Telugu, Kannada or Malayalam. Or any language that we speak. English is no exception to that.

So in the process of understanding sound systems in English, I want you to keep this in mind that in the words of English language, there must be at least one vowel. No matter how a small a word is, there must be at least one vowel. If there are bigger words, then there could be more number of vowels. It is also possible that there could be all vowels only, but there must be atleast one.

I think this should be clear to you for making a word and we are going to see. Pay attention to each one of these words. They have a vowel sound in that. So when we say a word like up, the word like up as up and down. The first sound of this word is a. The first sound in the word up is a as opposed to the first sound in the word, father. What is the first sound in the word father? F. Right after that, the sound that follows is aa.

That is a long vowel. So when you say up, pay attention to a, as a vowel sound and when we say father, pay attention to the vowel first vowel aa. You will see the distinction in terms of the duration of the time. So one is the short vowel. The other is a long vowel.

We are giving more examples for us to notice that. So when we look at the second set, when we look at cup. In this word, the vowel is the second sound k, a, p. There are three sounds in this word, k, a, p. Second sound happens to be a vowel, which is a shorter vowel. Then, the second sound in a word like sound. Sound. S, aa, o, n, d. The second sound in this word is aa, and that is longer than a. So one more time, two points, we do see the distinction between short and long in terms of a and aa in these two sets.

Cup shorter vowel, sound longer vowel. Please pay attention to another thing that we were discussing, which is in a word like up, the sound a is written with the symbol u. Again in the word cup, sound uh is written with symbol u. In the word father sound aa that is a long vowel is represented with a that is symbol a.

And in a word like sound, the long vowel aa-has completely different writing symbol that is o. So this is the way we write this spelling of a word, and we are talking when we say k, a, and p. For a word like cup, we have three sounds /kʌp/ but they are written as c u p. That was the distinction I was trying to make in the beginning that English words are written using writing symbols, alphabet letters from the alphabet.

But when we speak, we use different sounds for that. And today we are talking about those sounds, and we are trying to develop our understanding about those sounds. So that when we speak, we speak properly, we speak appropriately which, in turn, will make us sound impressive and confident.

A word like sound, there is another word round. Again, in this one, you see a second sound, aa being represented with some other symbol. So that is just for you to just for me to point it out to you, and I think we understand that part. Here, I want you to do a small exercise for yourself. The way I have written cup here representing sounds of this word /kʌp/. Here we are writing /ʌp/.

I want you to do this small practice exercise on your own. This will take five minutes, but give you better acquaintance with the vowel sounds that we speak. There are more vowel sounds; you will need to do little more practice for this. But this will be the initiative practice which will help you see the point that we are trying to drive home.

Please write all the sounds of these words that you have on the screen the way I have represented here and then put them under two slant lines. They represent, the slant lines and the letters inside the slant line represent the sounds of a word. So you will be able to see what is what are the sounds involved in each one of these words. So please use it for father, sound and round.

You will see the distinction between the short and long that we are talking about. So to represent this one, you can say when you are writing round, you can say /raʊnd/. So length you can represent by doubling of these letters. Sometimes they are also represented as putting a small line on top of that. But for using it on a piece of paper or typing it on a computer, this is much easier.

So use either one of the two but try to acquaint yourself, try to familiarize yourself with each one of, each sound in these words. That will give you a better familiarity. Moving ahead, we will look at the distinction between short i and long ii. So what we are talking about is short i, in words like in, ink, sink, drink. These are just some random examples of words in which we find short i, for instance.

However, in a word in words like clean, seat, beat, feet, we see the sound i is longer than the ones in the previous set of words. So again, when you write these right sounds of each one of these words, you will see the distinction. Also, do this practice after you have done finding out sounds for each one of these words. Read these words to yourself slow, and when you read this word, these words like up, cup, father, sound, round.

Read the next set in, ink, sink, drink, clean, seat, beat, feet. You will see the distinction. Slightly later you can also see similar sounding words like you see, I have given you an example of this word seat. You can contrast it with another example of a

word like sit. So what I am basically asking is, you can do this, sit. And then you can have another word seat. Try saying these two words; you will see there are only three sounds in both words sit, seat.

/sit/, /si:t/. The only distinction is the vowel in the first one is shorter i and vowel in the second one is longer ii. And that makes the distinction in terms of the meaning of these two words. So such a distinction is called phonemic distinction. That is, if one small sound and one small distinction between two sounds, make the distinction between the meaning of the two words that is a big thing.

And that is the distinction we want to capture, not only in similar-sounding words but in most of the words, in many words. So we should be able to say sit when we want to say that. And we should be able to say seat when we want to say that. And this distinction comes, the understanding about this distinction comes when we know that there are vowels in the English language, which are some are shorter vowels, some are longer vowels.

Also when you see, you will see like, a, aa, i. You will see when we say a the tongue in our oral cavity is little retracted. When we say i, ii, stress on the tongue is towards the middle side. And when we say u, uu, we see rounding on our lips. This becomes also important in understanding these sounds. So you can pay attention to these things. And that is what is important for these three sets as well.

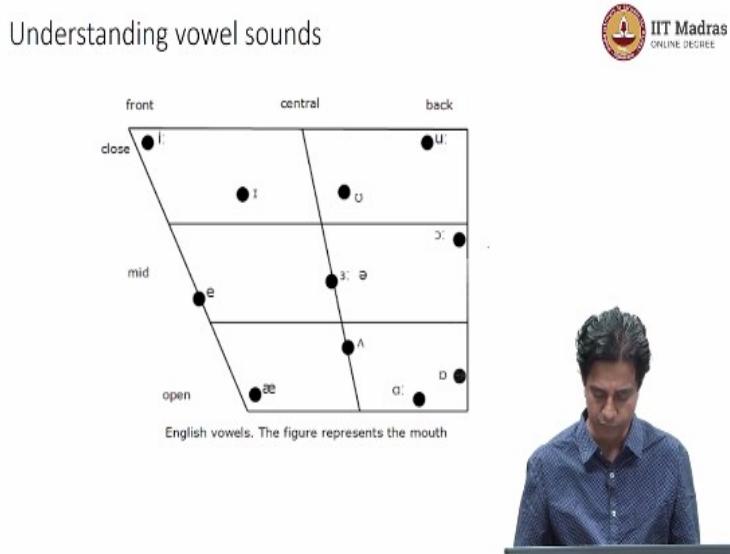
Now, if you pay attention in a similar way to these two, two vowels, u and uu, you see in words like book, cook, look. Each one of them have three sounds like book, /bʊk/. Cook, /kʊk/. Look /lʊk/. In each one of these words, the second sound is a vowel, but that is a shorter vowel. And when you say words like zoo, boot, room, we have longer vowels.

So once again, pay attention to the distinction between how we write these words and how we, how they sound. When you try to find out the sounds of these words, you will see the distinction in terms of long and short distinction in these three sets of vowels, and it will give you a better understanding about vowels in English, some vowels in English. There are more vowels, as you know, 20 of them.

So how do we know about it? So once again, when we were talking about the distinction, particularly, okay another point. These vowel distinctions that you see, these vowel distinctions are in the languages that we speak as well. These this type of distinction between a and aa, i and ii, u and uu this distinction is available In Hindi. This distinction is available in Punjabi, Bangla, Kanada, Tamil, Telugu any language that we speak these distinctions are available.

So you should be able to find them, and when we speak English, we do speak these sounds as well, and we should be very confident about that about these sounds coming in English from us. These sounds are available in English too.

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So this chart tells you about more vowels of English sound, and this will also give you an understanding of how i is a front vowel. How i is shorter than e, that is according to the tongue position. And u is a back vowel. But in terms of rounding, lip is rounded. So it is called closed vowel. So then, according to the tongue position, the distinction is front, central and back.

And you can find most of the vowel-like aa. When we say aa, it is a back vowel towards the back. a and aa both towards the backside in the oral cavity, but they are open vowel. They are æ, a, /ɔ/; they are all mid vowel. So it is not open, not totally close, but they are mid vowels. But some are towards the back; some are towards the

front. So this chart is basically the tongue position and opening and closing of the mouth.

And you can get some idea about the place of articulation of these vowel sounds of English in our oral cavity. We use all of them in our languages as well. Of course, there are some vowels, which may not be available in our languages that way.

But the point here is when we understand the vowels that are similar in our languages also, and they are places of articulation, how they sound in different words, these things will play a big role in our learning of English, our improving English as well. It is important for both those who are learning afresh. It is very important for those also who have been speaking this and paying attention to these smaller details will make you a much more confident speaker.

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### Articulation of Consonant Sounds



Oral Sounds		Nasal Sounds		
	-asp -voice	+asp -voice	-asp +voice	+asp +voice
Velar	k	kh	g	gh
Palatal	c	ch	j	jh
Retroflex	T	Th	D	Dh
Dental	t	th	d	dh
Labial	p	ph	b	bh
				ng
				ny
				N
				n
				m



When we use these vowels in different words, and when we pay attention to them, it becomes very important for us. Please do this exercise of writing, finding out vowel sounds in the words that I have mentioned and try to see the distinction. Then try to find, get more words that you speak and for your curiosity, see the vowel sounds in that. In this exercise, if you identify vowel sounds, in many words, you will get to know that there is no word which is possible without a vowel sound. And that is important information about vowel sounds. So thank you for your attention today. See you soon.

**English - 1 (Basic English)**  
**Prof. Rajesh Kumar**  
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**Lecture - 03**  
**Consonant Sounds in English**

Welcome to the class. Today, we will talk about consonant sounds in English. We know that speech sounds play a very important role. We know that. What I particularly mean is understanding a speech sounds, has an even greater role in learning to speak in an impressive manner. I do want you to underline this thing.

Understanding the sound system of the target language and in this case, English here, understanding the way we speak, looking at ourselves while we speak is very important for developing ourselves as an impressive speaker. And this comes from the confidence that we gain through this understanding, through learning about these nuances. And therefore, we speak in a better way.

So far as we know among the sounds, available sounds in English, as we know, there are two types of sounds. We have vowel sounds, and then we have consonant sounds. So there are 20 vowel sounds and 24 consonant sounds in English. We know, we very briefly we know vowel sounds are more fundamental. That is, we must have at least one vowel sound in every word in any language.

And that also in, that is true in English. That is for every word in English; there must be one vowel sound, which is to say, vowel sounds are more fundamental to the word in English. We have looked at 20 vowel sounds. Now today we are going to look at consonant sounds of English and the way we speak English. And we will also want to know how these consonant sounds are produced.

So keep in mind 24 consonant sounds and more importantly, not more importantly, important is also for us to keep in mind that we write these sounds with letters, with symbols, but we speak differently. So I will require you to pay attention to how we speak.

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## Articulation of Consonant Sounds

	Oral Sounds				Nasal Sounds
	-asp -voice	+asp +voice	-asp +voice	+asp +voice	
Velar	k	kh	g	gh	ng
Palatal	c	ch	j	jh	ny
Retroflex	T	Th	D	Dh	N
Dental	t	th	d	dh	n
Labial	p	ph	b	bh	m



So let us go straightaway and look at the vowel sounds. Look at the consonant sounds I am sorry. We are talking about consonant sounds today. So first I want to give you a generic description of sounds for you to see underlying pattern in which these sounds are sounds can be described. So I am going to show you a template. And I need your attention on that.

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Places	bilabial	labio-dental	dental	alveolar	post-alveolar	palatal	velar	glottal
stop	p b			t d			k g	?
nasal	m			n			ñ	
flap				r				
fricative	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ			h	
approximant			x ɹ	i ɿ		y j		
lateral approximant				l ɺ				



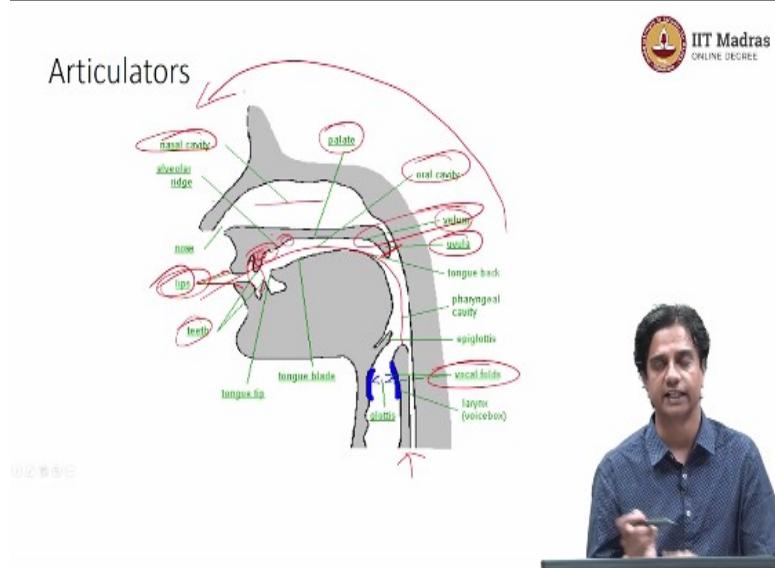
So let us first look at English vowel, English consonant sounds. So English sounds are p, b, t, d, k, g. These are in English consonant sounds. And this chart on your screen tells you about 24 consonant sounds in English. They also tell you about their places of articulations that are on this axis you can see that p and b are bilabial sounds.

Which means we can only need two lips in contact with each other to produce these sounds. Is that not true? When we say and for understanding these things, please say it for yourself, and then you will realize it. Lot of it is possible to observe when we just speak. Say just the sound pa and observe what happens; p, b. We need the two lips coming close together.

And therefore they are called bilabial sounds, and some people call it labial sounds also. M is also a labial sound; m, we need both lips together, but this is a nasal. So on this axis, you have so this is talking about places of articulations. And this is talking about the manner in which they are spoken. So, m is a nasal sound. When you pay attention to the sound, you will see this has nasal, this is a nasal sounds m.

No p and b are not nasal sounds; they are stop sounds. So what is important also to understand the distinction between what we mean by stop and what we mean by nasal. See, not very complex for us to understand. As you know, all speech sounds are produced by modifying the exhaling flow of air in our oral cavity. One more time, modifying means they get either stopped or some kind of modification happens in our oral cavity.

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Oral cavity looks like this. Let me explain this to you and pay attention to this thing. You will get to understand every feature, everything that we are discussing every sound. So this whole thing is called the oral tract, okay. This whole thing is oral tract.

This is the oral cavity, and this part here is the nasal cavity as you see here, okay. And as you see here, this is the oral cavity.

So what happens is when the exhaling flow of air moves from here, it moves up, and then you see this part uvula it gets raised when it gets raised it closes this small cavity that is it closes the flow of air through this cavity, and then the flow moves through this. When the flow moves through the oral cavity, all the sounds are called oral sounds. When this uvula gets lowered, and some bit of flow moves through the nasal cavity, then we get nasal sounds.

So when we say m is a nasal sound, that means in the production of m, the uvula gets lowered and little bit flow of air moves through the oral cavity, move through the nasal cavity. And therefore we get this thing as bilabial nasal sound. So this is the distinction between oral and nasal sound as you see from the distinction in the oral cavity and nasal cavity. Keep in mind all sounds are produced through the flow by modifying the flow of exhaling air.

We inhale. Inhaling and exhaling is a continuous process for us. And after inhaling when we exhale, the exhaling flow of air and its modification at different places in our oral cavity and nasal cavity is responsible for a speech sounds. That is an important part to understand about any speech sound in any language. Going back again to English. So this is what we mean by so this chart tells you m is a bilabial. But it is a nasal sound.

P and b are bilabial sounds, but they are not nasal, they are called stop sounds. Now, what is the meaning of a stop? Let me show you that as well. So the flow of air moves through this oral cavity comes here all the way to lips. These are called lips as you see here. And so the air moves, and it is completely blocked here before the release. So the complete block is what they mean by stop.

It is also called plosive because we release that with little bit explosion. Therefore sometimes it is called plosive sounds as well. So these are different terms that are used for these sounds that are understanding the features of these sounds. But they are

not important. These terms are not important. Neither this process is important for you to know to speak English.

However, if you know this, it is certain that your knowledge about these features of sounds that we speak is definitely going to help you stand out. It will give you a distinction when you speak. It will matter. It will make you a confident speaker in an impressive way. So lips become, so say p again and see it for yourself. When you say p, the moment two lips come together, that is for total closure.

And then we release the flow of air, and thus we get. So every time there is, we get p. So every time we get total closure, such sounds are called stop sounds. And that is the reason why it is called a bilabial stop. Then when we move from bilabial, we see there are some labio-dental sounds. In English, p is a bilabial sound, but f is not a bilabial sound.

So in a word like father, f is a labio-dental sound. Upper teeth and lower lip come together f. Not both lips. The same thing happens when we say v, this sound. These are according to places of articulation these two sounds are labio-dental sounds. Upper teeth, lower lips together. But according to the manner of articulation, this is a fricative.

That is when you say f it is not complete blockers of the flow of air. It is not a complete release also. So there is some sort of friction here, which is indicated as a fricative. Then we go to dental sounds like th and d. This is th and this is d, th and d. You see, the tip of the tongue touches teeth. That is the meaning of dental sounds. So according to the place of articulation th, d they are dental, but they are still fricative.

S and z are not dental also. So look at this. These were f labio-dental. Upper teeth and lower lips. Th dental, both teeth tip of the tongue. S, tip of the tongue moves towards the upper side of the upper teeth, and that is called alveolar sound. S and the friction that is friction in the flow of air still continues. So they are all fricative sounds in English. This is sh. Sh and this is again a different kind of z.

So this is a different kind of z, and this is a different kind of z. But they are, this is sh is post-alveolar okay. It becomes very close to; this is very close to the palatal. The moment you move from the alveolar region that is the teeth reach area of the upper lip, upper teeth, it can become palatal also. But in English this is not palatal, it is just post-alveolar it is pre-palatal sound. And then you have h.

It is still a fricative sound, but that is too low in the oral cavity towards the glottis. So when you reach, look at this. This is called the labial area. This is teeth is; these are teeth. So this is dental sounds are coming from here. If you have something from here, then you have alveolar. This is the alveolar region. And somewhere here will be called between palate and alveolar region you will be the sound will be called post-alveolar and then becomes palatal.

So you see and then finally, you see k and g coming from velum, velum area. K and g they are velar sounds in English. So and there are few more which we will look at again. But this is an important chart for you to get yourself acquainted with sounds in English. I am going to show you some words where you see some of these sounds.

And then that will give you a practice of how these sounds are used in different words in English. But, so this picture of our articulators that is the different places, different organs in oral cavity like tongue, teeth, lips and different places like alveolar ridge, palate, or velum they play an important role in producing sounds because the exhaling flow of air gets modified at these different places.

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 IIT Madras  
ONLINE DEGREE

# Articulation of Consonant Sounds

## Oral Sounds

	-asp -voice	+asp -voice	-asp +voice	+asp +voice	
Velar	k	kh	g	gh	ng
Palatal	c	ch	j	jh	ny
Retroflex	T	Th	D	Dh	N
Dental	t	th	d	dh	n
Labial	p	ph	b	bh	m

## Nasal Sounds

And thus we get a clear picture of how we produce vowels, how we produce consonant sounds in English. A slight contrast with some more sound, some more consonant sounds that we use in our languages. But when we speak English, that is we speak English in India, we do use these sounds, and I want you to pay attention to some of them as well.

One more time, let me take you to two specific English sounds like when you saw th and d they are dental sounds. T and d are not dental sounds. In English, they are alveolar sounds. So when we speak t in English, and if you pay attention, what simply happens is the tip of the tongue goes to the alveolar ridge. Only this much happens, the tip of the tongue t.

Tip of the tongue is raised, touches teeth and the muscular area which is also known as the alveolar ridge. The same thing happens when we say d. So this is d, which is dental and this is d, which is alveolar. That is true about English. But what will help us understand is, is this distinction. So look at that. We know sound like k is a velar sound. A sound like p is a labial sound.

A sound like t in English it is alveolar, but in our language, it is a t is a t sound, is a dental sound. D in our language is also dental. Ch is a palatal sound in our languages, and what we speak in our languages, this is a critical thing for us to understand. This entire series of sounds that we speak a lot in India, but these sounds are not there in English. That is T, Th, D, Dh, N. Some of these sounds are there in Hindi.

And a lot of these sounds and few more retroflex sounds are available in other Indian languages like Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kanada, Malayalam and so on. Kurukh, Tulu all these languages are full of retroflex sounds. So now a simple note here. You do not have to change the way you speak overnight. You can continue speaking the way you do.

These sounds are part of our languages that we speak, that we grew up speaking before we started learning English. In some of our languages, when we speak English, these sounds appear and therefore, we do not sound the way English speakers sound. This is not something that should damage our confidence. However, the knowledge about this can only make us learn it better.

Try to improve it better. We can try. But as you know, our efforts are always on a continuum. We start, we improve; we try, we improve. We still try we improve further. So we can continue trying, but must not stop. Must not, this the availability of these sounds in our speech must not break our confidence. It will not, if we understand how we speak and why we speak. We speak because we grew up speaking these things.

We intuitively innately learnt these things without putting any efforts when we were learning our languages. Now that when we are putting efforts into learning sounds of English, we will put efforts. But if at times in a fast speech, we end up saying these things, it is not a big problem. And I will get to show you; I will also show you that part. So see what happens.

For a sound like alveolar t in English, what happens is the tip of the tongue goes to the alveolar ridge. For a sound like Hindi or Indian t, th, d, speak it to yourself, you will see t, th, it does not have to make you shy. You need to speak it for yourself to realize and then understand this distinction very carefully. It will require some practice. Say it to yourself t. You see, the tip of the tongue folds backwards.

And then it hits the alveolar region in our oral cavity, folds backward, hits it up. T, th, d, for each one of these sounds. And we are so used to this that they will come in

other languages, when we speak other languages. One more time for clarity, it is not a problem to use them. But on the basis of this knowledge, if we keep working on it towards improvement, we will get these sounds as well.

And then we will sound better while speaking English. So that is one part we need to pay attention to. Our t is a retroflex sound because of the folding of the tongue. It is tough, but we are so used to, we do that effortlessly. Which happens tip of the tongue folds back happens at the alveolar ridge region. For English alveolar, for English speakers, this alveolar sound is very simple.

It happens without folding of the tongue. Just straight away, the tongue goes to the alveolar ridge area, and we speak these sounds. So that is one distinction we need to keep in mind. And a lot of sounds in our languages have this distinction. K, when we say k, it is a velar stop in our languages also. But when we say kh, it has little extra aspiration. And then it becomes kh.

So according to you see, these are nasal sounds that we were talking about in lowering down uvula and flow of air through the nasal cavity also. So when we say m, it is a nasal sound. When we say n it is a nasal sound. The only according to the place of articulation, the distinction is m is a bilabial nasal. N is a dental nasal. Ny is a palatal nasal and ng is a velar nasal. So that is the, and this is a retroflex nasal.

So this is the story of nasal sounds. When we look at oral sounds, what we see is a k sound is a non-aspirated sound for us. Because what when it becomes aspirated it becomes kh. We will see a roll of this thing when we talk when we start our discussion on words. But right now I only want your attention on the sound system. So this is k, this is kh.

When we say g if you put your hand in your this area, you and then say g. Say two of them. K, g. When you say g, say it a couple of times if you do not feel this. When you say g, you see more vibration on your hands and fingers. That vibration happens here in vocal cords. And this is called voicing. So g is voiced, but non-aspirated. Gh is voiced and aspirated both.

So that way in our oral cavity, we make four-way distinction. K, Kh, G, Gh. So, k is not aspirated, not voiced. Kh is aspirated but not voiced. G is not aspirated but voiced. And gh, gh is both aspirated and voiced. So we make this four-way distinction. In some of our languages, we do not have this four-way distinction, but in some languages, we have this four-way distinction.

The same thing happens for c, ch, j, jh. The same thing happens for our retroflex sounds, t, th that is th is aspirated, t is not aspirated; d is voiced, and dh is also voiced. But the distinction between d and dh is they are one is a non-aspirated, the other is aspirated. Same thing with t, th, d, dh.

Same with p, ph, b, bh. So when you see it this, in this direction, you will see why these things why velar sounds come first, why palatal comes second, why a retroflex third, why dental fourth, and while labial last? You see because exhaling flow of air is responsible for a speech sound. So the first place is velum, then we have a palate, then we have a retroflex alveolar area, then we have teeth, and then we have lips.

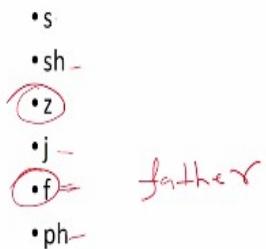
So it moves in this direction. Therefore, it is arranged that way. Now what I want your attention towards to is just two points that some of these sounds are in our languages. And these sounds are specifically for English. When we put these two things together, we see that we speak these sounds effortlessly and we use them in English also. But when we want to improve, we need to reach here.

We are already good with so many of them. We are good with p, b, m. We are good with f. We are good with v; we are good with th, d, s, z, h, y, r, l. These are this is y, this is r and this is l. So these are the, we are good with k, g, ng, we are good with many. We just need attention to alveolar sounds. We just need to know about fricative sounds.

And then when we do this maths, we are well informed about the distinction between our sounds and English sounds. That helps us pay attention to, helps us identify areas where we need more attention. And we become a more confident speaker of English using almost English sounds.

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## Some specific features of English Sounds



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There are some specific things where we need attention. That is a lot of speakers in our country; speakers of different languages do not make a distinction between s and sh. That is also fine. But while speaking English, we need to pay attention to that because it makes it does make a distinction in our languages also. But in some languages, this distinction does not exist. Similarly, it works when we say j and z.

Our j and English z are different. We do have z in lot of that is a lot of Perso-Arabic sounds in some of our languages too. We do have f too in our languages. But we need to pay attention to this distinction between f as a labio-dental and ph as bilabial. Z and j, that is one palatal you see, this z is alveolar, okay, and this j is palatal. So we need to pay attention to this. And then we get all these sounds done.

So at the end of this, what I want you to do exercise with is the following. First, start with this. You write one more time 20 words in a notebook. One blank white sheet 20 words. Try to identify sounds in each one of those 20 words. They could some of them could be smaller words; some of them could be bigger words. So when you start with a smaller or irrespective of the size of the word, you will have 2, 3, 4 consonant sounds in each one of those words.

I want you to identify the place of articulation of each one of those sounds according to this chart. This will be a very interesting exercise to do. Please note, please do it will take not more than 20 minutes. But please do it with 20 words. If you feel like breaking this exercise into two, you can start with 10 words. And when you are done

with the first set of 10 words, you can start with another set of 10 words at a later time.

But please do identify consonant sounds and any 20 words that comes to your mind. Finally, the second set of exercise is where I want you to find words in English which have s sound and words which have sh. Again we are talking about this one. So and then find words that are with f. And this is what I meant, lot of people when we say father end up saying it as bilabial, phather.

No, this does not have to break our confidence. But if we pay attention that in a word like father, it is not bilabial sound, it is labio-dental sound f, it helps us set this thing with a little bit of practice right away. And we improve our English; we improve the way we speak. So thanks for listening to this, please do this exercise, and it will help you improve the way you speak. Thank you so much.

**English - 1 (Basic English)**  
**Sudha Ravi, Guest Faculty**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Science**  
**Indian Institute of Technology-Madras**

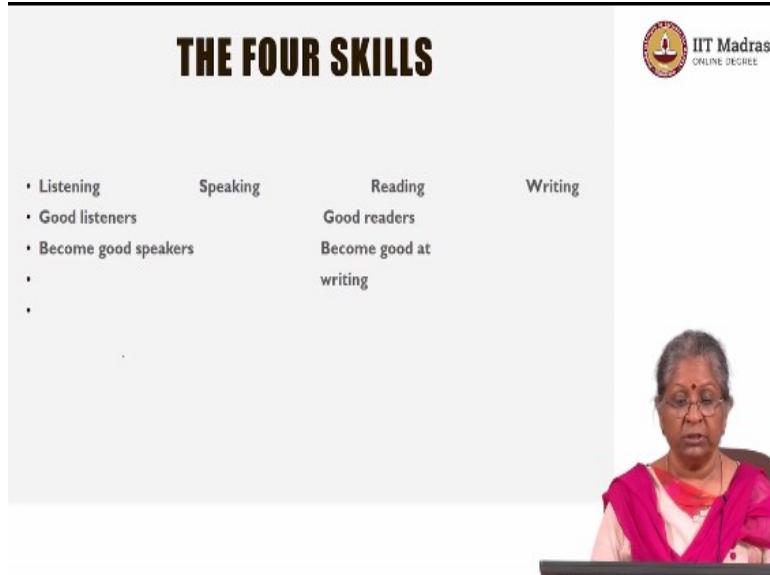
**Lecture - 04**  
**Listening**

Hi, welcome back.

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**THE FOUR SKILLS**



Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
• Good listeners		Good readers	
• Become good speakers		Become good at	
•		writing	
•			

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So just to recap once again, the four skills of language are listening, speaking, reading and writing. People who are good listeners generally tend to become good speakers. We will see why that happens as we proceed. And people who are good at reading and develop the reading skill also become good at writing.

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## WHY IS LISTENING IMPORTANT?

- Only if we listen can we understand/comprehend and only then can we assimilate ideas/thoughts that are spoken
- It is also important because listening leads to thinking
- Thinking leads to decision making



So why is listening important. Only when we listen, we tend to understand, we comprehend, and then only we will assimilate ideas, thoughts that are spoken. It is also important because listening leads to thinking. When we are listening to somebody, now that you are all listening to me, I am sure it is already triggered some thought process, and you want to know what she would be saying next and what are the kind of things we are going to learn today.

So listening definitely leads to some thinking happening. And thinking then leads to decision making, whether you want to continue with this course, you want to listen to this person, all that decision happens when you are thinking.

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- Research shows that poor listening habits and skills can cause as many failures of communication as ineffective expression of ideas.
- We have to understand that successful listening is not a passive act.
- It involves active processing, reformulation and revision.



So actually research shows that poor listening habits and skills can cause as many failures of communication as ineffective expression of ideas. To expand on this, what does it mean? So, people who are poor at listening, they will not be able to communicate because they have not listened to what somebody has said. Let us take the example of the classroom.

So in the classroom if a student has exhibited poor listening habit and has not paid attention to what the teacher or the lecturer is saying, they will be not able to communicate effectively in a test, a written test or an oral test, they will not be able to express their ideas well. So successful listening in that sense is not a passive act. It involves active processing, reformulation and revision.

See when we come into the classroom, we already have some idea about what we are going to listen to. So in that sense, we are not a blank slate, right. So we are we come with a certain idea or certain concept in our head, and when the teacher starts talking about it, then those ideas get added. So as I was saying, it is not a blank slate you come with your own ideas, then you listen.

So both of them get added, and now there are fresh ideas, concepts in your head about that topic. So in that sense, it is not a passive act. So that is where we say you are processing, you are reformulating. So you already have some idea or some thoughts about that topic. Now with the new ideas that assimilation happens, you reformulate, and then you revise your understanding of that concept.

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## **LISTENING-THE FIRST LANGUAGE SKILL**

- Most children come to school armed with only one way to learn – listening.
- Almost all of us were born doing it.
- Indeed, for the first few years of formal education, listening is an integral part of teaching.
- But something happens around first and second grade, when students learn to read.
- Slowly the read aloud books and story time are phased out, replaced instead by silent reading.
- 



So listening is the first language skill, right. Most children come to school, armed with only one way to learn, and that is listening. These days we send children at two and a half years, three years to school and what they come when they come from home? They only know listening. Almost all of us were born doing it. Indeed for the first few years of formal education, listening is an integral part of teaching.

So, children who have gone through a good amount of their time, classroom time listening, they will do very well in future. But what happens? Somewhere down the line, you know till they are in first and second grade, students start reading, and slowly the read-aloud books and storytime are phased out, replaced instantly by silent reading. So when this transition happens, they have not sufficiently prepared we can say to transit from listening.

They come to the school; they are just listening. But immediately the schools and the formal system is in a hurry to introduce speaking, to introduce reading, and also writing. So in all this, listening actually takes a backseat. The teachers only want them to listen to their instructions. Listen to me, listen to the instruction, listen to what I am saying; only this happens. But they are not exposed to listening in a very focused manner, which we will see as we proceed in this course.

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## WHAT DO WE LISTEN FOR?

### 1. Understanding detailed information for a purpose

Can understand straightforward factual information about common topics;  
understand simple technical information

### 2. Understanding & interpreting a range of features of context

- Can follow the main points of extended discussion

Required  
Lang.  
Listened  
on that topic  
in the past

So what do we listen for? So first, we listen to understand detailed information for a purpose. Can understand straightforward factual information about common topics. Understand simple technical information. For example, you are all sitting in this class today. So you are sitting here to get some factual information about what listening is.

When you go to a computer class, you are sitting there and listening for how to operate a computer, how to go into the internet, how to log in, how to log out. So basic, simple information. So that is detailed information for a purpose. You check-in into a hotel; they give you information, you know, take the key, this is the floor, this is how you go into the room. These are the facilities available.

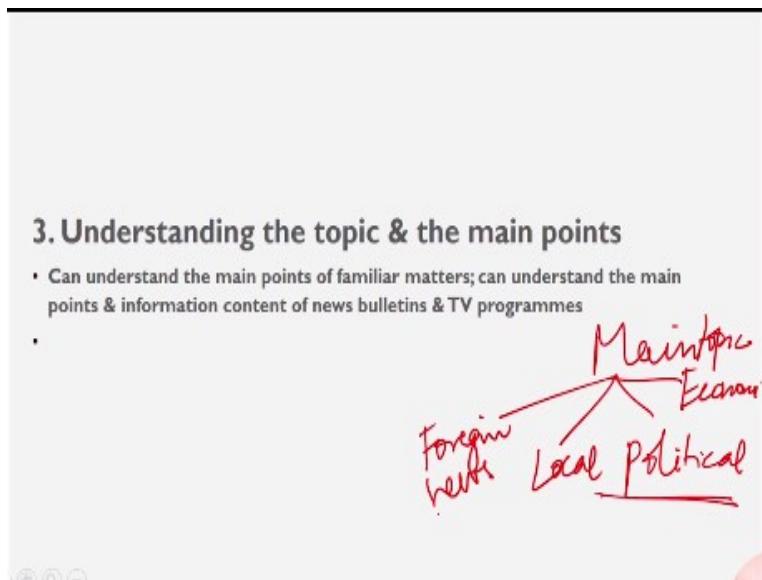
So there is a purpose behind which you know, you are standing there and listening. And you must have realized when you fail to do that, you go to the room, and there are so many questions. But all those questions have actually been answered at the reception, but you have not paid attention. So that is very specific information that we are listening to. The second is understanding and interpreting a range of features of context.

So what does this mean? Basically, it means if there is a discussion. If three or four of us, you are sitting together and talking about something. There is a discussion happening on the political situation, on an economic issue or general discussion on fashion. Then to be able to follow the discussion of what each person sitting there is saying, what each point of view is, and how the discussion is proceeding.

Only then you can be part of the discussion. I am sure many times you have felt sitting in you know conversation group where there are five or six people, and you do not know what they are talking about, and you are not aware of that topic, then you just become a quiet part of the whole group, and you are not able to contribute to the discussion.

The reason being either you do not have the required language for that topic because you have not listened on that topic in the past, right. So these could be the reasons why, you know, you are today unable to follow the main points of an extended discussion. We will see more examples as we move on.

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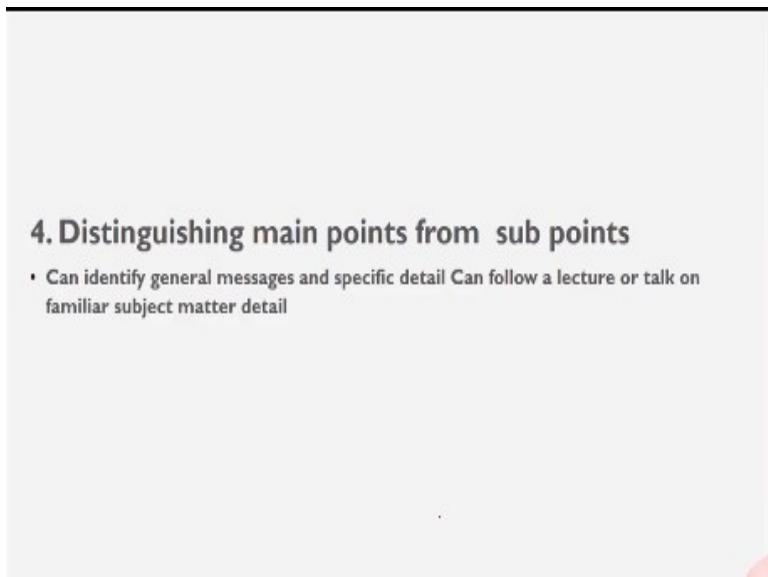
Now and the next reason why we listen, understanding the topic and the main points. When does this happen? This happens when we are listening to a news bulletin for example, on a television or a radio even, right. So if they are talking about an election result, so that is the main topic, and then under that, what else is the information that the newsreader is conveying to you.

So that is where there comes the main topic. Then it has subtopics. There will be news on, for example, foreign news, local, political, economic. So the main topic is the news for the day, and under this, there could be a variety of subtopics. Now there could be out of this only one that actually interests you. So you may pay attention to

that one area. So if you are interested in politics, for example, you may pay attention to that particular news.

So you will get exposed to the language, the words, the expressions that are specific to political news. That is called jargon, the political jargon. The term that we use for any particular set of words and expressions, which are used for one area, they are called the jargon, right.

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The other thing that we listen to is to be able to distinguish the main points from sub-points. So, for example, let us take what I have been talking about now, for the past 15 minutes. I have talked about, what is the main point? Talking about listening; developing, listening as a skill. Under that, we have discussed various sub-points. Under each sub-point, we are further discussing examples, further going deeper into the understanding.

So there are main points, and there are sub-points. This usually happens in a lecture or in a talk where you have gone for a particular talk because you are familiar with the subject matter, but you want to know more about that topic. So you go and sit in that lecture. So there is the main topic that the speaker talks about. And then he further takes you into the other aspects of the topic.

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## **WE LISTEN FOR:**

- **Comprehension**
- **Acquisition**
- Listening and listening comprehension are one and the same thing. It is believed that people listen for understanding the spoken language.
- When we say listening for acquisition it means listening will provide us inputs for developing our second language skills. In this case English

So, from the point of view of, you know the language, what do we listen for? We listen for comprehending or comprehension, and we listen for acquisition. So listening and listening comprehension are the same thing. It is believed that people listen for understanding the spoken language. Imagine yourself in a situation where you are sitting among people who do not speak the language you understand.

And you have to sit there for an hour or so. So would it not be a strange situation that you have got yourself into where you do not understand what the other person is speaking. So when we listen, the urge to comprehend and to understand is very strong. So that is what is listening for comprehension. And when we say listening for acquisition, it is at a little you know higher level.

It means listening will provide us with inputs for developing our second language skills. We listen for specific words. Okay, maybe I can use this word next time when I am talking in the class or when I am conversing with my friends. So we are also listening to you know, improve our own vocabulary fund, our own active vocabulary, right? In this case, it is English, right?

That is what we are trying to understand. But for any language, any language, these two things work. Even when if you are thinking of learning French, German, any language in this world, these are the two reasons for which we actually listen.

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- It means when we listen we also acquire vocabulary of that language, words, phrases and how to use them and where to use them while speaking or writing.
- The challenge of listening is the manner in which the speaker is delivering the spoken language, their pronunciation, intonation and above all speed of delivery.

So it means as I said, we listen to acquire the vocabulary of that language, words, phrases, and how to use them. So when you listen to a speaker, you also try to get those expressions, the style of using, in what context those words and expressions are being used. And probably if you have used them in the past and made some mistakes, oh, okay, so this is how I am supposed to use it. That understanding also comes.

The challenge of listening actually is the manner in which the speaker is delivering the spoken language, the pronunciation, intonation, and above all, speed of delivery. So this is something that we all face on a day to day basis, especially in a country like India, where the regional language influence is very strong. So there might be two people conversing in a room who come from one from the southern part of India and one from the northern part of India.

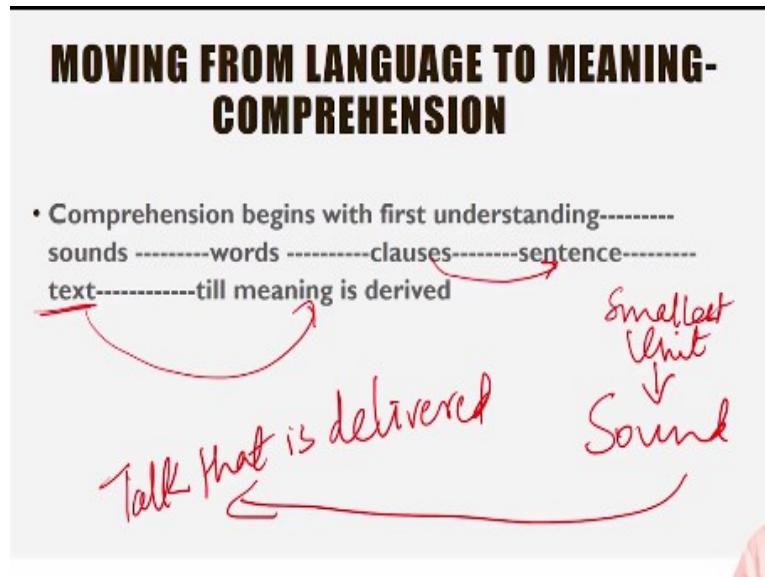
So they will have their own mother tongue influence when they deliver English. Their pronunciation will have that influence. Their intonation pattern may have, and their speed of delivery could not be as it should be for the English language. So these are the things that distract, that becomes a challenge, and you might find that you do not follow the speaker. So now, when we listen to somebody, we need to pay attention to the way they pronounce the words.

A native speaker, so if you listen to somebody from the UK, for example, the British because it is their language, they are the native users of that language. So if you expose yourself continuously listening to BBC, etc., then you will, over a period of

time, develop that pronunciation, you will watch out for specific words and how those words are pronounced.

So you can listen to people regularly to ensure that you do not make mistakes when you are speaking, and people do not find it difficult to comprehend what you are talking.

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So now, let us understand what happens actually in the process of comprehension. When we say that we are comprehending a language, it first starts with understanding sounds. From sounds, you move to words. From words, you move to clauses. And from clauses to sentences and from the sentence to the text. And there where you will know whether actually the meaning has been derived, whether you have understood.

So basically, it starts with the smallest unit, which is the sound. And from there, you finally reach the entire talk that is delivered. So it is we can also call it the bottom-up approach. I will talk a little more about it later.

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## **MOVING FROM MEANING TO LANGUAGE-ACQUISITION**

- In the second method we move from meaning to language.
- For this the listener need to have background knowledge of the topic of discourse.

Then when we say moving from meaning to language, which is acquisition. For this, the listener needs to have background knowledge of the topic of discourse. So I come from an English background, for example, and if somebody says that there is a lecture on nanotechnology and I have to go and sit in that lecture, I need to have some understanding of what nanotechnology is.

So what are the kind of expressions, what are the things they might talk? Unless and until I have that background knowledge, I may find myself groping in the dark. After 15 minutes, I might become disinterested in what the speaker is saying. He might be the best speaker on that topic. But because I do not have the background knowledge, I kind of fail to understand what the speaker is talking about.

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## **UNDERSTANDING BOTH PROCESSES**

- Let us take an example to understand both the processes.
- Situation: Visit to a doctor.
- Your friend tells you she is going to visit her doctor in the evening as she has been having stomach ache. She tells you that the pain is severe.
- First process:
- Words and expressions:
  - Stomach Ache
  - Visit the doctor
  - In the evening
  - Severe pain

*These chunks help us identify the underlying meaning the words express.*

So to reach this stage where you have acquired, you need to start bottom-up, right. So let us understand both the processes. That is comprehension and acquisition. So I am going to take an example here. The situation is visiting a doctor. So your friend tells you she is going to visit a doctor in the evening, as she has been having a stomach ache. She tells you that the pain is very severe.

Now when we talk of from the comprehension process point, what are the words and expressions here? Stomachache, visit the doctor, in the evening, severe pain. So these four, five words, these are chunks that help you identify the underlying meaning of the words right, these words express. So you catch on to these words, you latch on to these words, and you try to understand the whole discourse of what your friend is saying.

So once she tells you that she has a stomachache and she is planning to go to the doctor in the evening, actually after that many times we even switch off. She goes on to tell you more in detail about what has been happening, why it has been happening, and you are actually not paying attention. And you realize that after a few minutes, if she tells you, hey, where are you?

Oh, I did not pay attention; I only know that you are going to the doctor. Probably you have stopped processing once you know the main information was kind of given to you, right.

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- Let us look at the second process:
- Situation: I heard on the TV last night that Japan has suffered an earthquake. As many as 200 people were killed.
- The moment the word 'earthquake' is uttered a set of questions come up in the mind of the listener.
- Where exactly was the earthquake?
- How big was it?
- Did it cause a lot of damage?
- What rescue efforts are under way?
- These questions guide us through the understanding of any subsequent spoken discourse that one will hear.

Now looking at the second process. The situation is, I heard on the TV last night that Japan has suffered an earthquake. As many as 200 people were killed. Now the moment the word earthquake is uttered, what happens? It triggers a set of questions that come to your mind. Where exactly was the earthquake? How big was it? Did it cause a lot of damage? What are rescue efforts underway?

So here because the earthquake is something that you know about, you know about earthquakes, you know why it happens, you know that there is a tectonic shift maybe, you know all that. So the moment the word earthquake is uttered, immediately there are questions that come to your head, right. So these questions guide us through the understanding of any subsequent spoken discourse that one will hear.

So already these questions have come up in your mind, and you are waiting for the speaker to give out this information. So as the speaker continues, it is literally like filling in the blanks. Oh, where exactly was the earthquake? So fill in the blank. This is where in Japan, it happened. How big was it? So what was on the Richter scale? What was the intensity? Immediately you fill it in there? So this is what is from the acquisition point of view.

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- The first one is called the Bottom Up Approach
  - The second one is called the Top down Approach
- 
- When we start listening to a language for the first time we use tend to use the 'Bottom Up Approach' to listening. We are looking for familiar 'words' and 'phrases' to get some meaning.
  - An expert user of the language uses the 'Top Down Approach' to listening.
  - Most of us are somewhere in between these two. If we wish to become an expert user of the language we need to move towards the second approach

So the first one is called the bottom-up approach. The second one is called the top-down approach. When we start listening to a language for the first time, we use, we tend to use the bottom-up approach to listening. We are looking for familiar words

and phrases to get some meaning, okay. You want to latch on to those words, sounds, and immediately try and create the meaning in your head.

An expert user of the language uses the top-down approach to listening. So this is the difference. So we all have to reach the top-down approach, and that is what is an expert user of the language. Somebody who, just as the speaker utters the word can connect can bring his own background information, can listen for more detail, and fill in the blank all the questions that come to his or her mind as he or she is listening to the speaker.

So at this point, we would end today's class, and there will be a worksheet that you need to do and some exercises to follow. Thank you.

**English - 1 (Basic English)**  
**Sudha Ravi, Guest Faculty**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Science**  
**Indian Institute of Technology-Madras**

**Lecture - 05**  
**Approaches to Listening**

Okay, now we are going to do an activity since we have been listening about listening. So let us do this short activity.

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## **ACTIVITY**

- Based on what you have understood till now answer the following questions:
- I. Say whether the following statements are T/F
  - a. Comprehension is possible even if we do not listen to the speaker
  - b. Thinking is an important aspect of language processing.
  - c. A good listener is a good communicator.

Based on what you have understood till now answer the following questions. Say whether the following statements are true or false. Comprehension is possible even if we do not listen to the speaker. Thinking is an important aspect of language processing. A good listener is a good communicator. So I am giving you a few minutes.

Without actually looking at the content that we have transacted till now, see whether you can answer all these three statements. They are very simple. If you have been listening to me, I am sure you would have got it right. I hope you are done with this. Now I am going to play audio for you okay, which you have to listen to, and then answer questions. **(Audio Starts: 01:23).**

Listen to this short task on developing brain. Someone has just offered you a fresh jalebi. You hesitate and then say, no thanks. Turning down a hot jalebi surely

demands an explanation. So here are two. You heard the offer, saw the delicious item. Felt like reaching for it, but then remembered, you are on a diet, and you said no. Neurons behind your ears fired in response to the question.

Neurons in the back of your head and deep inside the brain responded to the sight and smell of the jalebi setting off neurons in other regions responsible for thought and emotion. Then neurons responsible for decision making fired just behind your forehead triggering a small set of neurons at the crown of your head. And you said, no. The two explanations are at different levels of psychological analysis.

During the second half of the last century, mainstream psychology sought to explain human behaviour in terms of thoughts, feelings, and memories. Cognitive, developmental, social and other areas of psychology flourished along these lines. But all along, the brain was being studied too and with increasing sophistication. By the 1990s, it was actually possible to see and watch a live human brain using complicated scanning techniques.

This is neuroscience, and today it seeks brain-based explanations for everything we do and feel. When brain scans first began to be used in research, they confirmed that different parts of the brain are dedicated to different functions. Speaking, reading a word, comparing two numbers. Each of these is accompanied by a different pattern of brain activity. This by itself was not news.

Psychologists had already been studying the brains of dead people who had survived some brain injury during their life. Finding strong connections between the specific losses these people had suffered when alive and specific sites of brain damage. For example, stroke patients who had lost speech invariably had damage on the left side of the brain. And people with damage to the front of the brain invariably had shown poor control of their emotions.

But the new scanning methods are much more sophisticated. For one thing, some of them allow us to watch a living brain in action. Today, we can put your head in the scanner, show you a jalebi and watch while those pockets of neurons (**Audio Ends: 04:26**).

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### Complete the Activity

- Listen to the audio and complete the questions:
- A. What is this short talk about?
- B. Do you think the speaker likes jalebi?
- 1. yes
- 2. No
- 3. Can't say
- C. Neurons that helped the speaker say 'No' are located .....(behind the forehead/back of head)
- D. Post mid 20<sup>th</sup> century three aspects that psychologists were keen to explain were
- 1. .... 2. .... 3....

So now based on what you heard, I would like you to complete the attached worksheet. It has questions based on this recording. Without listening to it a second time, see how many questions you can answer. But if required, go ahead, play it a second time and see now how many questions you can answer. Now, this will actually tell you how you have focused on listening.

So we have been talking about listening for quite some time now. And I am sure by this time; it is kind of helping you to focus and pay attention to what at least I am speaking to you through these lectures. So you will realize that if you can translate all this into your real-life and pay attention, it definitely will help you do better in all walks of your life.

Listening is the one major thing that makes a difference between somebody who succeeds and somebody who actually finds it difficult.

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## BOTTOM UP PROCESS

- - Recognize words and clauses
- - Recognize key words
- - Recognize key transition words/phrases in a discourse/speech
- - Recognize grammatical relationships between key words in the sentence
- - Recognize the order in which words occur in a sentence

So let us now, so I hope you enjoyed doing the audio class where you had to listen to something and then answer the questions. Now let us go back if you remember to the bottom-up process. So how do you help yourself go through this process of listening from words to larger sentences, phrases, paragraphs and whole lot of chunk of spoken language? So the first step is for you to recognize words and clauses.

And then you have to recognize the keywords for each of the utterances. Then the transition words. For example, just know when I spoke, I said then, so then is a transition word. So after then, what comes is what we need to pay attention to. So if you are able to recognize the transition words, then it becomes easy for you to connect the words and phrases that follow. Then recognize grammatical relationships.

For example, prepositions on, in. So these will help you establish the relationships between keywords in the sentence. Then recognize the order in which words occur in a sentence. So is it the name of the person that comes first? Is it the action that the person is doing that comes first? So all these things, if you are able to pin down, then you are proceeding from the smallest chunk that is a word to a larger utterance.

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## **TASKS THAT DEVELOP BOTTOM UP PROCESS**

- Listening to positive and negative statements and choose an appropriate response. These are statements from a longer spoken discourse.

Statement	Options	
a. That's a nice bag	Yes	No
b. That's not a very good idea	Yes	No
c. This tea isn't hot	Yes	No

So which are the tasks that help us develop this bottom-up process? So, for example, listening to positive and negative statements and choose an appropriate response. These are statements from a longer spoken discourse. So the statement could be, that is a nice bag. So you have the option to say yes or no. So this statement by itself may not make sense to you now.

But when it is a part of a larger discourse, then when you are asked questions like, say yes or no. So please understand that they are testing your bottom-up processing capability. That is not a very good idea. So if two of us are conversing about some idea on how to do a certain thing, and one of your friends says, Oh, I do not think that is a good idea. So what is not a good idea?

Then you go back to the conversation, and you try to identify what you had said, and which she is commenting on as not a very good idea, right? This tea is not hot. So when based on a spoken discourse, you are given statements to answer, then that is part of the bottom-up listening process.

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## **ACTIVITY TO DEVELOP IDENTIFYING KEY WORDS**

- Listen to the following:
- My town is a nice place to visit as it is close to a forest, there are lots of interesting short walks one can do before going into the deep. The town is surrounded by greenery.
- Task:
- Which of these words do you hear?
- Town, forest, walks, greenery, shops, countryside

So what are the activities that we can do to develop identifying keywords? Now listen, I am going to read out something, just pay attention to this. My town is a nice place to visit as it is close to a forest. There are lots of interesting short walks one can do before going into the deep. The town is surrounded by greenery. Now the little task that you have to do is you heard me out, right?

Which of these words did you hear? Did you hear town? Did you hear forest, walks, greenery, shops, countryside? So now here, I am specifically asking you to identify whether you heard specific words, right. So any such activity that you expose yourself where you are asked to listen to discourse and asked for specific words. Did you listen to this word? Yes or no?

Did you listen to this phrase? Yes or no? So these all are testing your ability to look for key words and that is what essentially happens in the bottom-up process.

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## ACTIVITY FOR TOP DOWN PROCESS

- Imagine I make the following statement to my friend:
- “I am going to the dentist tomorrow”
- The moment I say this a thought process is activated around “going to the dentist”. This includes:
  - A setting (dentist office)
  - People there (the dentist, his assistant, the other patients)
  - Reason (to have a check up, filling, replacing a tooth)
  - Procedure (drilling, rinsing, injection)
  - Outcome (fixing the problem, pain, discomfort)

Now the other process, if you remember that I discussed last week, was top-down process. Imagine I make the following statement to my friend. I am going to the dentist tomorrow. The moment I say this, a thought process is activated around going to the dentist. This includes a setting.

You know a dentist, clinic or office, people there, the dentist, his assistant, the other patients, the reason why one goes to a dentist to have a checkup, filling, replacing a tooth and so many other things. The procedure drilling, rinsing, injection, not very happy thing to happen, right. And the final outcome, fixing the problem, pain, discomfort.

So the moment I say this, I am going to the dentist tomorrow it activates in your head, a whole lot of words and so many things around that situation, right? So these are the things that come to your mind.

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- The next day when I meet my friend I ask him:
- How was it?
- Fine, not as painful as I thought it would be,
- Without giving any background the two people involved in the conversation are able to understand what it is about as the listener understands what "going to the dentist" means.

And the next day when I meet my friend I ask him, how was it? Fine, not as painful as I thought it be. Says my friend. So now here, if you look at the question, how was it? It here is replacing how was the visit to the dentist. But since this whole discourse has happened the previous day, and there is a whole lot of process that has been set in motion, I do not have to really ask my friend, how was the visit to the dentist?

The moment he listens again, how was it, he is able to respond that I am referring to that conversation, which I had with him the previous day where I said that where he told me about his visit to the dentist, right. So he also replies fine, not as painful as I thought it would be. Without giving any background, the two people involved in the conversation are able to understand what it is about as the listener understand what going to the dentist means.

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## **TOP DOWN PROCESS**

- A listener who develops this ability can do the following:
  - Can use key words to construct the ideas involved in a conversation/discourse
  - Can infer the setting for a text
  - Can infer the role of the participants and their goals
  - Can infer cause and effect relationship
  - Can guess unsaid details of a situation/ guess
  - Can guess/anticipate questions related to a given topic

So this is what is the top-down process where a situation, so the moment I say that I am going to IIT, right, there is a whole lot of words, phrases, and the situation comes into play in the head of the speaker and in the head of the listener too. And if the listener is familiar with that situation, they will immediately start constructing the vocabulary, the sentences and the phrases related to this particular visit.

So let us look a little more at the top-down process. A listener who develops this ability can do the following. He can use keywords to construct the idea involved in a conversation or a discourse. For example, if I give you the word forest, so when you are applying the top-down process around, and I say that you get one minute to speak on this, right.

If you have in the past, been exposed to listening about forests, then you will be able to construct a whole lot of language around the forest. So that will come into play, and you will be able to talk about it. So he can infer the setting for a text. Can infer the role of participants and their goals. Can infer cause and effect relationship. Can guess unsaid details of a situation. Can guess or anticipate questions related to a given topic.

So if you are going for a lecture on let us say, the eroding you know the eroding oceans, for example. And you are a student who has studied about this. So you already know what kind of questions you need to ask what kind of questions you think would get answered when you go for such a talk.

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## **ACTIVITY TO DEVELOP TOP DOWN PROCESS**

- Imagine you are going to listen to a talk on Birds of India:
- Prepare a set of five questions which you think might get answered during the talk
- Read this conversation about "going abroad to study". You are provided with what the first person says, predict the speaker's part
- Text of first speaker:
- Speaker 1: Going abroad to study has become very common these days. Many students from India wish to go the US, Canada, or European countries for studies.
- Speaker 2: .....
- Speaker 1: Many students prefer the US the next destination is Canada these days and after that comes Australia and UK
- Speaker 2: .....

Now here is a little activity to develop the top-down process. Imagine you are going to listen to a talk on birds of India. So now, before I proceed, take a few minutes and prepare a set of five questions which you think might get answered during the talk. I hope you are ready with the questions. At some point, we will play a conversation or a talk on birds of India, and you can see whether all your questions get answered.

Now read a conversation about going abroad to study. Now, this is a very in topic. Everybody talks about going abroad to study. So now you are provided with what the first person says, okay. Predict the speakers part. So text of the first speaker is provided to you here, and you have to predict what the second speaker would say in response to what the first speaker has said, okay.

So this is how we develop the top-down process. So the speaker one says, going abroad to study has become very common these days. Many students from India wish to go to the US, Canada or European countries for studies. Now, what do you think the second speaker would have said in response to this? Again, I have for you the text of what the first speaker would have said. Many students prefer the US.

The next destination is Canada these days. And after that comes Australia, and the UK. So in response to this, what do you think speaker two would have said? So like this, you can actually continue this conversation where you are predicting what each speaker would say. There has to be a logical aspect of the conversation, right? So this is how we develop the top-down process of listening.

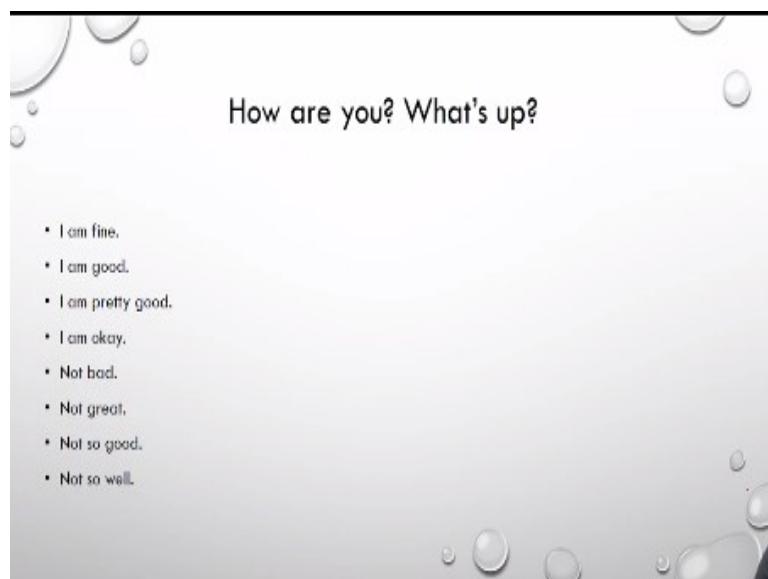
So for today, we end here, and I am sure you enjoyed doing a bit of activity where you listened to an audio. So I will come back with more activities for you next time. Thank you till then.

**English - 1 (Basic English)**  
**Karthika Sathyananthan, Project Officer**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Science**  
**Indian Institute of Technology-Madras**

**Lecture - 06**  
**Conversational Skills for Basic Communication**

Hello all. I welcome you to this Basic English course. Today's module is going to be on conversation skills for basic communication. In this module, we will see a few basic introductory questions that will be handy to you when you get introduced to somebody. Let us begin.

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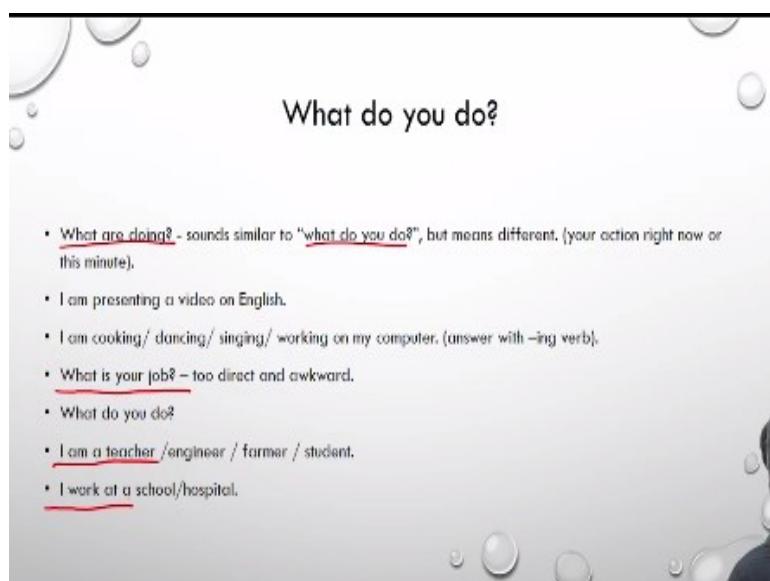
Let us start with the question. How are you? How do you say that? How are you? How are you? Let us suppose you are talking to friends. You happen to meet somebody very close to you. Then instead of how are you, you may also use what's up. How do you say that? What's up? Now let us look at the responses. What are the different responses that you can give to this question, how are you? Or what's up?

Let us suppose you are; you are doing good. You are happy. Then you may say, I am fine. Or I am good. Or if you are feeling really good, you may say, I am pretty good. Now we are just okay. And you do not want to specify your mode, then you may say, I am okay or not bad. Now if you are not doing great, you may say, not great, not so good or not so well. Let us repeat once again. Let us look at the responses.

You may say, I am fine. Or I am good. I am pretty good. I am okay. Not bad. Not great. Not so good. Not so well. So one thing that needs to be noted here is when someone asks this question to you, how are you or what's up. They do not expect you to elaborate on your response or your answer. For example, you would not respond to it in a way that you elaborate on your emotions or feelings.

An appropriate response would be one among the following. That is already been discussed, which is I am fine. I am good. I am not okay. I am okay. I am great, or I am not great. But you would not say I got up and I was feeling some kind of pain in my tummy. And I brushed my teeth and then I was doing little okay. So you understand what that is? You would not elaborate on your answer. That is not an appropriate response to this question. Okay, fine.

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Now the next question, what do you do? It is important to understand the difference between what are you doing? And what do you do? These two questions may sound very similar, but they mean different. If someone asks me, what are you doing? I would say I am presenting a video on English. And if someone asks me, what do you do?

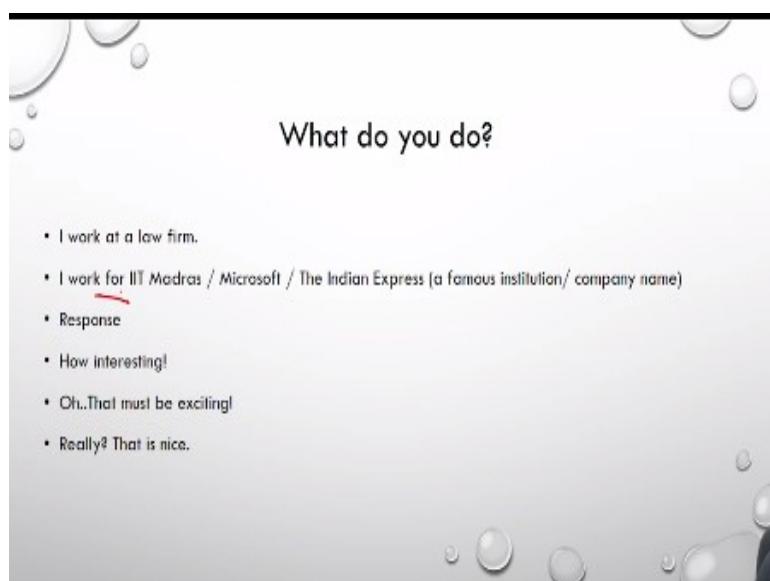
I would say I am a teacher. Can you guess what the difference between these two questions are? The question what are you doing questions your action at that moment? That very minute. So if someone is asking me what are you doing, I would say what?

I would say I am presenting a video on English. And if someone asks you, what do you do? It is another way of asking, what is your job?

So native speakers of English, find this question, what is your job too direct and therefore a little awkward. Therefore they rephrase it and ask, what do you do? So this question, what do you do, in a way, means, what is your job? So how do you respond to that? You may say I am a teacher; I am an engineer; I am a farmer; I am a student. Depending on what job you do, you may answer it.

Now there is another way of our answering to that question. Based on the place you work. A teacher works in a school, a doctor or a nurse or an attender works in a hospital. So you may say I work at a school. I work at a hospital. I work at a law firm.

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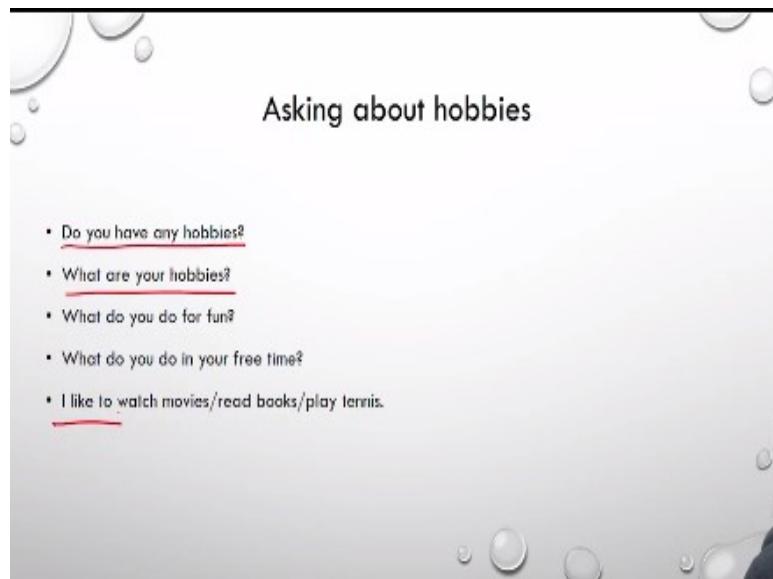
Now let us suppose you are working for a very famous institution or a very famous company. In that case, you may say I work for; I work for IIT, Madras. I work for The Microsoft. I work for The Indian Express. I work for The Hindu, right? Let us just go back and see. So if you are starting with I am, then you may fill your profession.

I am a teacher, get it? Now if you are going to specify the place where you are working, then you may start with, I work at. I work at a school; I work at a hospital. I work at a law firm. And if you work for a famous institution, then you may say, I work for. I work for IIT, Madras. You got the difference. Good. Now it is a when

someone tells you what their job is it is always good to respond with a positive comment.

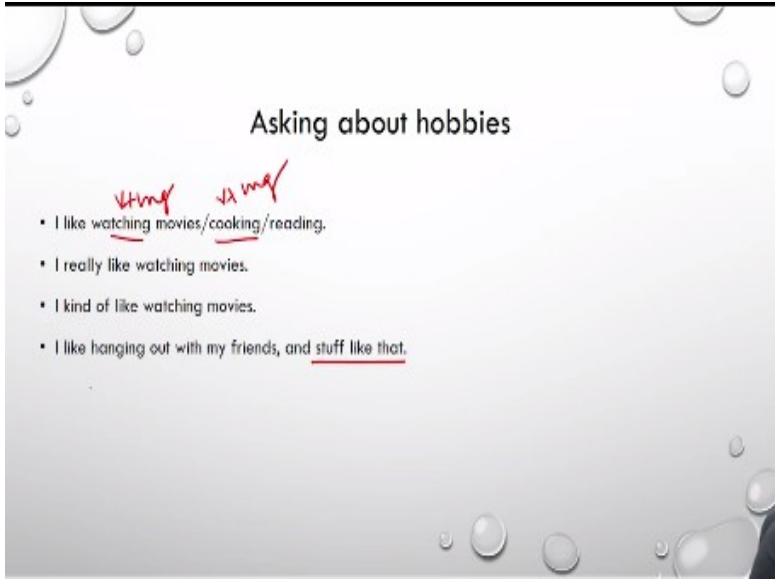
You may say oh, how interesting. Or, oh, that must be exciting. Oh, really? That is nice. But make sure that you are genuine in your response. The listener should not feel that you are making a fake comment.

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Now let us see how we may ask about hobbies. Again, native speakers of English refrain from asking this question or using the word hobbies. So instead of asking, do you have any hobbies? Or what are your hobbies? They would prefer asking, what do you do for fun? What do you do for fun? Or, what do you do in your free time? What do you do in your free time? I like to watch movies, or I like to read books. I like to play tennis, or I like to play cards.

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## Asking about hobbies

- I like watching movies/cooking/reading.
- I really like watching movies.
- I kind of like watching movies.
- I like hanging out with my friends, and stuff like that.

There is another way of responding to that. I like watching movies. Here, you are using verb plus ing form. So, in that case, we strike to from the sentence. Instead of saying I like to watch movies, you may say I like watching movies. Or if you want to specify how much you like doing something. Then you may say, I really like watching movies. Or I really like reading books. I really love cooking.

Or if you do not want to be too specific and I want to be just plain about it you may say, I kind of like watch movies or watching movies. How do you say that? I kind of like watching movies. Or you may say, I like hanging out with my friends and stuff like that. What is stuff like that mean here? It includes all other activities that you would do with your friends while you hang out with them.

It could be watching movies or going to a restaurant or having a coffee in a coffee shop.

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## Where are you from?

- Which city are you from?
- What state are you from?
- What country are you from?
- I am from (your nationality).
- I am Brazilian/ Indian.
- I am from (the country you are from).

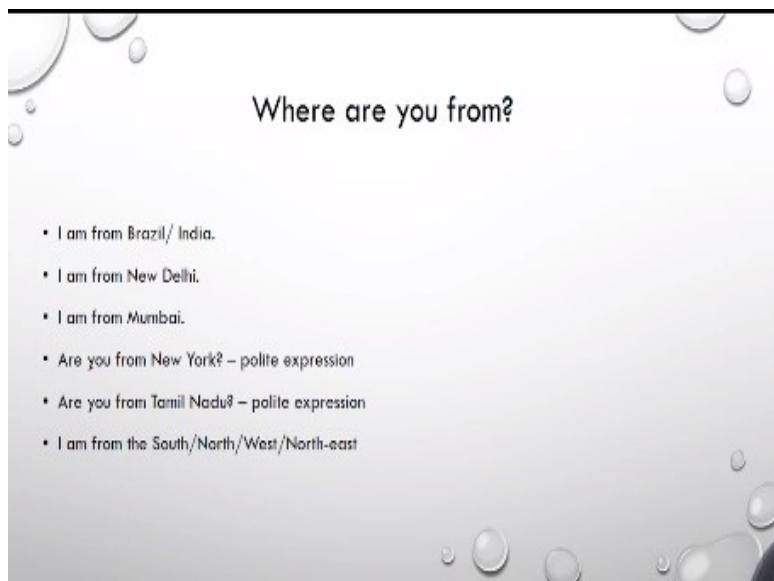
Now the next question, and that is, where are you from? So depending on the context, we can rephrase this question and ask, which city are you from? When do you ask that? When do you ask which city are you from? So you meet somebody in a small city, you know that, or you feel that that person does not belong to that city. Then you may ask which city are you from? For instance, you meet somebody at Patna.

Then you may ask which city are you from? Maybe he may respond saying I am from Delhi. Or you meet somebody at the National Capital, and you feel that person does not belong to that state. And you would like to know where that person is from. Then you may ask, what state are you from? And let us suppose you meet somebody abroad. And you would like to know where that person is from; then you may ask, what country are you from?

So depending on the context, we can rephrase this question and ask, which city are you from? Which state are you from? Or which country are you from? Now how do you respond to that? You may say, I am Brazilian, or I am an Indian. So you may use I am. You may use I am and then your nationality, which country you are from? Nationality is a country that you are from.

There is another way of responding to that. You may say I am from India, which means you are an Indian. You may say I am from India. So when you are using the term from you fill it up with the country you are from, right. So how do I phrase, how do I say that? I am from India, okay.

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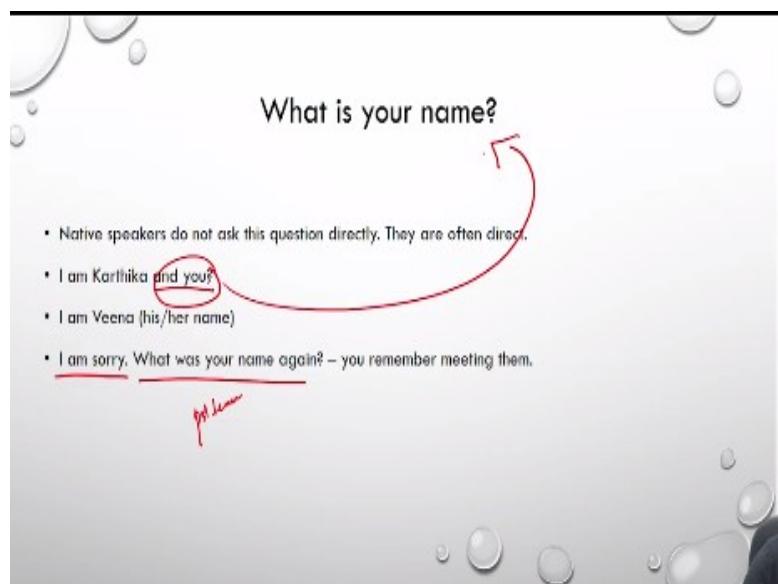


Now if you are from a world-famous city, or very known place, then you may say I am from New Delhi. How do you say that? I am from New Delhi. I am from Mumbai. I am from Mumbai. Or there is another polite way of asking this question. Some people find it a little awkward to ask where you from. So instead, let us suppose you are meeting somebody in New York, and you would like to know where they are from.

You may ask, are you from New York? How do you ask that? Are you from New York? That person may say, no I am from, some other city, the city that he or she comes from. Or yes, I am from New York. Let us take an Indian state. So you meet somebody in Tamil Nadu, and you would like to know if that person is a Tamilian. So you may ask, are you from Tamilnadu? How would you ask that? Are you from Tamil Nadu?

How do you respond to that? Yes, I am from Tamil Nadu. Or no, I am not from Tamil Nadu. I am from Uttar Pradesh. Now there is another way of answering to that. You may answer denoting the region you come from. So suppose you are from Kerala, you might say, I am from the South. You are from Kashmir; you may say no, I am from the North. You are from Rajasthan. You may say, no, I am from the West. You are from the Northeast. And you can say no, I am from the Northeast.

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Now the question, what is your name? You rarely hear native speakers of English ask, what is your name? Instead, they introduce themselves and ask and you? So how do you do that? For instance, the appropriate way would be to introduce myself, which is I am going to say I am Karthika and you? So this and you encompasses the question what is your name? So how do you ask that? I am Karthika, and you?

So let us say I am asking Veena what her name is. How do I ask? I am Karthika, and you? So Veena says I am Veena. Now let us suppose I have met with somebody I have gotten introduced to them before. I do not remember their name. So it is always nice to start with an apology. So you say, so you may say, I am sorry, what was your name again?

So in this case, when you are asking what was your name, again, you are telling the listener that you remember meeting him or her, but you do not remember his name. In this case, you are letting the other person know that you are sorry for the fact that you do not remember his name, but you remember meeting them. So how do you say that? I am sorry, what was your name again? I am sorry, what was your name again?

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What is your name ?

person's name

- Riya, what do you do? – use of name in conversation to show interest.
- What do you do for fun, Riya?
- Do not use the name too often as it may sound strange.

Now another interesting aspect of is that if you use a person's name at the beginning or the end of a question or a sentence, you are interested in the conversation. So the use of name and conversation generally shows interest. So instead of asking, what do you do, you may ask Riya, what do you do? So you may fill the person's name and then question. Or you may ask, what do you do for fun Riya?

What do you do for fun Riya? But also make sure that you do not use the name too often as it may sound very strange.

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Getting contact details

- What is your phone number? – too direct (particularly with the opposite sex)
- For formal and official purposes, people prefer to connect by emails over phone calls.
- Could I get your number? – less direct / softens the request.
- Could I get your email-address?

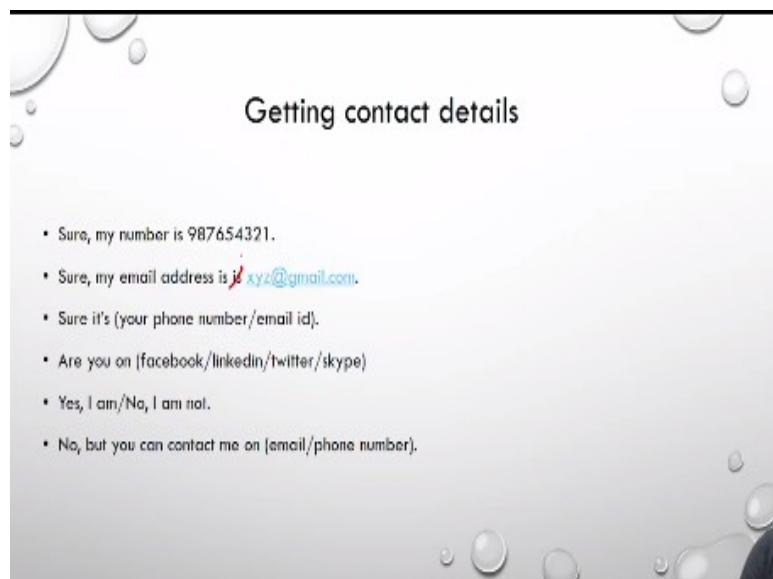
Now how do you get contact details? How do you ask for contact details? Do you go and ask somebody what is your phone number? Do you do that? That is too direct, particularly if you are asking the opposite sex that is not the appropriate way to ask.

So instead, you may request the person, if you could get their phone number. Or if you could get their email address. So how do you do that?

Could I get your number, please? Could I get your email address, please? So, in this case, you are less direct, and you are actually softening the request. For formal and official purposes, people these days, particularly youngsters, prefer to connect by emails over phone calls. So in that case, it would be ideal for you to ask someone their email, rather than their phone number.

Let us practice once more. How do you ask? How do you ask for contact details? You may ask, could I get your number please? Or could I get your email id, please?

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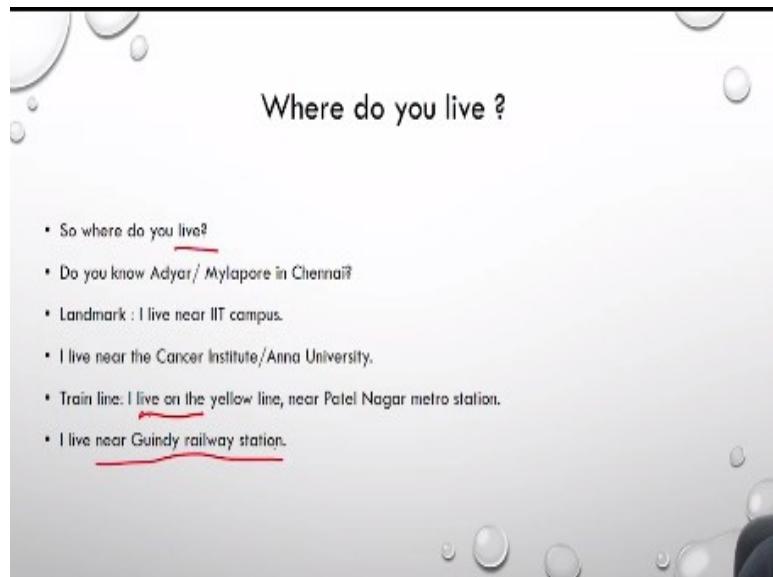


How do you respond to this question? Sure. My number is 987654321. Or sure, my email addresses is [xyz@gmail.com](mailto:xyz@gmail.com). That was a mistake. Or you may say, sure, it is and then the phone number or your email id. Sure. It is 987654321. A lot of youngsters these days, have Facebook or LinkedIn or Twitter or Skype accounts. In that case, you may also connect to them through social media.

So you may ask, are you on Facebook? Are you on LinkedIn? Are you on Twitter? Are you on Skype? How do you respond to that? You may say, Yes, I am. Or if you are not, you may say no, I am not. And when you say no, I am not give them an alternate option through which they can contact you. So you may say, no, but you can

contact me on my email. How do you say that? No, but you can contact me on my email.

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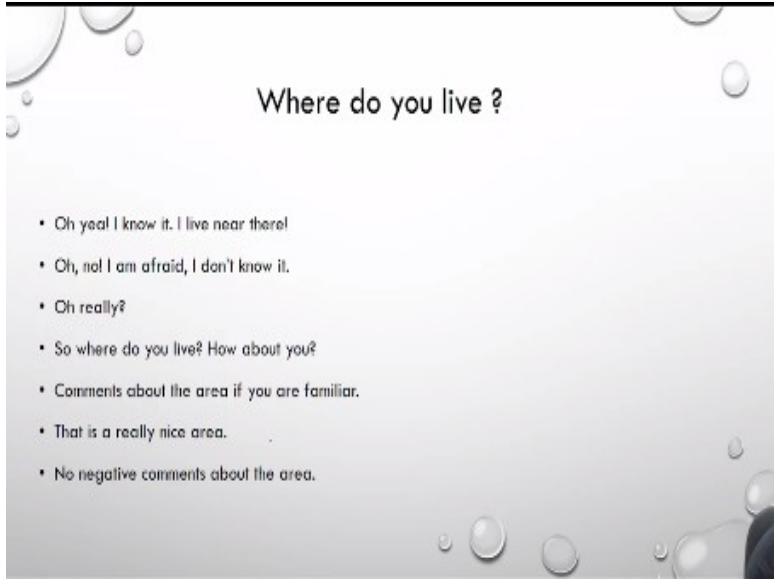
The next question that we are going to see is where do you live? Where do you live? Pronounce this right. It is not leave, it is live. Where do you live? How do you respond to that? If you are staying in a famous part of the city or a known part of the city, then you may say do you know Adyar in Chennai, I live there. Do you know Mylapore in Chennai, I live there.

Or again if you are living and living near to a famous landmark or famous institution or a hospital, then you may say, for example, IIT campus or Anna University or Cancer Institute, I say, I may say, I live near IIT campus. I live near IIT campus. I live near the cancer Institute. I live near the Anna University. Or you can say that along train lines.

Let us suppose there is a metro line and you live on the yellow line near Patel Nagar metro station then you say I live on the yellow line near Patel Nagar metro station. You live on the yellow line. I live on the yellow line near Patel Nagar metro station. Or a famous railway station. I live near Guindy railway station.

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## Where do you live ?

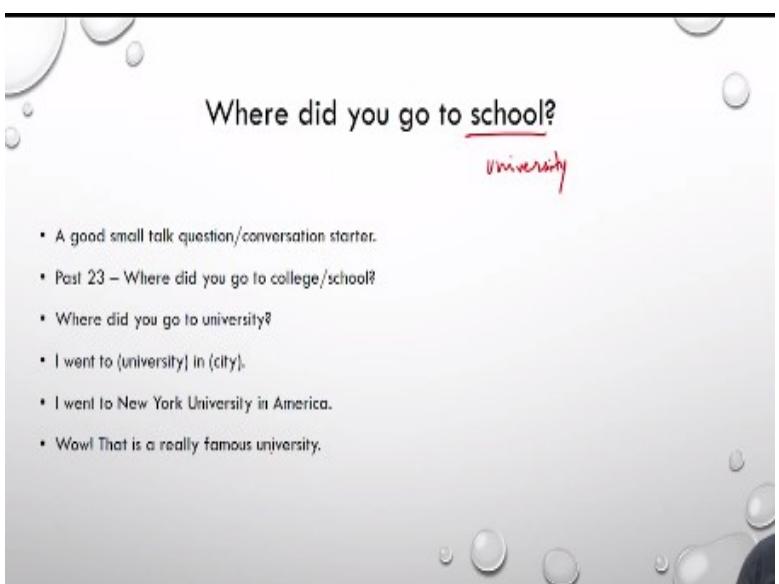
- Oh yeah I know it. I live near there!
- Oh, no! I am afraid, I don't know it.
- Oh really?
- So where do you live? How about you?
- Comments about the area if you are familiar.
- That is a really nice area.
- No negative comments about the area.

How do you respond to that? If you know where that place is, if you are familiar with the place, you may say, Oh, yeah, I know it. I live near there. Or if you do not know that place, if you are not familiar with that place, you may say, oh, no, I am afraid I do not know. How do you say that? Oh no, I do not know. Or you may also say, oh, really? Oh, really?

Now how do you return the question? So you may ask so where do you live? Or how about you? How about you? It is always nice if you give comments about the area if you are familiar about that area. So you may say, oh that is a really nice area. But make sure that you leave no negative comments about the area.

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## Where did you go to school?

*University*

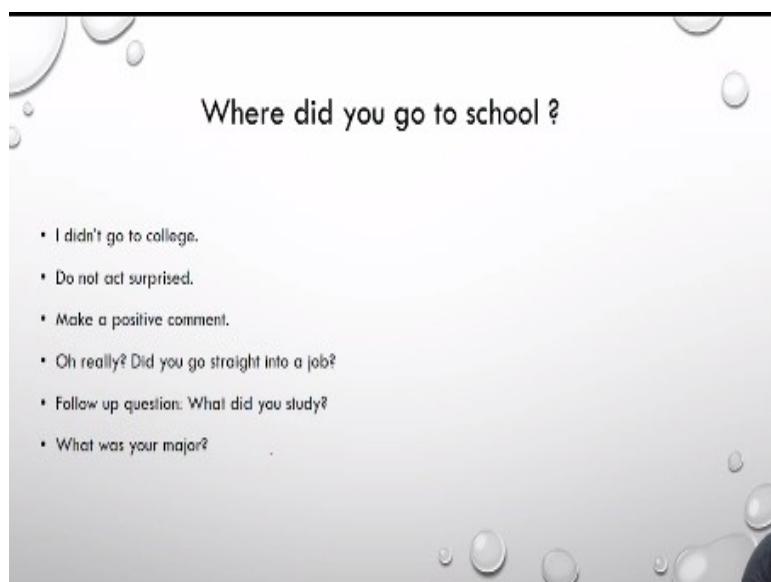
- A good small talk question/conversation starter.
- Post 23 – Where did you go to college/school?
- Where did you go to university?
- I went to {university} in {city}.
- I went to New York University in America.
- Wow! That is a really famous university.

The next question is, where did you go to school? School in American English also means University. So if you are in America, and someone asks you, where did you go to school? They might be asking you, where did you go to the University? So this question is a good small talk question or a conversation starter. In Europe and in India we have a clear distinction between school and University.

So in India, you may ask somebody, where did you go to University? Where did you go to University? So how do you answer that? You may say I went to fill it with a university name in and again fill it with the city name. For example, I went to New York University in America. I went to New York University in America. How do you respond to that? Wow, that is a really famous University.

You respond with a positive comment. How do you say that? Wow, that is a really famous University.

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Now let us suppose someone says, I did not go to college. Make sure that you do not act surprised and question why. In that case, how do you, how do you continue the conversation? Make a positive comment or ask, oh really? Did you go straight into a job? How do you ask that? Oh really? Did you go straight into a job? A good follow up question when you are talking about universities, or school is also what did you study?

What did you study? Or what was your major? Which means you are basically asking what did you specialize in. With that, we come to the end of this module. Hope you have picked up a few sentences that will come handy to you when you are conversing with a stranger or when you are getting introduced to someone. I will meet you with a different topic on a different day with a different module. Until then, stay safe, take care and happy learning.

**English - 1 (Basic English)**  
**Prof. Rajesh Kumar**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology-Madras**

**Lecture - 07**  
**Words**

Welcome to the class. Today, we are going to talk about words, in particular the underlying composition. We are going to look at underlying rules that help compose a word. We know the language, we speak words. But if we look at how the composition of words work, and how sounds come together to make a word, this is going to give us an insight into how we pronounce those words.

And therefore, when we pronounce a word in a sentence, and we pay attention to these nuances, we are going to be speaking confidently and in an impressive way. So for this purpose, we are going to look at the composition of words. So the first thing we are looking at is the composition of words.

And then within the words, we are going to look at how those sounds come together to look at different things. So two things, we are going to look at. One underlying rules for making a word and two, how those rules help us understand cluster. Let us go to look at first the composition of a word, and then we will look at the cluster.

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Simple words



- Most of the words are a sequence of consonants and vowel sounds.
  - CVCV      papa, daddy, mom
  - EVC      dad, mom,
  - VCVC →      defeat
  - CVV →      what, glass
  - CCVC      sink
  - CVCC      mom
- Words only with vowel sounds
  - Eye      /aai/
  - VV
  - \*CC
  - VCVC



So we know how to do, we know the definition of a word. A very generic, simple definition that we follow is a word is a combination of different sounds. We combine several sounds to form a word. Here something worth paying attention to is, can we combine any sound together? Can we put any random sounds together to make a word? Can any sequence of sounds become a word? The answer is obviously no.

And for that purpose, we need to look inside the word to see how is it that these sounds are organized? Is there any pattern in it? There is a mathematical pattern. It is a very simple pattern, and once we pay attention to that, we become careful in understanding that. We become, we know the composition very clearly. So two things, a word is not the random ordering of any set of sounds, number one.

And number two from our discussion on consonants and vowels, what I want you to keep in mind is, every word must have a vowel sound in it. So these are the two parts, two things that will make us understand words properly. So let us look at these things. So what is the order of sounds in a word? If we say, that order of sounds in a word is not random.

If we know that order of sounds in a word is not random, then we must point out what is the order of sounds in a word. Let us look at a word. And let us use our understanding of consonants and vowel sounds. So we start with a very simple word like papa, daddy, mom. So when we look at these words, we see a word like papa, so very simple. Just say the word papa to yourself.

When we say we hear, we hear a sound p. Then we hear a sound aa, and then we hear another sound p and then we hear another sound aa. So there are four sounds in this word, p aa p aa. So this becomes, if we have to identify them, we identify them as consonant, vowel, consonant, vowel. Keep in mind this aa is an example of a long vowel. So p consonant, aa long vowel, another p consonant, aa long vowel.

So this word has this pattern, that is CVCV, that is consonant, vowel, consonant, vowel. So a simple alternation of consonant and vowel gives you this word. You will find this sequence in many words like mama; m, aa, m, aa. Baba; b, aa, b, aa. So papa, mama, baba, chacha, all kinds of words will follow this pattern. Not only just this

relation terms, but there are a lot of words with just this alternation of consonant and vowel possible.

Now a couple of other things to look at. When we know about a consonant sound, we have had a good discussion about consonant sounds, and a vowel sounds. Today, I want to add one more very specific information about consonant sounds. Every consonant sound has one specific vowel inbuilt in it. So take any consonant sound, the vowel that is inbuilt in it is called a. So when we say p, k, ch, t, m take any.

You can try it with all 24 consonant sounds in English. The only vowel sound that you find inbuilt, which becomes slightly prominent at the end of it is a. That is when we say p; we hear a at the end of it. Only that sound. What happens is, when we use this word in a, when we use this sound, that is when we use a consonant sound in a word, that sound gets suppressed.

So when we say papa, we do not say p aa p aa. We say papa. So, p and another vowel aa comes together, and that already inbuilt vowel gets weaker. So that the word becomes papa and we identify it as a sequence of CVCV that is consonant, vowel, consonant, vowel alternation. When you look at this word daddy, you see the sounds are d e d ii daddy. So this is again a sequence of consonant, vowel, consonant, vowel.

As you know this is long ii. And when you look at mom, so you have you can have mommy. So okay, let us look at this word mom. So you have m o and m. This is a sequence of CVC. So now you see you can have d a d, CVC. So look at this sequence, look at this sequence and look at this sequence. So these two are consonant, vowel, consonant vowel.

And these two are consonant, vowel, consonant. So likewise, you are going to see an alternation of these sounds for any word in English. And thus you will also find out at least one vowel sound in every word. There could be more, but at least one vowel sound in every word. So you get to see this alternation. The other important point about a word is you have a vowel sound in every word.

You have one inbuilt vowel sound in every consonant, which gets slightly weaker when they combine with another sound in a word. There is no constraint on which sound comes in the beginning of a word. There is no constraint on which sound comes at the end of a word. And how many sounds must be there in a word. These are not constraints.

Now, this becomes meaningful in understanding why only 24 consonant sounds and only 20 vowel sounds together can make millions of words. Keep in mind. The pattern is not random, but still, we can have millions of words only with these 44 sounds. The answer to this question is, it is possible because there is no limit on how we use these sounds in a word. That is what comes first what comes at the end.

How many times the same sound can come in a word? Please look at this word, papa. A sound like p and aa are coming twice in the same word. Daddy a consonant sound d is coming twice. Dad a consonant sound d is again coming twice. Mommy, mom, consonant sound m is coming twice. So we can have multiple times the same sound, we can have more sounds.

We can have more number of consonant sounds in a word. So we are not talking about a contradictory thing. I want you to understand these two things with clarity. Two things, one is order of sounds is not random in the sense that it will have consonant, vowel, consonant vowel. It could also be and then alternation of these things. So it could also be a consonant, vowel, consonant.

It could also be, a word could begin with just a vowel sound. So these alternations are possible as a pattern. But which consonant comes and which vowel sound comes there is no constraint on that. And that is responsible for giving us millions of words in English. So this gives you some idea about the sequence of consonants and vowels sounds in English words.

So at this stage, based on your understanding of consonant sounds, vowel sounds, and how they come together to make simple words or complex words. A very simple exercise that will help you look into that is keep, okay, I will talk about the exercise in

a minute. But another point that you need to keep in mind is keep looking at them, paying attention to the places of articulation of these consonants also.

So, p is a bilabial consonant d is an alveolar consonant, m is a bilabial nasal consonant. And then you have several types of vowels to make these words. Now the exercise that I wanted you to do is, again take another set of 20 words. Or you can use the same set of 20 words that you have used to do other exercises. It is always a good idea to take another set of 20 words. You can pick some words that we are using in our speech.

You can pick words that we are using in other classes, or you can use your own random words. You can pick any word that comes to your mind. Make a note of that, write them down on a piece of paper in your notebook. And then try to write the sequence of sounds in your words and observe how many sequences, how many types of sequences you see in terms of consonants and vowels alternations.

Also, see if there is a word which comes without a vowel sound. The answer is you will not find one, but just try for that. So you will get to see several alternations. You will get to see the arrangement of consonant vowels in that sequence, and it will also help you pay attention to the places of articulations of those consonant sounds. And it will also help you look at the vowel sound.

Basically, it will help you slow down and look at various components of at least 20 words and that way; you will get to know how these things come together to make a word that we speak. There are several types of several other types of patterns that are underlying a word.

We are going to talk about one or two of such things today for you to see and for you to develop a better understanding of a word. So you will see so here is an example of a word. Look at this, I have been telling you that vowel sounds are more basic in a word. That is a word that is possible only with vowel sounds. So it is possible to have a word like this. But it is not possible to have a word just like this.

So look at this word English word aai. So it has two consonants aa, and it has two vowel sounds aa one, i two and this is the sequence in this word. So this is what we mean, words only with vowel sounds are possible in any language, also in English. So you see several sequences when you do your own exercise of 20 words. You will see a sequence like the CVCV. You will see the sequence like this.

You will also see the sequence of this type. You will see the sequence of this type. I am not giving you examples of these sequences because this is another type of exercise that I want you to do. Once you have done the exercise of finding the arrangement of consonant and vowels as patterns in those 20 words.

Then the next set of exercise that you should do to develop your understanding of underlying patterns of sounds in a word is to find out a word which has this pattern, find out a word which has got this pattern. And then I want to draw now, your attention to what we know as a consonant cluster. We are discussing words, and we are going to discuss one more specific feature of a word which we see in words quite often.

So a cluster is when two consonant sounds come together. What is a cluster? When two consonant sounds come together and what they do is, there is no vowel sound in between that. Not even the inbuilt vowel sound that you have that we have discussed, like p has a inbuilt in it and k also has a inbuilt in it, b also has a inbuilt in it. So when two consonant sounds make a cluster, that inbuilt sound is also gone.

And when that sound is lost, the two consonant sounds come too close, and that is what we call a cluster. So look at the examples like this. This is how you are going to see a cluster. This is how you are going to see a cluster. Meaning, a cluster of two consonant sounds is also possible at the end of a word. And in some examples that we will see at different stages, a cluster of two consonant sounds is also possible in the middle of a word.

So examples like what. So two consonant sounds are making a cluster here. Examples like glass. Remember, we when we speak, we use speech sounds to articulate English words. And when we write, we write it in the form of its spelling. So these when you

apply this understanding, to see the distinction, you will get a better understanding of these words.

So please pay attention to where I am drawing your attention to. Look at this word glass. In this word first two sounds are making a cluster. Glass. G l aa and s. What are the sounds in this word? G l aa and s. That is what we are looking here. So g and l are making a cluster. Say this word to yourself glass. The g sound does not retain the aa inbuilt aa sound in it. It has lost.

That is in a cluster only the first sound loses that inbuilt vowel. L sound has aa vowel on it. So gla. That is how we say glass. And last s sound in English spelling it is written as doubling, but that is not a cluster. That is just one sound s. And this aa is also long vowel aa. So only this one is making the cluster by dropping the inbuilt aa vowel sound of the first member in the cluster.

That is how we make a cluster. Cluster is a very unique and normal pattern of word formation in English in particular, and also in many other languages. We speak several languages. When you pay attention to our languages, we do find a cluster of several sounds in our words. So that is the example of the use of sounds in a word and how several words use clusters as well.

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## Consonants



- Sounds produced by modification of the flow of exhaling air in the vocal tract
- ~ ✓ • /k/ [velar] king, class      /kɪŋ/      /kla:s/
- ~ ✓ • /g/ -- velar great, glass
- ~ ✓ • /p/ [bilabial] pink, pure      /pɪŋk/
- ~ ✓ • /b/ -- bilabial bliss, bless
- They have an inbuilt vowel sound 'a' with all of them.



I would like you to look at more examples of these clusters and how words are made. So as we know, sounds are produced by modification of the flow of exhaling air in the

vocal tract. That is how sounds are made. So we have velar sound, k as a velar sound g as a velar sound. Remember, k is not voiced and is g is plus voiced. P is not voiced and b is voiced. So these two are velar sounds.

And these two are bilabial sounds. So and this is what I was talking to you that every consonant sounds has an inbuilt vowel sound a with them. So look at these words with these velar sound, two velar sounds k and g. King, class. Once more. The first sound in the word king is k. And first sound in the word class is also k. It is a different matter that they are written differently as a matter of spelling in English.

So and this is what will be useful when you have done the exercise that I have asked you to do. So you will get to see when you write king. So you see ki ng. This is a velar nasal sound. When we write class, we are going to see, so this is how we write that, and the sequence here is CVC. When we say class, we have k l aa and s class. This has CCVC sequence. And in this word, the first two consonants are forming a cluster, class.

When you look at the second one great, you will see the first two sounds in this word that they are g and r are again forming a cluster. We have seen this word glass, g and l are making a cluster. When you look at the words like pink. In this one, you have p, short i, n and k, pink. These two sounds n and k pink, n and k they are making a cluster. The word like pure, there is no cluster here.

But this uses bilabial at the initial position, bilabial sound p. Bliss. B and l are making cluster and bless again b and l are making a cluster. So these are simple words that we use in our day-to-day English. You can see the use of velar and bilabial sounds in that. You can pay attention to how they are spelt when we write.

You can also pay attention to them in terms of how we speak, what kinds of sounds are used when we speak these words and what is the arrangement of these sounds in these words? Do they have a cluster in them? Do they have a vowel in this? All these things become clearer when you start paying attention to them. The types of vowels, their places of articulations, their manners of articulations.

Are they bilabial? Are they velar sounds? Are they voiced or not? So when we speak a word in a flow, we do not pay attention to these. But for us to practice a word in English, to become a better speaker, these kinds of nuanced understanding about sounds and sequence of sounds in a word become very useful, very helpful.

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### Assimilation



- Impossible
  - Incomplete
  - Accident
- K.S



So much so that we get, we notice a lot of other things as well. What is it that we get to know through that? Look at this a word like how do we say a word like impossible? I want you to do the same exercise with these three words. So try to write the use of the sequence of these words. And you will see that the negative prefix in this word impossible sounds m because it precedes another labial sound p.

So it becomes m, and then we get impossible. The same thing happens when it precedes a velar consonant. Say the word incomplete. The first it has this word has a negative prefix in it, and then the word is complete. So the first sound of the word complete is k. Therefore, the negative, in the negative prefix, the nasal also becomes velar.

And when we speak this sound, this word we do not say incomplete, it becomes incomplete. So this becomes a velar nasal. And in this word, you see you have, in this word accident you have two it looks like a cluster. But this is not a cluster, because the first one is k and the second one is s. So I am using this example to show you there is a huge variation in terms of writing and how we speak English words.

And we get to the nuances of this and the distinction of this when we pay attention to sounds in a word. Make a list of these things, and then you will see that in a better way. So with this, we have just started our discussion on how words are made, how sounds are sequenced in a word, and how words use clusters. And when you do this much of practice, you will get to understand the more detailed nuances of this.

I hope you enjoy doing this exercise and develop your understanding of sounds and words in a better way. Thank you so much.

**English - 1 (Basic English)**  
**Prof. Rajesh Kumar**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
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**Lecture - 08**  
**Clusters in English Words**

Welcome to the class. Today we will look at clusters in English words. We know there are two types of sounds, consonant sounds and vowel sounds are part of the sequence. We also know that there must always be a vowel sound in a word. A lot of times we see it is a combination of several consonants and several vowels.

But as part of the requirement of your word, that is to form a word; there must be at least one vowel sound in every word. Okay, so with that, we see consonants and vowels together in a word. So we will continue our discussions on words, and we will see how clusters play an important role in the formation of a word.

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### Consonants

- Sounds produced by modification of the flow of exhaling air in the vocal tract

• /k/ – <u>velar</u>	[-asp, -voice]	king, class	/kɪŋ/ /klɑ:s/
• /g/ – <u>velar</u>	[-asp, +voice]	great, glass	
• /p/ – <u>bilabial</u>	[-asp, -voice]	pink, pure	
• /b/ – <u>bilabial</u>	[-asp, +voice]	bliss, bless	

- They have an inbuilt vowel sound 'a' with all of them.



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So look at consonants. As we know, one more time consonants are produced vocal tract by using exhaling flow of air. And this flow of air is important because the exhaling flow of air slowly gets modified at different places of articulation in our oral cavity. And therefore, we produce various different kinds of consonant sounds. Without this modification or very little modification, we produce vowel sounds.

And a combination of the two makes a word. So when we look at the look at few examples to repeat one more time, we have vowel sounds, consonant sounds like k and g. So according to their articulation, that is the place where they get articulated it is a velar sound because it comes from velum, both of them. Both of them are not aspirated sounds, and k is a voiceless sound whereas g is a voiced sound.

We see these sounds in words like king, class. Remember, in English spelling; we use symbols to represent these sounds. Sometimes, there are different symbols for the same sound. For example, we are using this symbol for k sound in king, and we are using this c letter as a symbol for k sound in a word like class. So when we write, therefore, when we try to identify the sounds, we write it this way, king.

And to class, we do it this way. So thus we can show that k is the initial sound in both words. In words like great and glass, we have initial sounds in these two words are g and g in another one as well. So, p and b are bilabial sounds according to their places of articulations. And they are both again, p is non-spirited, non-voiced and b is non-aspirited, but voiced as in words like pink, pure, bliss, bless these other words.

With these sounds, and what we also know about consonant sounds and particularly consonant sounds in a word that each consonant sound has an inbuilt vowel a in it and this vowel sound a gets reduced, there is a reduction of this vowel sound for making of a word.

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### Words

- Words are sequence of consonants and vowel sounds.

• CVCVCV	CVCV	CVC
• CVC	papa, daddy, mom	
• VCVC	dad, mom,	
• CVV		
• CCVC		
• CVCC	glass	
	sink	

- Sounds from same places of articulation do not come next to each other.

pb      bp      td

- Words only with vowels sounds

Eye      /aai/

So when we see words, we have discussed some of these examples, and I want to draw your attention one more time to these words like papa, daddy, mom. These are examples of, so papa is an example of a sequence of CVCV. Daddy is an example of CVC. Mom is also an example of CVC. That is this word mom has three sounds, consonant, vowel, consonant.

Daddy has four sounds, consonant, vowel, consonant, vowel. And mom has three sounds consonant, vowel, consonant. Same thing as in dad and mom. So this simply shows you that there are several possible combination combinatory sequences of consonant vowels possible. And words reflect various kinds of sequences of these consonant and vowel alternations.

There are some examples here of these alternations, and we get words according to these alternations. The only thing we need to keep in mind that vowels and consonants come in various sequences, various alternation patterns to form a word. And because there are no restrictions on how many times a sound can be used, one sound can be used more than once in a word.

Therefore, we have millions of words using a limited number of sounds that is 20 vowel sounds and 24 consonant sounds in English. Now we turn to the discussion for today that is again clusters. Let us start our discussions from here because they are an important part of words. So what happens in a cluster? We see a sequence of two consonant sounds sometimes at the beginning of a word that is at the initial position of a word.

And sometimes at the final position in a word that is at the end of a word. In an example like glass, there are two sounds g and l at the initial position, which form a cluster. In this word sink, there are two consonant sounds n and k at the final position of this word, they make a cluster. Now a cluster of two consonant sounds is possible at the initial position and also at the final purchase.

Sometimes it is possible in the middle of a word as well. Then what is a cluster? A cluster is, I will talk about cluster one more time again. While talking about words and sequences of sounds in a word two another important, two more points that are

important. One, usually you do not sound you do not find two sounds from the same place of articulation coming next to one another in a word.

You will never find a word with a combination of p and b, b and p or t and d. Such combinations are not allowed in a word. And sometimes words are possible only with vowel sounds. This is an example of this one. One more time I am talking about sounds in a word. That is two sounds aa and i not the way it is written.

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### Consonant Clusters

- Two consonant sounds together
  - Reduction of the inbuilt vowel sounds from the first one
  - Not in random order *Phonetic transcription*
    - ↓                    ↓
- |           |   |   |         |
|-----------|---|---|---------|
| • Cluster | - | /kla <sup>stər</sup> /  | CCVCCVC |
| • Bliss   | - | /blis/  | CCVC    |
| • School  | - | /skuul/  | CCVC    |
| • Scooter | - | /skutər/  | CCVCVC  |
| • Blast   | - | /blast/   | CCVCC   |

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Now when we look at clusters, we find there are two consonant sounds together. But two consonant sounds next to one another does not make a cluster. For a cluster, what is important is the reduction of the inbuilt vowel sound a, and it is completely removed, and then there is no space between the two, and they make a cluster. So, for example, here you had seen word like glass, sink.

So when we speak, we do not find any vowel quality in g when we are saying glass. And when there is a cluster, only if it is a cluster of two consonant sounds, only the first one is losing the vowel quality. That is how the cluster is made. So let us look at some of these examples. Let us look at some of these examples in English words. Actually, the word cluster itself is an example of clusters.

And it is very important for us to see how it works. There is another important note on this part that I want to add here. This is, so this is how we spell words in English. And, this sequence tells you, this column tells you the sequence of consonant and

vowels in these sounds. This part is called it is a phonetic way of writing a word, which helps us identify sounds.

So this is also called phonetic transcriptions. In a different class, we will talk a little bit more about IPA symbols that is in that is there are some specific symbols that are used to identify sounds in English. But for the convenience of our learning, I have tried to reduce some of these symbols. So I want your attention here. Keep in mind; there is a full, fully developed chart of symbols that are used to capture sounds in English.

They are called IPA charts. This is part of IPA chart. IPA stands for International Phonetic Association, and this chart is also known as International Phonetic Alphabet. But for the purpose of simplicity, for the purpose of making it easier to type, and for the purpose of making it easier to learn, I have tried to simplify it to some extent. That is one.

Second, we will discuss it, because it this understanding these symbols helps us use the dictionary faster and eventually, they also help us identify sounds. So we will have a discussion on that. But at this point, I want your attention on this column, only because it helps us identify sounds. Also, I will indicate where I have simplified it. So in a word like let us look at the word cluster.

So it is we have a cluster of two consonant sounds at the beginning of this word, and then a cluster of two sounds in the middle of this word. And this is where you try to identify k, l. They form a cluster. So they become kl a, s and t again make a cluster. So they become, st and then a and r. So it is a consonant, consonant, vowel, consonant, consonant, vowel and consonant.

This is the sequence in which sounds appear in this word. And this sound in, which is an inverted e is a symbol for a, a sound according to IPA. So I have tried to use it in this word for you to see. So that is how we write cluster. Let us look at the new word next word, bliss. It has a cluster of two consonant sounds at the beginning of the word. And then you have a vowel and a consonant.

This is the way to spell. That is s, s at the end of the word bliss is just a way to a spell. It is not a cluster. It is just one sound, s, bliss. In the word like school, s and l, these two words, these two sounds, make a cluster. Then you have long uu and l at the end of this word. So this is again, a cluster at the initial position in this word. Now again, this is a spelling. This is the symbol for sounds.

And according to the phonetic alphabet, sometimes this length of u is indicated like this or it is also indicated as this. But for simplicity, I am just putting it doubling of these two letters to indicate length. In a word like scooter, look at this, again s and k are making cluster, but this is a short vowel skutar. And here I want you to see that I am using just a general symbol to indicate sound a and not this one.

So this is scooter and final word it is called blast. This is an example of a cluster in the beginning of the word and cluster at the end of the word. B and l these two sounds are making cluster and s and t are making clusters. So you see, in several words in English, we find a cluster of two sounds. A cluster of two consonant sounds is a very natural phenomena in our speech.

There are some languages where cluster is not allowed. In fact, even words with clusters from some other language like English is simplified. When you speak when you hear some variety of Hindi or particularly Punjabi variety of Hindi, you will hear people say a word instead of a word like school; some people do say sakool. For a word like scooter, some people do say sacooter.

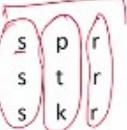
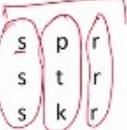
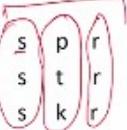
Now English words like school and scooter are used in Punjabi or Punjabi variety of Hindi and what the speakers do is they insert the consonant, the vowel sound a in between the two sounds that are making cluster to break the cluster. And therefore school, sk in school becomes sakool. So they do not leave the first sound s without its vowel quality. They insert that sound there and it becomes sakool.

So some languages do not allow clusters, but it is a common feature of many languages in the world. And there are a lot of clusters in words of English. There could be small words or a big word in every type of word. Small words are like monosyllabic word, and big words are like multi-syllable words. So you see cluster in

various kinds of words in English. And this simply shows you cluster, in the beginning, cluster in the middle, cluster at the end.

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### Clusters of three consonants

• Spring	/spring/		<u>cccvc</u>
• Stress	/stres/		<u>cccvc</u>
• Screw	/skrue/		<u>cccvv</u>

• Splash	/splash/		<u>cccvc</u>
• String	/string/		<u>cccvc</u>
• Scrub	/scrub/		<u>cccvv</u>

↑ heavy



Now, I want you to pay attention to clusters with three consonant sounds. So far, what we have seen, these are they were clusters of two consonants. That is two consonant sounds. Now I want your attention specifically to clusters of three consonant sounds. This is also very common in English. But because cluster as a process is making the word heavier so without clusters, you have millions of words.

With clusters, the total number of words are far lesser than the words without clusters. And when we talk about clusters of three consonants, though it is a productive pattern in a language like English, the total number of possible words is far fewer, very few in number. But nonetheless, what is important is to look at its pattern. It is a very interesting and very interesting pattern emerging out of it.

It is worth paying attention to for improving the way we speak English, for making our English impressive. So let us look at some of the words. So words are like when you pay attention to words like spring, stress, screw. I have an example of six words here to help you understand the cluster of three consonant sounds in English. What do we see?

So the way we have been working that is the first thing we want to do is to write it in a way so that we identify sounds. So when you write it this way you have s p r i ng

okay. This is a velar nasal sound, which in the phonetic chart is indicated like this ng. How does it sound? Ng spring. So there are three consonant sounds which are part of the cluster, and they are all at the initial level, initial position.

So another point to keep in mind is, clusters of three consonant sounds are possible only in the initial position of a word. Or at least the examples that I am giving you, the clusters are at the initial position of a word. What are the sounds in the cluster? That is interesting for us to notice. In this example spring, we have s p r.

So three consonant sounds and after that comes a vowel sound i and then we have another consonant ng. That is velar nasal, which I show you here. In a word like stress, again identify it. S t r e and s. The sounds that make cluster are s t r. They are consonant, three consonant sounds, then a vowel and then a consonant. In a word like screw. You have s k r i u. It is screw.

It is i and u screw. S k r i and u. So again three consonants and then two vowels at the end of it. So you get s k r as three sounds making clusters. Similarly, you look at splash, string, scrub. What do you find? The three consonant sounds that are making clusters are s p l in splash. S t r in string. And s k r in scrub. So if you pay attention to these words, immediately your attention comes to this part.

And you find in these this part that in every example of a cluster with three consonant sounds, the first sound of that cluster must be s, must only be s and the second sound must be one of the three that is, p, t, and k. Look at this. Here also the first sound is s. The second sound is one of these three p, t, k. And the third one is either r or which is either r or l. Now, this is a very heavy constraint on making of a word.

And therefore, words with clusters of three consonant sounds are very few in number. So this is very interesting to see that words follow such heavy constraint on its formation that we have, you try to make a word, first sound must be s second sound must be either one of the three p t or k.

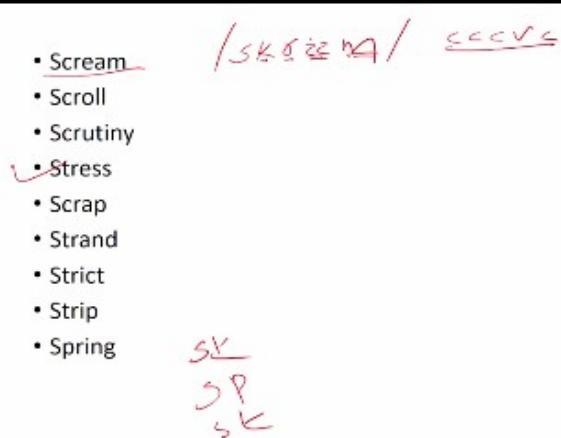
So if you want to describe this on the basis of your understanding of sounds and vowels and consonants and places of articulations it becomes even more interesting.

So first one is s. It is a dental fricative sound. S, in English it is a dental fricative sound. Second one is one of the stop sounds, p, t, k. One is bilabial stop. The other is alveolar stop; t alveolar stop and k is a velar stop.

So there are three different places of articulations but they are all stops sounds plosive sounds and r and l in English are called not English in according to sounds are called liquid sounds. So there is a common thing between the two sounds. So the last sound that is last sound of the sequence of the cluster must be either r and l. No other sounds can participate in a cluster of three consonants.

This is an interesting pattern to observe, that we see in a cluster of three consonant sounds at the initial position in several English words. I mentioned that it is a very productive pattern in English.

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You can see a lot many words with this. Words like screen, scroll, scrutiny, stress, scrap. I have used this word stress as an example to show you before. Scrap, strand, strict, strip, spring. All these words have a cluster of three consonant sounds in the beginning. But if you start noticing not paying attention to how they are spelt, but how they are spoken, you will see this pattern of s in the s as the first one.

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### Clusters of three consonants

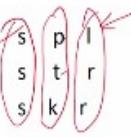
- Spring /spring/
- Stress /stres/
- Screw /skru:/



cccvc  
cccvç  
cccvv



- Splash /splash/
- String /string/
- Scrub /skrub/



cccvç  
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cccvç



So the way it works is there are three consonant sounds. So s as the first one; p, t or k as the second one, and r or l as the third one. That is how the pattern emerges. See if you understand this, then you understand, not just the word formation, not just the cluster. And, you know, you know how these sounds are combined together, how we should speak.

And by now you can see that a clearer understanding a clarity about these things definitely gives you more confidence. And these are not complicated things to understand. Again, one more time, you do not have to memorize any one of them any one of these. You just understand. Try to pay attention to some of them.

And they will automatically pop up when you do a little bit of practice by keeping these things in mind, and your speaking becomes impressive. So that is an example. Now for this purpose again, I would suggest you repeat the exercise that we have done before. Let me start it in let me talk about the practice exercise for this class in the reverse order.

There are several words with this with examples, as examples of three consonant sound as clusters at the beginning of a word that I have given you. I also mentioned this as a very productive pattern. I want you to work on finding out more words like this, where you can see three consonant sounds as the clusters. It is possible, but it is possible for s and k, s and p and s and t to come as a cluster of two consonants also.

So check if you get a vowel right after this s k like as in school s p as in spa, or s t in several other words. Do you get a vowel right after two consonants or do you get a vowel after three consonants? If you check this thing, you will get more examples. The second part of the second set of the assignment again that I want you to do today is taking a set of another 20 words.

Another set of 20 words where you can find consonants and vowel sequence and quality of consonants and vowels. Check what are the consonant sounds in that word and what are the vowel sounds in that word. What are the places of articulations of those consonant sounds in these words? And what are vowel sounds in them like are they front vowel, mid vowel or back vowel. Are they short vowel or a long vowel?

According to these things, when you spend some time on 20, 30 words and pay attention to that, it makes you slow down. And it helps you look at those words. Trust me, your attention to 40 words whether you do this exercise in twice, whether you do this exercise twice, or you do this exercise three times. Or let us say four times of 10 words each.

The harder you look at consonants and vowels sequence, consonant and vowel when you identify consonants, the first thing is to identify consonants and vowels, sounds. Then write their sequence and then write the sequence of what I have. So you, here is how you do this. First, find a word, let us say scream. Write it identifying sounds like s, k, r, ii, and m. Put them in the slant line.

This symbol tells you that this is not the spelling. This is a sequence of sounds. So you have scream, s, k, r, ii that is long ii and m. And then write it as consonant, consonant, consonant, vowel, consonant. So this is the sequence. When you put them, then I want you to pay attention to the sounds. Because we know there are only 24 sounds in the language, so we want to see what are the sounds in this word.

It is an interesting exercise to be able to pay attention to individual sounds and also to see how so many how only a few set of 24 sounds come in various sequence various order to make a word. So s is an alveolar fricative, k is a velar stop, r is a liquid sound, ii is a vowel sound, and m is a bilabial nasal sound. So when you pay attention to

these things, with a set of examples of 10 words at a time or 20 words at a time, do it twice or three times.

It really becomes, it really leaves a mark in you. And it helps you identify the sounds. It helps you use those sounds. And when they appear in words, your pronunciation of those words, and eventually your speech becomes impressive. And you sound a very confident speaker. Thank you so much. See you soon.

**English - 1 (Basic English)**  
**Prof. Rajesh Kumar**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
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**Lecture - 09**  
**Syllables and Words**

Welcome to the class. Today, we are going to look at a very specific feature of words continuing our discussion on words and this feature is called syllabification. So we are going to look at syllables. Now we have been talking about words and sounds. You know, when we talk about words, we talk about sounds. The definition of a word is, a word is a meaningful combination of sounds.

That is a word is a combination of sounds, which also gives us some meaning. We say it is a meaningful combination because a word must give some meaning. The meaning of a word is arbitrary. Why a word like cat means an animal. We know when we say cat, we know what it means. We know what it refers to. Why the word cat refers only to that animal is arbitrary.

Why a pen is called pen is arbitrary. So any name is arbitrary. We will look at this aspect some other time. Today, all I want to discuss with you is when we say a word we say it is a meaningful combination of sounds. In other words, it is a combination of sounds, which also gives us meaning. So we will leave it there. We do not want to discuss that. Because a word must also give meaning, that is fine.

So there are only two parts, two things that we discuss when we talk about words and words that they are sounds, and they give us words. We know there are two types of sounds, some are consonant sounds, and some are vowel sounds. To be precise, in English, there are 20 vowel sounds and 24 consonant sounds. And these many 44 sounds are responsible for all possible words that we know, or we do not know in English.

But when we talk about words, there is another thing called syllables that we need to understand. So what is a syllable?

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## Syllables

- A **syllable** is a unit of organization for a sequence of speech sounds.
- Syllables have nucleus (most often a vowel) with optional initial and final margins (typically, consonants).
- Words can have several syllables.

- One syllable words
- Two two syllable word,
- Three syllable words,
- Four syllable words



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A syllable is something, which is bigger than a sound or and smaller than a word, which simply means, a syllable can have one or more than one sounds in it. But, a syllable is part of a word in a sense that, a word could be just one syllable. There are several words which are just one-syllable words. They are the words are syllable in themselves, and they are called monosyllabic words.

But it is possible that one word may have one word will definitely have one syllable, but one word may have more than one syllables. One word may have two, three, four, five, sometimes more than five syllables as well. But in general what we find is monosyllabic words, words with two syllables, words with three syllables are very common. That is, there are so many in numbers in English.

The moment we start moving ahead that is the moment words become heavier in terms of a number of syllables, words with four syllables, words with five syllables and words with six syllables, the total number of possible words start decreasing. That is simply because of the weight. A heavier word is more difficult to pronounce, to speak, and therefore we do not have too heavy words too many of them.

So the basic point is, a syllable is a unit, which could have multiple sounds, and there could be multiple syllables in a word. Therefore we say it is bigger than a sound but is smaller than a word. That is one way to identify and to understand syllables. When we look at a syllable, we also want to know at the same constraint on that, that there must be a vowel sound in a syllable.

Remember and try to draw inference from what we know about a word. What we know about a word is there must be a vowel sound in a word. So it follows from the point that there must be a vowel sound in every syllable. And this requirement of a vowel sound in every syllable is called the nucleus of the syllable. Nucleus means the fundamental basis. And this is the reason why we say vowel sounds are more basic units of a word.

Because a word is not possible without, every word has a vowel sound because every word has at least one syllable in it and every syllable requires the nucleus. And this nucleus can only be a vowel sound. Apart from this nucleus, it could have an initial and final sounds in it. So they are called there are different names, but there could be more than one sound in a syllable.

That is all we need to understand, and we need to keep in mind. But there must be the nucleus in a syllable. Now when we, let us look at some generic picture of words and syllables. It is like I discussed with you. It is possible to have one-syllable words, two-syllable words, three-syllable words and four-syllable words. We are going to see some examples of it, and we are going to see how they are identified.

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## Words and Syllables

- One word may have one or more syllables
- Words with one syllables
  - sun      life,      break,      tongue  
*son*
- Words with two syllables
  - tiger(tiger),      police (po-lice),      between( bet-ween),  
marriage(mar-riage)  
*tiger*

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So words with one syllable are examples are son. There are some, this word also has one syllable only, son. Life, break, tongue. Now please do not look at again spelling. Please do not look at the sounds also. The way we identify a word, a syllable is if

there is no break, then no break in the pronunciation of a word, in the way we speak a word, then they are monosyllabic words. Say these words to yourself and see how they sound.

Son, life, break tongue, these are all monosyllabic words without a break. Now, look at two words, two-syllable words. Words like tiger, police, between. One more time hear it. Tiger, police, between. What do we see here? When we say the word tiger, we see after this one; there is a break. Ti-ger. Ti is one syllable, ger is another syllable. Police. Po is one syllable, lice is another syllable.

Between, bit is one syllable, and ween is another syllable. Between bit-ween. This is a two-syllable word, between, between. So when we see in two-syllable words, each syllable, like ti two syllables of tiger ti-ger. Please pay attention to that. Both the syllables have one vowel sound in them. aai in ti the vowel sound in ti is aai ti ger; aa in the second syllable. When we say ger, g a r.

There is a vowel sound a in this syllable as well. So ti-ger. Police, p and o police. L i s police. Between, b i t first syllable v e n second syllable. So in a word with two syllables, we have only taken two, three examples. We see each syllable has got a vowel sound in it. So this also tells us that a syllable is bigger than a sound but is smaller than a word.

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## Syllables

- Examples of three syllable words :

energy (e-ner-gii),	capital (ka-pi-tal),
heritage (he-ri-teg),	suffering (sa-far-ing)

- Examples of four syllable words:

Invisible(in-vi-si-ble), 1 2 3 4	education (e-du-ke-shan), 1 2 3 4
aquarium (aqua-rii-am), 1 2 3 4	infinity (in-fi-ni-tii) 1 2 3 4

Now let us look at examples with three-syllable sounds. Energy, e-ner-gii. Heritage, he-ri-tez heritage. This word capital ka-pi-tal. Suffering, saf-far-ing suffering. And then you will see breaking these points and three syllables in each one of them. Each syllable with a vowel sound in it. Examples with four sounds four syllables. They are invisible, aquarium education, infinity.

Let me say these words, these words again, and I want you to notice their syllabification. In-vi-si-ble, aqua-rii-am, e-du-ke-shan and in-fi-ni-tii. So e-du-ke-shan four syllables. Infinity in-fi-ni-tii. I have tried to roughly identify these syllables for you. Aquarium, aqua-rii-am. So there are breaks between syllables in a word, and every syllable must have a vowel sound in it.

The rules of syllabification is intuitive to speakers of English. There are not rules that can tell us about how syllabification is actually done. But when we pay attention to spoken speech in English and we try to speak the way, that is speak with proper syllables that is proper syllabification identifying each syllable, then we sound very close to the way it should be spoken.

So, instead of saying so if we say four-syllable words with only two breaks, then they could be misunderstood and sometimes not intelligible to hear us. Therefore, once again, I will try to underline the point that the process of our efforts in understanding the process of syllabification, our efforts in trying to identify syllables is yet another effort in the direction of making our pronunciation impressive and speech confident.

So we when we identify them, we want to speak using this syllabification. We need to identify these syllables when we speak. And the composition of syllables is going to be helpful for us, that is our when we know that every syllable must have a vowel sound, this knowledge will help us check the syllabification process. So this is how we look at syllables.

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## Syllables

- A syllable consists of three segments –
  - nucleus, onset, rhyme, coda
- Nucleus : a vowel or syllabic consonant, obligatory in most languages
- Onset- a consonant or consonant clusters
- Rhyme – contrasts with onset and splits into nucleus and coda



So like I mentioned in the beginning, a syllable must have a nucleus. The other things in other parts of the syllables are known as onset, rhyme, coda and these, but these are not you see it is good to know about them. But these are not important things to remember for learning English or learning a language.

However, our familiarity with the process of syllabification and the fact that there are multiple syllables, there could be multiple syllables in a word is going to be helpful and useful for us. So this helps you understand what a nucleus is, what is onset and what is a rhyme. Please look at it, but you do not have to memorize them.

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## Syllables

- Nucleus a vowel or syllabic consonant, obligatory in most languages.
- Coda: a consonant, optional in some languages, highly restricted or prohibited in others.
- Whenever words in English have more than two syllables, one of them is more accentuated. For example, the word ba\_NA\_na..



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So again, this tells you something about nucleus that a vowel or a syllabic consonant is obligatory in most languages. A vowel must be the nucleus. Then we have a coda.

And whenever we have words in English have more than two syllables, one of them is more accentuated. That is one of them is more stressed.

And I will talk about this process of stress on syllables to make our speech more impressive, very soon. But meanwhile, I want you to do the practice of the syllabification. One more time take a few more words. This time, take the help of a dictionary. Dictionaries usually help you check your syllabification. Say those words to yourself and see how many times you observe breaks.

Then, check those words in the dictionary and then check actual breaks. Identify vowel sounds in each syllable. And then try to see when we have more than two syllables which one is getting more stressed? That you will be ready for another session on stress patterns in English words. That I will come soon and talk to you about.

At this point, once you are done with this exercise not only, you feel more confident, but you identifying syllables in your own speech helps you make it make your speech more impressive and emphatic.

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### Words

- A single distinct meaningful element of speech or writing, used with others (or sometimes alone) to form a sentence and typically shown with a space on either side when written or printed.

Examples of words: bees, hair, matter, tall etc.

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At this point of our discussion, at this point, when we are discussing words, I want to add very quickly one specific thing that you find in traditional grammar books. They are called parts of a speech. This slide tells you a little bit more about word. So please take a look at this, and you will understand.

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### Words

Words combine to form phrases and sentences. All words belong to categories called word classes (or parts of speech) according to the part they play in a sentence. The main word classes in English are listed below.

- Noun – Book, cat, Ram
- Verb – play, sing, cry
- Adjective – tall, beautiful, red
- Adverb – loudly, really, very
- Pronoun – She, him, that

Parts  
of  
Speech

When we move beyond words, we see words fall in different categories. And these categories are known as parts of a speech in traditional grammars. So we have words fall in grammatical categories, and we can also call them grammatical categories like nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns.

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### Words

- Preposition – on, at, in, above
- Conjunction – but, for, if
- Determiner – a, an, the
- Interjection – Hello!

Prepositions, conjunction, determiners, and interjections. So these are several examples of parts of a speech. Here, one more time I do not want you to memorize these things. In fact, as a matter of principle, in learning a language, we do not need to memorize anything. We only need to understand things properly.

We need to slow down our speed; we need to write, we need to look at the details, we need to look at nuances, subtlety and pay attention to them. What I mean by slowing down is to pay proper attention to them. This process builds our understanding stronger. And once our understanding becomes stronger about these nuances, they start showing up when we speak. This is the most robust process of learning.

Therefore, what is important here is to pay attention to what we know as parts of our speech is, it simply means different grammatical categories. All possible words in our spoken language can be identified in some of these categories. These categories also become important when we start looking at sentences. Therefore they are called parts of a speech. We will have more sessions on parts of a speech.

And each one of these categories in details for you to understand. But more important than understanding this part also is to understand the process that helps us make a sentence. So very soon, we will see you with another set of our discussions. Meanwhile, have a practice of identifying these categories.

When you have a word, identify the category of that word, whether it is a noun, or an adjective, or something else, and take some more words and look at the syllabification with the help of the dictionary. This will definitely help you build your understanding of these nuances and eventually make you an impressive speaker. Thank you.

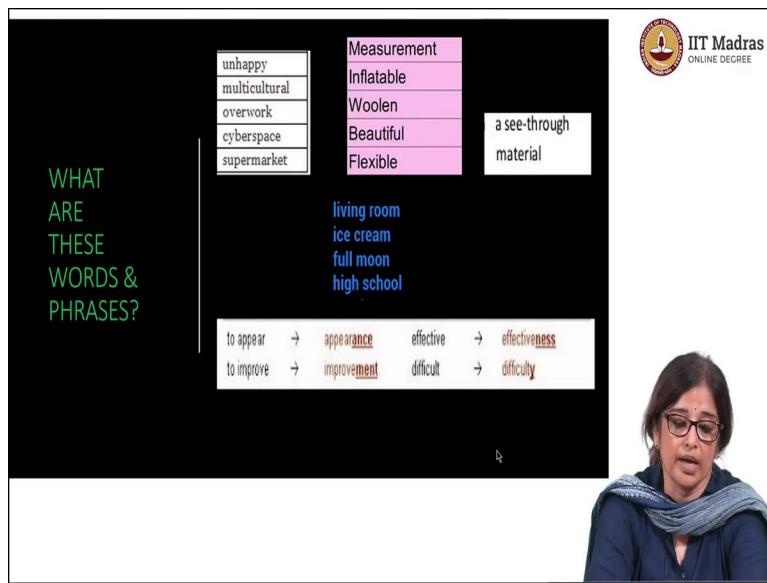
**English-I (Basic English)**  
**Dr. Leena Anil**  
**Guest Faculty**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology Madras – Chennai**

**Lecture-10**  
**Building Vocabulary**

The importance of vocabulary learning can never be overstated, and by vocabulary, we do not refer to a single lexical unit. We also mean lexical terms and this could represent phrases that we very commonly used in our day-to-day communication phrases, like good morning or nice to meet you. This even though they are learnt as a lexical unit and as individual word, they are actually categorized as a lexical chunks, and these are also an important part of vocabulary development. By lexical of course, we mean word for the vocabulary of a language.

For developing vocabulary is not something that is done in an artificial way, you have to realise it is a natural process but done consciously when you start learning a language.

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Look at the words on the screen; you will see that you come across quite commonly in your day-to-day communication. For example, unhappy or supermarket, I'm sure that the most used these words almost every day if not the cyberspace or multicultural. Unhappy and supermarket surely

form a part of our day-to-day communication. Likewise, measurement or beautiful or flexible these are words again that are commonly used.

Look at the other set living room, ice cream, full movie, high school and see-through as a see-through material these are not words that are specialist in nature or something that you know, you only when you are giving a kind of an academic lecture. These words that are commonly used by all of us and if you notice that is something unusual something different about these words even though you might not have been using them consciously and realizing what is different about these words.

Likewise, the ones at the bottom to up here you can see that it is used as the different formats appearance and likewise to improve we use it commonly as improvement. So you can see that there is a change in the form of the word as well. So, let us not worry about what the Grammatical or any other technical use these words have letters have. Let us just look at what is word means to us and how these can be incorporated into the development of vocabulary.

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DEVELOPING VOCABULARY THROUGH WORD FORMATION

There are four main kinds of word formation

Prefixes      Suffixes  
Conversion      Compounds

A video frame shows a woman with glasses and a blue top speaking.

This concept or this method of developing vocabulary is called word-formation. So there are four main kinds of word formation and what we looked at previously in the earlier screen are examples of these four kinds so you can see unhappy it is an example of a prefix. So, you can see that all those words in that list, unhappy, multicultural, overwork, cyberspace and supermarket

are actually two words with the exclusion of unhappy everything and multi. Everything else is almost an individual word in its own right.

So these are prefixes, so I am sure it is a very common concept in vocabulary learning, and most of us have come across it from early schooling. However, it helps to understand a little more in-depth on how these words can be used to develop vocabulary. So, those are prefixes the second kind of word that we could incorporate into our development of vocabulary is called the suffix. So, look at these words measurement, inflatable, woollen, beautiful and flexible. You see that this word end with a particular either or complete word is very unlikely is a complete word with a set of letters put together to complete or add more meaning to the root word.

So, you can see measure has become measurement, inflatable is both, you might be confused and probably in is the prefix, but it is not. Inflate is the root word and you add, able to it becomes inflatable and likewise woollen, beautiful and flexible. You can see that the root word comes the beginning and you add a little word to make it as a suffix, a suffix is added to this word, and it becomes a completely new word with the added meaning of connotation.

The next kind of word formation that we are looking at conversion, the conversion is a little more complex in that you are looking at a change in the grammatical form of the word. So even though it is not required to understand how this change happens, this knowledge will help you when you are developing your vocabulary. So the words you can see here is see-through material. So, use a little bit grammatical term so you can say see through that as standalone words are actually verbs.

So, I could see through the gap between the two buildings. So you can see that see and through are used as a phrasal verb. Whereas when it is used in this context, see-through material it becomes a word that describes materials, so it automatically becomes an adjective. So, you can see the verb see-through has become an adjective. So that is what you mean by conversion. So there is a change in the grammatical form and the grammatical concept of that word.

So likewise, to appear is a verb, and it becomes appearance, verb becomes noun, to improve becomes improvement and that again, you can see the change from verb to noun. Likewise, this change or conversion of the grammatical form is another way in which vocabulary development can be handled. Then the fourth and final part is called compounding or where do you use compound words, and this kind of formation is actually, probably the simplest and the most easy to acquire.

Because as you can see in the on the screen the word living room, icecream, full moon and high school, these are probably words that we used in our very, very early formative years of learning the language. Of the four types of word formation probably compound words are the easiest ones to acquire followed up by prefixes and suffixes and probably the most complex one to learn at least or to consciously understand the conversion that happens from one grammatical category to another.

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PREFIXES

We add prefixes before the base or stem of a word.

ISNT "PRE" IN "PREFIX"?

A PREFIX?

monorail, monolingual      mono- means 'one'  
multipurpose, multicultural      multi- means 'many'  
post-war, postgraduate      post- means 'after'  
unusual, undemocratic      un- means 'not' or  
'opposite to'

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So now to look at prefixes I think most people know that pre means before so you automatically understand that a prefix is a word that is added before the stem or the main of the root word and it comes before the word to add some more meaning to the original word. You look at the list of words you can see rail, and there is lingual, so you see the mono is the prefix so its added or fixed before the main word rail and it changes the meaning.

So, when you say rail, it can be just any kind of reference to probably the Railways, or you know something generic connected to the word rail. But when you say Monorail automatically, you know that you are referring to one. So mono obviously this in any context means one. Likewise, monolingual, you talk about somebody who knows only one language as monolingual, and somebody who knows more than one language is bilingual.

And then you have multilingual, and then you have people who are polyglots. So, you can keep adding prefixes wherein the meaning of the main word changes depending on what is meaning of the prefixes. Likewise, multipurpose and multicultural very commonly used by us in our communication and again multi means many and multifaceted, and there are so many words that you could think of which you could use with this prefix.

Likewise, post and postgraduate and post-war, so here post means after, so if you are wondering whether post office also carries the same meaning with because of the addition of post to it, you obviously know that it doesn't, so you know the reason why post-war and postgraduate is does not have the same meaning as a post office. And likewise adding un to usual and un to democratic means that it gives the opposite meaning.

So un here stands for not, so unusual and undemocratic. You can notice that when you add a prefix to a very generic base or stem in certain cases, it gives the opposite meaning. But in certain cases, it is all it also adds a different context or a different gives a totally different sense to the whole usage. So, prefixes do add a lot of character to be root or stem word.

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**SUFFIXES**

We add suffixes after the base or stem of a word. The main purpose of a suffix is to show what class of word it is (e.g. noun or adjective).

<i>terrorism, sexism</i>	<i>-ism and -dom</i> are used to form nouns
<i>employer, actor</i>	<i>-er and -or</i> are used to form nouns to describe people who do things
<i>widen, simplify</i>	<i>-en and -ify</i> are used to form verbs
<i>reasonable, unprofitable</i>	<i>-able</i> is used to form adjectives
<i>unhappily, naturally</i>	<i>-ly</i> is a common suffix used to form adverbs

The next kind is, of course, the suffix and like we have already looked at suffixes are added to the end of the stem or the main word, and it also has the role of a more complex kind compared to the prefix in that it thus indicate what kind of word it is. The suffix added to the end of a word will give you some indication of what type of word it is whether it is a noun or an adjective, but none of these things are required in order to learn these words and use them unconsciously because you don't have to learn grammatical rules in order to become a good communicator.

But these things do help in your general understanding and the way you use the language. So if you can see the list ism is added to terror and sex, and it totally changes the context and the meaning of the word and likewise and these become noun, when you add ism, the word becomes a noun, likewise with employer and actor. You can see that er when added to the root it shows some the work, or it describes the things that people do.

And the same happens with all the other suffixes. So the main thing about adding suffix is, is that there is also a change in the spelling. So, the addition of those few letters not only changes the grammatical function, but there is also a very, there is a change at the level of spelling as well. So this is also something you should be conscious or aware of, especially in writing because of obviously spelling comes into play only when you write.

So prefixes and suffixes words added to the beginning and words added to the end of the root or the main word creates a whole new set of words for you to use in your day to day communication and it really, and it really adds a fillip to your entire understanding of how to use words.

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The slide has a header 'Conversion' and a logo for 'IIT Madras ONLINE DEGREE'. It includes a three-panel cartoon strip from 'The Far Side' by Gary Larson. The first panel shows a character thinking 'LUK TO 58 WORDS. WHAT?'. The second panel shows him thinking 'I TAKE NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES AND USE THEM AS VERBS. REMEMBER WHEN "ACCESS" WAS A THING? NOW IT'S SOMETHING YOU DO. IT GOT VERBED.' The third panel shows him thinking 'VERBING WORDS... MAYBE WE CAN EVENTUALLY MAKE LANGUAGE A COMPLETE IMPEDIMENT TO UNDERSTANDING...' To the right of the cartoon, there are three examples of conversion: 'GOOGLE → GOOGLE THE INFORMATION', 'SEE THROUGH → SEE THROUGH FABRIC', and 'STAND UP → STAND UP COMEDIAN'.

A woman with glasses and a blue shirt is visible in the bottom right corner, likely the speaker.

Conversion, this is a little more you know complex as a concept, but then not really important that affects the way you learn how to use them because usage is different and understanding the grammatical categories of these things is a totally different ballgame and not required for somebody who just wants to be an effective communicator. So in conversion, what you see is there is a change of the words from one grammatical functions into another.

If you look at email and the microwave; if you tell somebody, please email me; obviously it means that email is used as a verb. But then if you say that I get about 500 emails a day, their email is used as a noun, you can see that in day to day communication you would not have even realized it, but you can see this conversion happening quite automatically without having an awareness of this.

Likewise, with microwave and if you look at Google, probably the one action or function, many of us are involved in so unconsciously every other day, in every day of our lives. Google is actually the name of a company, and it is a proper noun. But then it has become a verb, and we

say that oh I Google this information or you know, I found when I Google this, I discovered that there are so many, you know so many hits about this particular topic.

Google also has many other nouns you can see would have made this conversion into verbs, and like we looked at earlier the see through the example of the see-through fabric. Likewise, stand-up comedians, stand-up by itself is a phrasal verb, but then it has converted into a noun, and it become to call somebody who stands up and cracks jokes at a performance, you call them a stand-up comedian. Here you can see conversion happening, and there is no reason to be consciously worrying about how do I convert this word into that, is just that awareness helps you improve your understanding.

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COMMON CONVERSIONS

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Can you **text** her? (verb from noun text, meaning to send a text-message)  
They are always **jetting** somewhere. (verb from noun jet)  
If you're not careful, some **downloads** can damage your computer. (noun from verb download)  
OK, so the meeting's on Tuesday. That's a **definite**. (noun from adjective)  
It's a very big **if** and I'm not at all sure we can afford it. (noun from conjunction, meaning 'it's not at all certain')  
All companies have their **ups and downs**. (nouns from prepositions)  
We also use conversion when we change a proper noun into a common noun:  
Has anybody seen my **Dickens**? (copy of a book by Dickens)

A video frame shows a woman with glasses and a blue top, speaking.

So here are some more common examples of conversion frequency. Look at these words like text. Can you text her, text here means what you mostly; what you send people using your mobile device usually an SMS, an SMS or a short messaging service is what you call a text. Typically it was used as a noun, but then in this context, it becomes a verb. So, likewise, Jet becomes jetting and downloads very commonly used by all of us, and here there is the change from download the file, if you say, please download the file you are asking somebody to do an action.

Whereas here you can see, this becomes a noun. So this common thing likewise with all the examples and awareness of this conversion will not in any way impede your fluency, but if it will help you be little more conscious about the way you are using the word. and it is one of the common ways in which people improve their repertoire of words because if you know, that a particular word that you use so commonly can be used in different ways, and it changes the meaning depending on how you are using it in different context. It really enhances your ability as a communicator.

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COMMON CONVERSIONS

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Can you **text** her? (verb from noun text, meaning to send a text-message)  
They are always **jetting** somewhere. (verb from noun jet)  
If you're not careful, some **downloads** can damage your computer. (noun from verb download)  
OK, so the meeting's on Tuesday. That's a **definite**. (noun from adjective)  
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All companies have their **ups and downs**. (nouns from prepositions)  
We also use conversion when we change a proper noun into a common noun:  
Has anybody seen my **Dickens**? (copy of a book by Dickens)

[Video frame showing a woman speaking]

Compounding like I said earlier is probably the easiest and commonly used strategy to develop one's vocabulary, and I think we would have acquired as school kids. So, when you talk about compounding you are basically bringing together two words and again the grammatical meaning of any of these things are not particular, but just for the better understanding, you can see that words like car park or rock band are very commonly used.

Especially car park and it comes under the category of nouns. Likewise, heartbreak and sugar-free are adjectives. Again two words brought together, sometimes hyphenated, sometimes not again not critical to know for spoken communication and verbal like baby-sit and chain-smoke, adverbs like good-naturedly and nevertheless. You can see that two unlikely words come together, and they form one word which is used and enhances the meaning of the message that you are trying to say.

So these things like compounding and conversion, obviously the native speakers used this quite effortlessly and without much conscious awareness of using it. But now as you learn to communicate, it will help you when you want to acquire certain vocabulary items or lexis in a conscious way because in the early stage of learning to communicate that there should be some conscious effort and then it becomes an automatic habit.

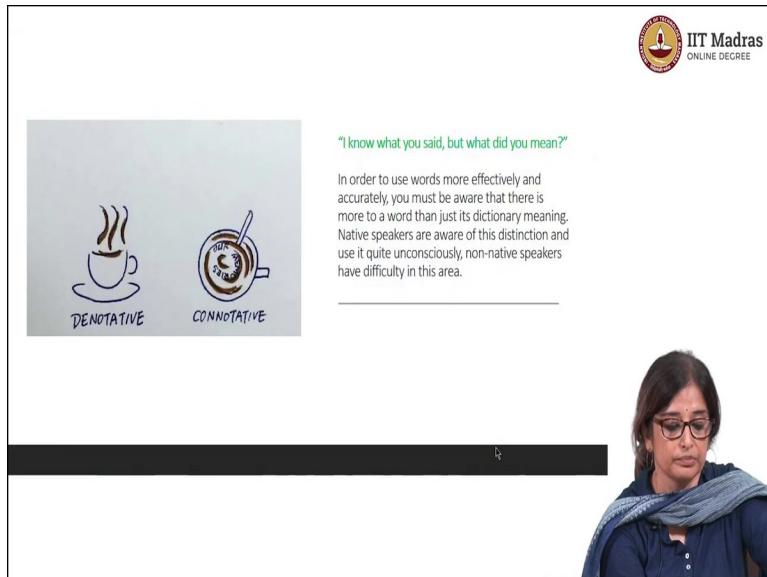
So in the early days of learning to communicate; if you know that there are certain classes of vocabulary like prefixes and suffixes and conversion happens as well as compounding, it will improve your understanding of how you need to develop your vocabulary, and it would enhance your communication skills.

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So, the next area that you are looking at is in building vocabulary; the next area you are looking at is denotation and connotation. Again, these are high sounding words, but again, of no relevance as far as acquiring the skill of learning to communicate, but it would help if you know these terms because automatically, you will know what to focus on, what areas to look at to develop your vocabulary.

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"I know what you said, but what did you mean?"

In order to use words more effectively and accurately, you must be aware that there is more to a word than just its dictionary meaning. Native speakers are aware of this distinction and use it quite unconsciously, non-native speakers have difficulty in this area.

A woman with glasses and a blue shawl is visible in the bottom right corner of the slide.

So, denotation and connotation is if you look at this quotation. I know what you said, but what did you mean. That is basically what is clearly gives you an idea of what is the difference between denotative and connotative? So if you look at denotative very simply look at that; very high sounding word even though it sounds very high sounding, it is basically if you open a dictionary and you look at the meaning of a particular word, whatever definition it has given you in that page is basically the denotative meaning of a word.

So the dictionary meaning or the definition that is the meaning of denotative whereas Connotative is basically the shades of meaning or the emotion or the mood that a particular word carries. And as we go along will see how very interesting this difference is. So, again if you are a native speaker of the language, you really don't have to worry about these distinctions because it will automatically, you know occur in your speech.

You do not have; you don't really have to be bothered about it. But, if you are trying to acquire a language as a second language or non-native speaker or even as a foreign language learner, it would help that you are aware that these two distinctions are you know, are there in a particular word, its denotative meaning and its connotative meaning.

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So, let's look at it in a little more detail. If you look at rose probably if you look up the dictionary it would say that this is a plant which has thorns and you know, it has most cases it has a flower which is in most cases is pink in colour or some kind of definition which is very simple in most dictionary and what is called the literal meaning of the word, and that is what you would find in the dictionary, which is the explicit meaning or the literal meaning or a definition. These are different words in which you can describe denotative meaning.

Whereas, the connotative meaning is the association or the emotion that is evoked when you talk about or you refer to a particular word that is a suggestiveness that goes with the use of that word. So, if you say rose, it evokes a certain mental image in you, or you had a particular experience with a particular event or you know some occurrence in your life. Apart from a personal occurrence, you also know that symbolizes certain other emotions.

So like here it says its love, passion, romance, death or even duality. So you can see that there is a very clear distinction in the literal meaning of a rose which is a plant, which is a flowering plant which also has thorns and there is this connotative or the deeper meaning that is associated with the word which evokes images of love and passion and probably Valentine's Day. So, denotation and connotation are two areas that you could, you know kind of pay attention to understand the depth or the layers of meaning a simple day-to-day word could have. So, from the dictionary, you want to move on to the connotative or the emotional meaning of a word.

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The slide features a table on the left with three columns: Positive Connotation, Neutral Connotation, and Negative Connotation. A curly arrow points from the 'Positive Connotation' column to a green box on the right. The green box contains the title 'CONNOTATIONS CAN BE' followed by three categories: '+ POSITIVE', '- NEGATIVE', and '= NEUTRAL', each with an example sentence.

Positive Connotation	Neutral Connotation	Negative Connotation
thrifty	economical	miserly
economical	inexpensive	cheap
exceptional	unusual	strange
youthful	young	childish
illustrious	famous	notorious
slender	thin	skinny
prudent	timid	cowardly
laid-back	inactive	lethargic
persevering	persistent	stubborn
overrought	nervous	high-strung
up-to-date	new	newfangled
visionary	inventor	dreamer
save	store	hoard
hilarious	laughable	ridiculous
assertive	aggressive	pushy
employment	work	drudgery
strategy	plan	scheme
fragrance	smell	stench

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**CONNOTATIONS CAN BE**

+ POSITIVE

Thrifty: Jay is very careful about spending money. He is very thrifty.

- NEGATIVE

Miserly: Jay's boss is miserly. He doesn't share profits with the team.

= NEUTRAL

Economical: Jay moved to a smaller apartment as it was more economical in the long run.

A woman with glasses and a blue top is visible on the right side of the slide.

So, if you look at the connotation in; we would not look at the denotative because it is quite straightforward because you open a dictionary the denotative meaning or the denotative usage is there for all of us to see whichever dictionary you open. But if you look at connotation, that is where you, kind of your ability as a communicator comes across in your understanding of the connotations that a word has. So, if you can; you will notice that there are a whole lot of words on the screen and there are three categories under which these are listed.

So, connotations can be of 3 kinds; positive, negative or as well as neutral. So depending on where you use the word and to whom you use it and the context that matters. Also, the word rose if you are using it in a; when you are talking to your gardener, he obviously knows that you are referring to the plants that you want to buy or probably you are interested in knowing you know, how you know whether rose would grow in a hot climate or humid climate or wherever you stay.

When you have a conversation with a gardener about a rose, you are not really going into the connotative meaning of a word like that. But if you are talking about the rose and you are reading about it in a poem by some romantic poets from England, you obviously know he is not just talking about the rose, and you know what its literal meaning is, you know he is talking about emotions that flower has evoked in him at some point in his life.

So you look at this list, and you look at the word thrifty you can see that thrifty is a synonym with miserly and economical, but you can see that the three words even though they are closely connected as in meaning they are closely connected, you can see that there is a big difference in the connotation that they provide to those who you said. So, for example, if you say that Jay is very careful about spending money is very thrifty. This person comes across as somebody who is very careful about spending money; he is not a spendthrift.

So, the antonym for thrifty would be a spendthrift; so you automatically see, think of somebody who is responsible about his money, and he is not going to blow it away. So, thrifty does not have a negative or neutral connotation. It has a positive connotation. So, somebody tells you that you are a thrifty person, you should be honoured flattered. Whereas, when you look at miserly and that of course, we have come across this word in Literature.

And you know about this guy I think it was Midas who touched his; he is so fond of gold, and he was so miserly, and finally, he touched his own daughter, and she turned into a statue of gold. So, people who are totally miserly are people who don't want to part with anything that they have especially their money and their wealth, so if you say that Jay's boss is miserly, you see somebody who is very stingy.

So another word for miserly would be a very stingy person, somebody who is not, you know very generous. A miserly person is not a generous person. So you can see that it has a very negative or a connotation that is not at all, you know, in any way giving a good idea about the person. So, if you compare it with thrifty, you can see that it has such a strong negative vibe. If you look at economical, you can see that this is a word that is sitting on the fence. It is neither positive, nor is it negative in its meaning, and it has a very neutral connotation so it can be used in several contexts.

So it does not create any kind of negative impact, nor does it create a positive one. So when you say Jay has moved to a small apartment as it is more economical in the long run, you can see that whole sentence itself is very neutral. It does not really matter to us whether he moves to an economical, whether he is doing something that makes economical sense or not because it

doesn't really concern us. But, if you say somebody's boss is miserly, but if you say somebody's boss is thrifty, it will make you wonder whether you want to associate with somebody like that, whether you want to work with something like that.

So, connotation, as you can see, it has such an impact on our communication and using it in the right way is very important in order to be an effective communicator. So you can do this exercise. You have about 20 words in each column, and you could probably work on using them in context and see how effectively the meaning comes out. So this would be a valuable exercise you could try out on your own to bring out the connotative meaning and see the shades of the meaning that comes through.

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Rank the words in order from positive to negative

---

Thin, slim, lanky, skinny, gaunt, slender

Aggressive, assertive, domineering, dynamic, pushy, forceful

Shrewd, egghead, bright, clever, brilliant, cunning, smart, intelligent, brainy

[Video frame showing a woman speaking]

So, likewise, this is another interesting activity that you could try out where you could see that there are 4 to 5 words on every list. And if you look at each one, you could use a dictionary and learn them, find out the meanings of each and find out the denotative meaning of each of these words and then rank them in from probably in the order of starting with the most positive word in this list and then move on to what is the most negative and you can use them in a different context and see how to bring out the meaning as far as the connotation is concerned.

So, to sum up, all these strategies are the learning prefixes and suffixes as well as learning how to compound words and learning how to convert words, really enhance your ability to

communicate. And vocabulary development is the most important skill that one should acquire consciously in the beginning. And later becomes automatic because once you start reading more and listening more to people, you automatically start acquiring language, and it builds on your passive vocabulary.

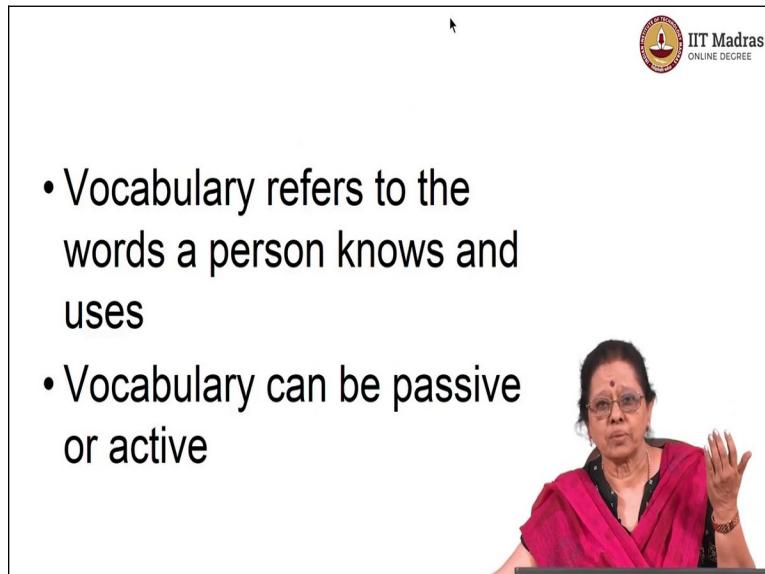
But, until that phase, you have to consciously learn a little bit of these technical terms in language learning. So learning prefixes and suffixes, conversions and of course, compounding and then moving on and understanding the difference between denotative and connotative meaning would help and enhance your communication skills.

**English-I(Basic English)**  
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**Lecture-11**  
**Enrich your Vocabulary**

Today, we are going to see how one can enrich one's vocabulary. Now to start with, what is vocabulary? It refers to the words a person knows and uses.

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- Vocabulary refers to the words a person knows and uses
- Vocabulary can be passive or active

Now vocabulary can be passive or active; the other words used is that it can be either productive or receptive. Quite often you know a particular word it is there, but you do not use it you do not produce it, but still, it is part of your vocabulary, so it becomes a passive vocabulary. Now more than anything else I feel vocabulary is the most important a fundamental tool to improve all your skills, whether it is listening or speaking or reading or writing.

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## Why should you improve your vocabulary?



- Words are catalysts for learning and thinking
- More words one can command, the more accurate one's thinking is
- Wide vocabulary improves academic scope
- Students who build vocabulary get better grades
- Words allow one to communicate one's thoughts and feelings
- Words help you to persuade and influence others
- A good repertoire of vocabulary reflects the personality of the speaker



Now the question is, why should one improve one's vocabulary is a whole lot of advantage, is such a lot of plus that you get by increasing it. Some of the words are catalysts for learning and thinking. When you think and use the word that is one thing, another is when you start using the right word, you also begin to think properly. Now more words one can command the more accurate ones thinking is.

Then a wide vocabulary improves the academic scope, fourth is students who build vocabulary get better grades and if not anything else that is something to work for. Allow one to communicate one's thoughts and feelings; they help you to persuade and influence others. I mean the demagogues or politicians know it very well, they really know to use the right word so that they can persuade you. And a good repertoire of vocabulary reflects the personality of the speaker.

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## How should you improve your vocabulary ?



- Learning is fun...like playing games
- Go for playing games ... say with root words, foreign words [Greek, Latin, French, American, Indian]
- Play prefixing games, suffixing games,
- Synonym games and antonym games



Now, the next question is, how should you improve your vocabulary. It is not a very painful exercise learning is fun; it is like playing games go for playing games, say with root words, foreign words, Greek, Latin, French, American, Indian words. Play prefixing games, suffixing games, synonym games and antonym games. Now I am not going to talk a lot about each one of them but, prefixing and suffixing, you must be able to do it quite easily.

For instance, you use a prefix like this for instance so you can say dislike, dishonour, dishonest, disobedience but then sometimes you know when you say dismantling, it's not a prefix you do not say mantle or dismantle. Similarly, I have this doubt about I mean expression disgruntled I am told that there is a word gruntled as well, but generally, it is not used, we only say that the employee is disgruntled.

Similarly, you say something is in is a prefix which you use for invisible, inaudible but when you say infacy, infacy is not the opposite of fancy. So, you have to know which are the words similar-sounding which can be prefixes and which are part of the root word themselves. Now when you look at suffixes, similarly you have like if you say courage courageous. Whereas when you use the prefix, it becomes n and encourage or enrich right.

Now, I mean I don't want to dwell much on prefixing and suffixing because I think that you can always find words and use the suffixes and make them increase your repertoire it can really enrich your vocabulary more easily than some of the other exercises will do.

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- Use one word to learn many.
- Price refers to the amount of money for which something may be bought or sold.
- There are other words related to payment of money,
- Fare
- Fee
- Fine
- Tax
- Toll
- Likewise, there are words related to travel, but a journey is not a voyage!
- An excursion is different from a tour and so on.
- Learn to use the right word.

Now the next exercise I would like you to look at is use one word to learn many. This is a very very interesting way of learning a word. For instance, the word price, the word price refers to the amount of money for which something may be bought or sold. Now there are other words related to the payment of money like fair; you say bus fare, fare and fee, tax toll. Now, I mean like you can take it as an exercise, go through the dictionary, go through thesaurus, find out what is the difference between each one of them.

So as part of my presentation, you also have these activities think of all these words which are related to payment, but later on, if you can't really put your finger to it, you can always check up the dictionary. Now other interesting things are you know words related to travel; a journey is not a voyage. An excursion is different from a tour. So, everywhere we have to learn to use the right word.

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## Synonyms



- A synonym is a word which has the same or nearly the same meaning in one or more senses as another word.
- Use the right word... not almost the right word... e.g. to see is not to observe
- “THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE RIGHT WORD AND THE ALMOST RIGHT WORD IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIGHTNING AND THE LIGHTNING BUG”—Mark Twain



Now, looking at synonyms, a synonym is a word which has the same or nearly the same meaning in one or more sentences as another word. Now use the right word, not almost the right word. Now in this connection you know I came across this very interesting quote by Mark Twain, he says the difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug and whatever difference it is, so, never use the almost right word when the right word is available.

Now there is another doubt that I used to often get as a teacher of English because I feel that there are really no synonyms. All the words each word is different just think of words connected to the visual or something connected to sight. You say see, you say look, observe, notice, glance, glimpse. Now all of them are connected to the fact, the sense of seeing but then each one is different from the other. When a student is in the lab, he is not just seeing he is observing.

The security personnel is not just viewing; he is watching. So, everywhere that is why I am very happy with this quotation; it cannot be almost the right word; it has to be the right word.

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- A student who knows a lot of synonyms will have the ability to use the right word in the right context.

e.g.

- Vigorous/lively/energetic

Elderly people who are frail should refrain from ----exercise

- Wrecked/demolished/ruined

The old mansion was ----to make way for an expressway



Now a student who knows a lot of synonyms will have the ability to use the right word in the right context. Now I have just given you a couple of sentences; for instance, many people they kind of mix up the word vigorous with lively or energetic. But then even though there are synonyms in some way you cannot use one for the other. Now look at this, elderly people who are frail should refrain from dash exercise.

So what do you say, do you say vigorous or lively or energetic, yes it is vigorous that is right. Now look at the second sentence, the old mansion was dash to make way for an expressway, do you use wrecked or demolished or ruined. So, you have to know the difference between wrecked and demolished, demolished and ruined. Of course here, the word is demolished.

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## Antonyms



- An antonym is a word that is opposite in meaning to another word
- Look at the following Examples.
- 1. Beating up a smaller person is not something brave. In fact it is a ----act
- 2. some people are optimistic about the country's economy while others are quite----- about it.
- 3. Mr. Sharma's frugality is in sharp contrast to his son's -----.



Now antonym, antonym is a word that is used I mean that is the opposite in the meaning to another word. Look at the following examples, I have given you two or three examples. Now I do not want to give you the answers. I am sure it is interesting for you to think and come up with the answers. First one is beating up a smaller person is not something brave in fact it is a dash act. Two, some people are optimistic about the country's economy while others are quite dash about it.

So as you know the word optimistic so you antonym pessimistic I remember the very famous example that is given to distinguish optimistic and pessimistic. So, given a glass which is half-filled with water, the optimist says there is a half glass of water, and the pessimist says it is half empty. So, one who looks at the brighter side of things one who looks at the darker side of things I mean you can keep on talking about it but look at the way you can work out the antonyms.

Mr. Sharma's frugality is in sharp contrast to his son's dash. So, look up the antonym of frugality. In the third sentence, the opposite of brave in the first sentence and fill in these blanks. You get it.

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## Homophones

- These are words with the same pronunciation, but they are spelt differently and have different meanings. Most of them are short and monosyllabic:
- Tail and tale
- Bow and bough
- Hail and hale
- Pail and pale
- Blue and blew
- Bear and bare
- Fare and fair



Now the other ways I am just giving you different ways in which you can improve your vocabulary. See there is never a possibility of not learning a word, if you learn, if you begin to learn one word, through it you will start learn many, many words. Get into the habit of looking into the dictionary and not just look up one word and leave it at there. See what goes before or after whether it is used as an idiom whether its uses as a phrase.

Whether there are slangs connected to it, now, these are words with the same pronunciation, but they are spelt differently, and they have different meanings. Most of them are short and monosyllabic. So, you I have given you a few homophones tail and tale, bow and bough I mean like here in all these you can see that only the spelling is different, but the pronunciation is the same, and the meanings are different. Pail and pale, blue and blew and bear and bare and fare and fair.

So, it is very important that you do not mix up the homophones but use the same and use the right word depending on the context you are working at.

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## Homonyms

- These are words spelt and pronounced alike, but have different meanings
- Bear
- Stalk
- Charge
- Row
- Bow
- Swallow
- Fine



Similarly, you have homonyms, they are words spelt and pronounced alike, but they have different meanings. Now the word bear I mean I have been teaching English to a lot of students from rural areas I find that almost always they pronounce it as beer but beer is b e r, and this is bear, and the word bear itself has more than one meaning. So, they are homonyms. Similarly, the word stalk, charge, especially charge you can find so many different ways in which the word charge is used. Okay.

Whether you are charging somebody or whether you are in charge of somebody or whether you are charging your cell phone. I mean there are a lot of meanings for the same word, so they are classified as homonyms. And then you have row; please remember that row itself has two meanings but then the same spelling if you pronounce it as row it has a different meaning altogether.

So you have swallow, fine all these are homonyms. It is more important that you pick up each of them, look up the dictionary, find out how many meanings they have and then try to use them in a sentence.

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## Words with Classical roots

- -cide, -phile, -phobia are parts of words which can help you to multiply your vocab. They are words with Greek or Latin origins
- Cide is an act of killing
- Suicide, Genocide, Patricide, Matricide, Insecticide, Regicide, ecocide
- Phobia is a strong unreasonable fear about something
- Claustrophobia, Autophobia, Xenophobia, Ornithophobia, Aerophobia, Sociophobia, Astrophobia



Now you have words with classical roots like cide, phile, phobia are parts of words which can help you multiply your vocabulary. Now they are words with Greek or Latin origins. For instance, cide is an act of killing. So, you have related words suicide, genocide, patricide, matricide, insecticide, regicide, ecocide. So, with the help of just one word with a classical root-like cide, you can learn more than 10 words.

Similarly with the word phobia the strong unreasonable fear about something. You have claustrophobia and autophobia, xenophobia, ornithophobia, aerophobia sociophobia, astrophobia okay. I am sure that with this at least try not to have a language phobia I am sure you will be able to pick up so many different words and then you will find that your vocabulary is increasing at such a hectic speed.

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- Phile refers to fondness for, affinity towards a particular thing
- Anglophile
- Bibliophile
- Pedophile
- Hellenophile
- Think of other foreign words commonly used like bon voyage, viva voce



Now, similarly another word with a classical root is phile which refers to a fondness for or an affinity towards a particular thing. So, you have anglophile, bibliophile, pedophile, hellenoophile. Now can you tell me like these four words with phile I have given you. There is one word which is having a negative connotation; it's not the same as bibliophile, it is pedophile. I am sure you have read a lot of stories connected to it as a crime.

So look at the meaning of that word. Now think of other common, other foreign words commonly used like bon voyage or viva voce even these words are very much in use and they are words not originally from English, but they are classical words.

**(Refer Slide Time: 13:38)**

### Idioms and slangs

- Knowing idioms and slangs can give a boost to your confidence.
- They cannot be understood literally. You must familiarize yourself with them.
- They can give you an edge over others who are not familiar with these phrases.
- American idioms and slangs are a huge part of American culture



Now, look at idioms and slangs. I am just giving you different ways in which you can enrich your vocabulary as I said with synonyms and antonyms, prefixes and suffixes with classical root words. Now another thing is idioms and slangs. Knowing idioms and slangs can give a boost to your confidence. I find that lot of young students; they find that not knowing the slangs kind of undermines their confidence. So, but it is not difficult to pick, they cannot be understood, literally you must familiarize yourself with them.

They can give you an edge over others who are not familiar with these phrases. American idioms and slangs are a huge part of American culture.

(Refer Slide Time: 14:27)

  
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**Look at the following passage:**

- Did you ever plan an exciting vacation only to get *as sick as a dog* when it was time to leave? Being *under the weather* is no fun at all, but being sick on a vacation can make it really hard to *keep your chin up*. Just *scarf down* some hot chicken soup and get better *lickety split*...



Now, look at the following passage. Did you ever plan an exciting vacation only to get as sick as a dog when it was time to leave? Being under the weather is no fun at all, but being sick on vacation can make it really hard to keep your chin up. Just scarf down some hot chicken soup and get better lickety split. Now, this is supposed to be a passage with a lot of American slang. Have a good look at it see which of the slangs and how they can be explained?

Yes, I put them in italics for you sick as a dog is feeling very sick, feeling very unwell. The next one is being under the weather, okay the weather is what and keep your chin up and scarf down okay to keep your chin up is to remain brave, scarf down is to drink something very quickly okay yeah lickety split is very quickly very briskly, being under the weather having a very tough time.

So, all these things are American slangs and kids these days learn to use it wherever possible, and it helps them to communicate well with their peers.

(Refer Slide Time: 15:57)

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## Semantic field

- Words belong to different semantic fields like Medicine, Law, Journalism etc.
- Given below are set of words. Classify them according to four different semantic fields:
- Law, Cookery, Journalism, Politics
- Boil, Ballot, Appeal, Witness, Coverage, Court, Vote, Special Correspondent, Scoop, Knead, Barbecue, Manifesto, Spices, Adjourn, Seasoning, Reporter, Nomination, Public Prosecutor, Stir, Anesthetics.

Next, we go to the semantic field, okay. So, the word belongs to different semantic fields, I just given you three fields here; Medicine, Law and Journalism. Given below are a set of words. Classify them according to the four different semantic fields. This is another exercise I have given you the fields as Law, Cookery, Journalism and Politics, okay. So, you look at these words, boil, for instance, boil comes under cookery. Okay. Ballot, appeal, witness, coverage, quote.

Just pick up like make the columns and put each word under the semantic field. So, and that helps you to improve your vocabulary. Right. Have you seen them? Okay. I am sure it is not difficult, but then it helps you to enrich your vocabulary. So, we end it in with stir and anesthetic. Stir is for as you know, cookery and anesthetics is in the field of medicine.

(Refer Slide Time: 17:08)

## Loan words or foreign words

- American English /British English
- Dumb
- Candy
- Apartment
- Gas
- Druggist
- Bill
- Fall
- French fries



Now, loan words or foreign words are yet another way to improve your vocabulary. So, you have American English and British English. I have given you a set of very common, very often used American words for which you find the British equivalence. Okay. Dumb, Candy, Apartment, Gas Druggist, Bill, Fall and French Fries. So, you find the English equal the UK or the British equivalents for them and I just given you a sample of some 5, 6 words.

There are ever so many words, where you have words connected to the American English which have their English equivalence. Right. Just I will give you the first one dumb; they say do not be so dumb. So, in British English, it is somebody who cannot speak, but in American English, it is somebody who is stupid.

**(Refer Slide Time: 18:05)**

## Use New words

- There are plenty of words...interesting words, right words.
- Do not repeat the same words. That reflects a poor store of vocabulary.
- You don't like to repeat the same dress, do you?
- Why repeat words? Like its super, a TN college student's favourite word!



Now, use new words. There are plenty of words, interesting words, right words. Do not repeat the same words because the repetition of the same words reflects a person of vocabulary. Well, you do not like to repeat the same dress. I know a lot of parents who come to me and say my child, my son or daughter, what he has worn in the first semester he will not wear in the second semester. So, go and go in for a new a whole new wardrobe.

So if you do not want to repeat the same dress, why do you want to repeat the same words, why repeat words. Like I find this word super, it is a Tamil Nadu college student's favourite word. Super for everything you know, the dress is super, food is super, movie super, so many words. So, if everything is super. Then, I came across another word awesome, which many other students also use. Everything is awesome. So, one of the dictionaries said that awesome does not mean anything, I said why, but I am told that if the same word is used for so many things, then it has no meaning, it loses its power, it loses its power to communicate.

**(Refer Slide Time: 19:27)**

- b) Here is a letter written by a friend with a limited vocabulary. Try replacing 'awesome' and 'lousy' with other suitable adjectives:



So to close, I have just given you a small exercise. Okay. Here is a letter written by a friend with a limited vocabulary. Try replacing awesome and lousy with other suitable adjectives. So, awesome is set for everything that is good and lousy for everything that is bad. Okay. Like awesome, they say food is lousy, movie is lousy, class is lousy. So, there are so many words which you can use. So, I am just giving you the letter in the next slide have a look at it.

**(Refer Slide Time: 19:54)**

- b) Here is a letter written by a friend with a limited vocabulary. Try replacing 'awesome' and 'lousy' with other suitable adjectives:



Remove awesome and replace it with some other adjective.

**(Refer Slide Time: 20:02)**

- Hi Pradeep,
- How are you? You wanted to know about my trip to Goa. Here you are...
- The rooms the agents had booked were awesome, but the cabs were lousy.
- On the second day they had arranged for a shopping experience and I tell you the shops were simply awesome and by the time we got back it was pretty late and we had to settle for some lousy food.



Look at this; Hi Pradeep, How are you? You wanted to know about my trip to goa. Here you are... The rooms the agents had booked were awesome, but the cabs were lousy. So, what can you say here? The rooms were great, comfortable, magnificent, I mean you can use any words other than awesome. But the cabs were lousy. So, see what words you can use for cabs being lousy. Cabs were dirty, uncomfortable.

Now, look at the second paragraph. On the second day they had arranged for a shopping experience, and I tell you the shops were simply awesome, and by the time we got back it was pretty late, and we had to settle for some lousy food. So what can you say? The shops were awesome. So you can say the shops were fantastic, the shops were excellent, okay. We have to settle for some lousy food. So, generally, people say horrible food but the word horrible can be used for everything else also.

Think of something very, very specific to food so you can say, settle for some unpalatable or unhygienic food, of course, you can say the food was not tasty, whatever. Let us just complete it; there is just one more slide.

**(Refer Slide Time: 21:45)**

- Next day we were taken to the Church of St.Francis which was absolutely awesome. As we had still some time left the guide suggested a short movie ‘Shoot out at Lonawala’ which was so lousy we wanted to shoot the guide.
- We broke away from the group the following day to visit an old friend. He lives in an old mansion which I am told is 300 years old.



Next day we were taken to the church of Saint Francis, which was absolutely awesome. As we had still some time left the guide suggested a short movie ‘Shootout At Lonavala’, which was so lousy we wanted to shoot the guide. We broke away from the group the following day to visit an old friend. He lives in an old mansion which I am told is 300 years old.

**(Refer Slide Time: 22:13)**

- It was truly awesome. More awesome were the two horses that kept galloping round the awesome lawns. On the whole the trip was awesome.
- Your bff
- savitha



It was truly awesome. More awesome were the two horses that kept galloping round the awesome lawns. On the whole, the trip was awesome. So, then why should you be finding it difficult to use other words. There are ever so many words, words related to beautiful things, words related to something of a fine quality. So, try and pick up all the adjectives and use it.

Using the right adjectives instead of repeating the same thing is one way in which you can enrich your vocabulary.

**(Refer Slide Time: 22:53)**



So, empower yourselves with a rich vocabulary.

All the Best.

Usha Mahadevan  
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So, empower yourself with a rich vocabulary and happy learning.

**English-I(Basic English)**  
**Karthika Sathyananthan**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology – Chennai**

**Lecture-12**  
**Get it Right- Pronunciation of Common Words**

Hello all. I welcome you to this class. In this class, we are going to look at the pronunciation of a few commonly used words. Before I get started, let me make this point clear that the goal of this module is to improve your speaking skills. Please pay attention to the way sounds and words are pronounced. Do not memorize them. But, by merely paying attention to the way sounds and words are pronounced, you will be able to incrementally improve your language skills.

**(Refer Slide Time: 00:52)**



Let's get started. So the first word is pronunciation. We say pronoun, pronounced, pronouncing, but not pronunciation. But pronunciation. Repeat it after me, Pr-nun-cia-tion, Pr-nun-cia-tion. The next word is women. It is not wo-men, but vi-men. Repeat it after me, vi-men.

**(Refer Slide Time: 01:48)**

**GET IT RIGHT!**

**COMFORTABLE**

- Comfort-table
- /kam-f-tbl/

**SAYS**

- /sez/
- I say
- You say
- He/she sez

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The next word is comfortable. In this picture, you see a man comfortably sitting on a couch, on a sofa. Repeat it after me, /Kam-f-tbl. The next word is /sez/ and not say-s. It's sez. You may say, I say, you say, but he or she /sez/. It ends with the sound z and not s. Repeat it after me, /sez/, /sez/.

**(Refer Slide Time: 02:41)**

**GET IT RIGHT!**

**JEWELLERY**

- Jewellery
- Joolary
- Jool-uhl-ree

**COMMENT**

- Kament
- Ko-ment

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The next word is Jool-uhl-ree. In this picture, you see a woman wearing a beautiful piece of Jool-uhl-ree and not jewellery. Repeat it after me, Jool-uhl-ree. After watching this video, put your ko-ments in the discussion forum and not kament. What is the next word? Ko-ment and not, Kament. Repeat it after me, Ko-ment, Ko-ment.

**(Refer Slide Time: 03:18)**

**GET IT RIGHT!**

**INTERSTING**

- In-ter-est-ing
- In-tre-sting

**Interesting Facts**

**ALMOND**

- Almond
- Almund
- Aa-muhnd

**Almonds**

The next word is interesting. Some facts are quite in-tre-sting. It is not in-ter-est-ing, but in-tre-sting. Repeat it after me, in-tre-sting. Good. The next word is almonds. It's not almond or almund but, Ah-muhnds. Repeat it after me, ah-mund.

**(Refer Slide Time: 04:05)**

**GET IT RIGHT!**

**HOTEL**

- Ho-tel
- How'-tel
- Stress on the second syllable.

**HOTEL**

**SUITE**

- Suite
- Soot
- Sweet

**Suite**

The next word is how-'tel. It is not a ho-tel, but how-'tel. Repeat it after me, but how-'tel. The next word is suite. It is not soot, but sweet. What is a suite room? Suite room is a room attached to another room. Suite rooms are generally the biggest room that you can get in a hotel. Repeat it after me, sweet, sweet.

**(Refer Slide Time: 04:48)**

**GET IT RIGHT!**

**ET CETRA**

- Ek-cetra – commonly used
- Also remember that the stress is on 'ce'
- /et 'set(a)ra/

**etc...**

**GARBAGE**

- Garbage
- Gar– big
- /ga big/

**Garbage bin illustration with a smiling face and recycling symbol.**

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The next word is et cetra. It is not ek cetra or etcetera, but et cetra. Its /t/ sound there, /et set(a)ra/. Repeat it after me, /et set(a)ra/. The next word is not gar-bage, but /ga-big/. Repeat it after me, /ga-big/, /ga-big/. Okay.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:37)

**GET IT RIGHT!**

**CLOTH/CLOTHES**

- K-lo-th
- K-law-th
- Kloz

**OFTEN**

- Less pronounced – ofTen
- Of-en

**OFTEN** (in a large oval)

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The next word is k-law-th. It is not k-lo-th, it is k-law-th, but k-law-th. Repeat it after me, k-law-th. What's the plural of that word; Kloz, Kloz. The /t/ is silent there, so, you don't say k-lo-thes, but Kloz. It's a /z/ sound there and not /s/. The next word is of-en and not Of-Ten. But, Of-Ten is not a wrong pronunciation, but less pronounced word. Therefore, it's better that you adhere to the pronunciation Of-en.

(Refer Slide Time: 06:29)

The next word is Uh-nion, Uh-nion. It is not onioon, but Uh-nion. Repeat it after me, Uh-nion. The next word is rest-ta-ront or res-tront. Its either rest-ta-ront or res-tront. Repeat it after me, rest-ta-ront, rest-ta-ront or res-tront, res-tront.

**(Refer Slide Time: 07:08)**

The next word is Mah-nk. It is not moonk, its Mah-nk. What is the plural of that? Mah-nks, not Moonks. Repeat it after me, Mah-nk. Okay. The next word is the second month of the year, which is also the month of love, that is feb-yoo-ary. It is not feb-ru-vary, but feb-yoo-ary. Repeat it after me, feb-yoo-ary, feb-yoo-ary. Good.

**(Refer Slide Time: 08:01)**

The next word is deng-ee. It is not dengoo or dengyu, but deng-ee. Repeat it after me, deng-ee. The next word is Pah-lees. It is not Poo-lice, but Pah-lees. The stress is not /l/ there. Lees, Lees, Pah-lees. Repeat it after me, Pah-lees. Good.

**(Refer Slide Time: 08:48)**

You are doing a programme in day-ta science and not daa-ta science. So, how do you pronounce that word? Day-ta. Repeat it after me, day-ta, it is not daa-ta. Day-ta. The next picture shows different kind of vi-e-cls and not ve-hi-cls. Vi-e-kl. Repeat it after me, vi-e-kl, vi-e-kl.

**(Refer Slide Time: 09:29)**

The slide features the title 'GET IT RIGHT!' at the top. On the left, under the heading 'COUPON', there is a red circle containing the word 'COUPON'. To its left, a list includes 'Coupon', 'Cupun', and 'Koop-on'. On the right, under the heading 'PIZZA', there is a picture of a pizza. To its right, a list includes 'Peeze', 'Pizzaa', and 'Peet-'se'.

The next word is Koop-on. How do you pronounce that? Koop-on. Repeat it after me, koop-on.

The next word is pizza. It is not peeze or pizza, but Peet-'se. Repeat it after me, Peet-'se.

**(Refer Slide Time: 10:10)**

The slide features the title 'GET IT RIGHT!' at the top. On the left, under the heading 'BREAKFAST', there is a blue circle containing the word 'Paratha'. To its left, a list includes 'Breakfast', 'Break faast', and 'Brehk fuhst'. On the right, under the heading 'DESSERT', there is a circular image of various desserts. To its right, a list includes 'Dessert', 'Dissert', and 'Di zuht'.

The next word is breakfast. It is not break-fast, but brehk-fuhst. Repeat it after me, brehk-fuhst, brehk-fuhst. The next word is dessert. Do not confuse this word with desert, which is a dry and arid area. The word di-zuht here means, the sweet that you have after your meals. Repeat it after me, di-zuht, di-zuht.

**(Refer Slide Time: 11:06)**

The slide features the IIT Madras logo in the top right corner. The title 'GET IT RIGHT!' is centered at the top. On the left, under the heading 'GENRE', there is a list: 'Jonra', 'Jonre', and 'Jhaun-re'. Below this is a circular illustration of a stack of colorful books labeled 'LITERARY GENRES' with categories like ADVENTURE, Autobiography, SCIENCE FICTION, POETRY, Fantasy, and HISTORICAL FICTION. On the right, under the heading 'VIDEO', there is a list: 'Viidio', 'Veedioo', and 'Vidi o'. Below this is a circular illustration of a blue video camera on a tripod. A woman with glasses and a grey shirt is standing in front of the screen, holding a small object.

The next word is Jhaun-re. It is not jonra; it is Jhaun-re. Poetry is a literary Jhaun-re. The next word is video. It is not viidio; but vi-di-o. Repeat it after me, vi-di-o, vi-di-o.

**(Refer Slide Time: 11:50)**

The slide features the IIT Madras logo in the top right corner. The title 'GET IT RIGHT!' is centered at the top. On the left, under the heading 'BURY', there is a list: 'Bary', 'Bery', 'Barry', 'Be-ree', and '(beree a seed)'. Below this is a circular illustration of a brown bear sitting on a pile of dirt. On the right, under the heading 'DEBRIS', there is a list: 'Debris' and 'Dei-bree'. Below this is a circular illustration of a landscape with debris, trash, and rubble. A woman with glasses and a grey shirt is standing in front of the screen, holding a small object.

The next word is be-ree. It is not bary, but be-ree. You bury a seed, not bary a seed. Repeat it after me, be-ree. Okay. The next word is debris. Dei-bree, dei-bree. Repeat it after me, dei-bree.

**(Refer Slide Time: 12:45)**

**GET IT RIGHT!**

TOMORROW

- Tomorrow
- Tuh-mo-row

**VEGETABLE**

- Vegeetable
- Vegetaable
- Vej-ta-ble

The slide features two circular icons: one with the word 'TOMORROW' and another with various vegetables.

The next word is tomorrow. Tuh-mO-row, Tuh-mO-row. Repeat it after me, Tuh-mO-row, Tuh-mO-row. The next word is vegetables. It is not vegeetable or vegetaable but, vej-ta-ble. Repeat it after me, vej-ta-ble, vej-ta-ble.

**(Refer Slide Time: 13:29)**

**GET IT RIGHT!**

WEDNESDAY

- Wednesday
- Wenezday
- We-nz day

**CUCUMBER**

- Kyoo-kyoom-ber
- Cu-cum-ber
- Kyoo kuhm buh

The slide features two circular icons: one with the words 'HAPPY Wednesday' and another with slices of cucumber.

The next word is we-nz-day. Tommorow is a We-nz-day. Repeat it after me, we-nz-day. It is not Wednesday or Wenezday, but We-nz-day. The next word is kyoo-kuhm-buh. Repeat it after me, kyoo-kuhm-buh. It is not kyoo-kyoom-ber or cu-cum-ber, but kyoo-kuhm-buh, kyoo-kuhm-buh. Good.

**(Refer Slide Time: 14:16)**



The next word is Asma. It is not asthma or as-ma, but asma. The next picture is lettuce. It is a vegetable and how do you pronounce it? Letus. It is not letuse, but letus.

**(Refer Slide Time: 14:53)**



The next word is chocolate. It is not choco-late or choc-late but, chok-let. Repeat it after me, chok-let. The next word is sour. It is not soor sor, but sa-wuh. The /r/ is silent there. So, you say, you pronounce it as sa-wuh.

**(Refer Slide Time: 15:37)**



The next word is ri-seet. It is not re-cei-pt or receipt, but ri-seet. Repeat it after me, ri-seet, ri-seet.

The next word is det. It is not debth or depth but, det. Repeat it after me, det.

**(Refer Slide Time: 16:18)**



The next word is pass-tah. It is not pastha or paastta, but pass-tah. Repeat it after me, pass-tah.

The next picture is sawds. It is not sword, but sawd. Repeat it after me, sawd.

**(Refer Slide Time: 17:04)**

**GET IT RIGHT!**

OCTOBER

- Octuber
- October
- Actuber
- 'Ok-tow-b

MORTGAGE

- Mort-gaje
- Mow-gij

The next word is ok-tow-b. It is not octuber or actuber, but ok-tow-b. The /r/ sound is silent there. The next word is mow-gij. It is not mort-gaje but, mow-gij. Repeat it after me, mow-gij.

**(Refer Slide Time: 17:40)**

**GET IT RIGHT!**

SINGER

- Sin-ger
- Sing-er
- Younger/finger but not singer.

PLUMBER

- Plum-ber
- Plum-er
- B is silent

The next word is sing-er. It is not sin-ger, like how you pronounce in younger or finger, but sing-er. How do you pronounce that? Sing-er. Repeat it after me, sing-er, sing-er. The next word is plum-er. It is not plum-ber, but plum-er. How do you pronounce that? Plum-er. The /b/ sound is silent there. Repeat it after me, plum-er, plum-er.

**(Refer Slide Time: 18:18)**

The slide features the IIT Madras logo in the top right corner. The title 'GET IT RIGHT!' is centered at the top. On the left, under the heading 'CLIMB', there is a list: 'ClimB', 'Klaim', 'ThumB', 'Tham', 'ComB', and 'Kom'. To the right of the list is an illustration of a person climbing a tree. On the right, under the heading 'TOMB', there is a list: 'Tomb', 'Tom', and 'Toom'. To the right of the list is an illustration of the Taj Mahal.

The next word is klaim, it is not climB. Similarly, it is not thumB, but thum. And, kom and not comB. So pronounce these words with me, klaim, tham, kom. Good. The next word is toom. Taj Mahal is a toom of Mumtaz. It is not tom, but toom. Repeat it after me, toom. Good.

**(Refer Slide Time: 19:09)**

The slide features the IIT Madras logo in the top right corner. The title 'GET IT RIGHT!' is centered at the top. On the left, under the heading 'ARCTIC', there is a list: 'Arctic', 'Ark-tuhk', 'Ant ark tuhk', and 'Ant-art-tuhka'. To the right of the list is an illustration of a polar bear in a snowy environment. On the right, under the heading 'MISCHIEVIOUS', there is a list: 'Mis-chii-vious' and 'Mis-chi-vas'. To the right of the list is an illustration of a brown puppy playing with a green ball.

The next word is Ark-tuhk. You say Ark-tuhk and not Ar-tic. Similarly, you pronounce it as Ant-ark-tuhk, Ant-ark-tuhka. Ark-tuhk. Repeat it after me, Ark-tuhk, Ant-ark-tuhk and Ant-ark-tukha. The next word is mis-chi-vas. It is not mis-chii-vious, mis-chi-vas. In this picture, you see a mis-chi-vas puppy and not a mis-chii-vious puppy. Mis-chi-vas. Repeat it after me, Mis-chi-vas. Good.

**(Refer Slide Time: 20:17)**

The slide features two circular illustrations. The left circle, labeled 'BOWL', contains a red bowl. The right circle, labeled 'CHAOS', contains a colorful, abstract illustration of a face and various objects.

**BOWL**

- Bouwl
- Baul
- Cold/old
- Hole

**CHAOS**

- Kaoz
- Kavoz
- Keius

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The next word is baul. It is not bouwl, but baul. It is a and o sound together as au, baul. Similarly, it is not cold, old, hole, but cauld, oauld and haul. Repeat it after me, baul, cauld, oauld. The next word is keius. Repeat it after me, keius. It is not kaoz, but keius. Repeat it after me, keius. Good.

**(Refer Slide Time: 20:54)**

This slide also features two circular illustrations. The left circle, labeled 'FAMOUS', shows a person on a red carpet. The right circle, labeled 'HIGH', shows a person climbing a ladder near a tree, with a vertical scale labeled 'LOW' at the bottom and 'HIGH' at the top.

**FAMOUS**

- Famous
- Faimos
- Fai-mes/in fa mes

**HIGH**

- HIGH
- Hee
- Hai / hait

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The next word is divelep. It is not develop, but divelep. Repeat it after me, divelep. The next word is waid. It is not waYD, but waid. Similarly, the noun form of that is width. You don't pronounce the /d/ sound there; it is silent.

The next word is pic-ture. In this pic-ture, you see a girl painting. It is not pichuer, but pic-ture. The next word is tuerist. How do you pronounce that? Tuerist. Repeat it after me, tuerist. The next word is fai-mes. It is not famos, but fai-mes. Similarly, it is in-fa-mes and not infaimos, but in-fa-mes. Repeat it after me, in-fa-mes. Good.

The last word that we are going to look at in this module is hai. The noun form of that is hait. Repeat it after me, hait. With that, we come to the end of this session. I hope you have had a good time learning, unlearning and relearning a few commonly used words. I will see you with a different topic, on a different day. Until then, stay safe, take care and bye.

## **English-I(Basic English)**

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### **Lecture-13**

#### **Stress in Words**

Welcome to the class. We are going to look at stress in words in English. For this purpose, we are going to look at where the stress is exactly located in a word. In our continuing efforts to look at words in English, for improving the way we speak, improving our pronunciation and therefore making our language impressive, when we speak these elements of language like stress, syllabification, sounds, different places of articulations of sounds, different manners of articulations of sounds; these are important factors which will help us improve our language.

These things build confidence in us, i.e., the improved language, the improved pronunciation, which plays a very vital role when we speak, makes us sound impressive and thus, in turn, it builds confidence. So, in continuation of this effort, we are going to look at syllabification and stress. We have looked at syllabification, but particularly today we are going to look at stress. And remember, all these things are related to words that we need to pay attention to.

**(Refer Slide Time: 02:05)**

**Syllables**

- A **syllable** is a unit of organization for a sequence of speech sounds.
- Syllables have nucleus (most often a vowel) with optional initial and final margins (typically, consonants).
- Words can have several syllables.
  - One syllable words
  - Two two syllable word,
  - Three syllable words,
  - Four syllable words





So, word, as we know, is a unit which is made of sounds. So, sounds come in a different sequence, i.e., consonant and vowel sound, come in a different sequence to make a word which eventually will also have some meaning. So, this is what we mean when we say a word is a distinct meaningful element. A word in language is the meaningful unit when it comes to spoken language, and we are familiar with the examples of smaller words like bees, hair, matter, tall.

We are randomly picking up these words for you to take and see the examples of this. When we look at word very closely, we find that there is something between sounds and words. Basically, what we are saying is, before we reach the level of words, it is not just made up with sounds. Sounds combined together to make a syllable and syllables make a word. So, in between sounds and words, there exists a notion called syllable.

It is also organized with words; it is like a word. Sometimes a whole word is a syllable, but the difference between a word and a syllable is; syllables are parts of words, and unless a word is just a syllable by itself a syllable does not have independent meaning. In other words, if we have a word with two syllables, then each one of them does not have their independent meaning, and also the total meaning of that word is not the combination of the two meaning of the two syllables.

To begin with, there is no meaning attached tested two syllables. So, therefore it is part of a word, and like we have been discussing, every word must have a vowel sound in it. Now it becomes much easier for us to understand that every syllable needs to have a vowel in it and that is the vowel which is called the nucleus of it, of a syllable. So, it is this nucleus which is critical in a syllable.

Now, words can have multiple syllables in it. A word; actually there is no constraint on a total number of syllables in a word. But usually, we do not see words with too many syllables like 7, 8, 9, 10. We do not know words with too many syllables. The minimum number of syllable in a word is one, and there is no limit on the maximum number. However, we do not see words with too many syllables. So, what we see in a word is when we observe a word, we see a lot of words have two syllables, three syllables and four syllables.

This is the range in which we have many, many words in English. So, we will primarily focus on 2, 3, 4 syllable words keeping in mind on both sides. To begin with, words can also be just one syllable. Such a word is called a monosyllabic word, and then there are two syllables, three syllables, four-syllable words where they are in a sequence and, each syllable will have a nucleus vowel in it.

**(Refer Slide Time: 06:31)**

Syllables

- One word may have one or more syllables
- Words with one syllables
  - sun      life,      break,      tongue
- Words with two syllables
  - tiger /tai-gar/      police /po-lis/
  - Between /bit-wiin/      marriage /mae-rij/

So, to a great extent we have also looked at some of the examples of monosyllabic and disyllabic words like sun, life, break, tongue, these are monosyllabic words. These words cannot be split into two syllables. Words like tiger, police, between, marriages; these are two-syllable words. So, when we say tiger, we say tie and gar; this is one syllable, and this is two-syllable. Police is the one-syllable, this is two-syllable between one syllable—two-syllable marriage, one-syllable, two-syllable.

Just a note here, I have tried to give you these words in these slant lines with how they sound that is what is represented in between these two lines is the sequence of sounds so that it is easier to speak, easier to see and read.

**(Refer Slide Time: 02:05)**

## Syllables

- Examples of three syllable words :

energy /e-ner-jii/	capital /kae-pi-tal/
heritage /he-ri-tez/	suffering /saf-far-ing/

- Examples of four syllable words:

Invisible /in-vi-si-ble/	education /e-du-ke-shan/
aquarium /a-kwae-rii-am/	infinity /in-fi-ni-tii/



So, these are words with two syllables. We have words with three syllables. I am repeating the examples because you have seen these things before energy, capital, heritage, suffering. Words with four-syllables like invisible, education, aquarium, infinity. So these are the words with four-syllables.

**(Refer Slide Time: 08:21)**

## Stress Patterns

Stress patterns in words are mostly unpredictable in English. However, some general rules can be applied to many words

- When a noun or adjective stems from a one-syllable word, (for example *break* and *friend*), the stress usually stays on the syllable of the original word.

Example: break – BREAKable, friend – FRIENDly



Now, before we go and take a look at stress patterns in words, let me make a point here and then I will give you this point at the end of the discussion as well. We can pay attention to these things, but we do not need to be too conscious when we speak a language in practice. Syllabification, i.e., how many syllables are possible in a word and which syllable of that word will carry stress in it.

This is very important for English. This is a very important thing to look at in the sense that when we look at these things, our pronunciation improves and our language improves. It is a big deal in the language. It is important for us to know how do we learn these things. We learn these things by paying attention to these details by paying attention to intricate details about how things are in a language. Syllabification and stress patterns are intuitive to speakers who learn to speak English from the very beginning.

For those who want to learn the language at a later stage, i.e., after 10 or 15 years of age in their lives, it does not come intuitively. Therefore, I have mentioned that it is not a matter to worry about a lot. However, when we are looking at these things when we are careful about these things, it dramatically improves our spoken English. It dramatically improves our spoken content, and we sound very good, impressive.

So, every time we look at a word, we need to find out what are the syllables in this. When we hear people speak, we pay attention to them, and slowly we develop this notion, and we can identify syllables so much so, that we can locate stress on the syllable. So, now let us move ahead. As I just now said, it is unpredictable. There is no specific rule underlying this which can tell you why a word contains stress on the first syllable or second syllable or third syllable. That is what it means when we say it is unpredictable.

However, we are going to discuss a few things if you keep them in mind a lot of words can be taken care of by that. For the rest of it, with the help of this much information, if we pay attention to them, we get there. So, let us look at some of these things. So, the important part about syllables is, every syllable will have a vowel sound in it which is called the nucleus of the syllable.

Now, what becomes important about the stress is, when we start locating stress in a word, stress is on one of the syllables. So, the discussion on stress becomes important when we have at least two syllables in a word. So we need to see, and the moment we have two syllables in a word in English, one of them is going to be stressed. So, what is the general meaning of stress, it is a

technical term. Stress is used very differently in the other context when we are not talking about language.

But the simple meaning of stress in a word is one syllable in a word will be pressed upon, will be louder than the rest of them. Okay. So, just remember one word clearly, distinctively louder, slightly louder than the rest of the syllables. So, if there is a word with only two syllables, one will be louder, one will be not louder. If there are three syllables in a word, one will be louder, and two of them will not be louder, i.e., two of them will not be louder.

So, what is important for us to see is again look at it when there are two syllables, one of them must be stressed. It is also important for us to see if there are two or more than two syllables in a word, only one syllable can be stressed. In a word, we usually do not have more than one stressed syllables. There are some words in English which have got secondary stress, but they are not that prominent. Therefore, it is not important to talk too much about secondary stress, i.e., words with two stress.

And even in the cases of secondary stress, secondary stress is very mild. So, the rule of thumb is, in English words if you have more than one syllable, one syllable is definitely stressed and irrespective of the number of syllables in a word that is, in a word which has at least two syllables, only one syllable can be a stressed. These are the two critical factors which are universal in nature about stress and for us to remember, to learn, to pay attention to.

When you look at some patterns which work to a great extent, it is like when you have a word where a stem of the word is a noun or an adjective; you see the stress usually is on the syllable with the original word, i.e. if you have a derived word for example; breakable, friendly. What is important about it? We are deriving this word from break.

By adding able, by adding ly, we are deriving this word from an original noun like a friend. So, in such derived words from nouns and adjectives, we have stress on the original word that is if it is derived from break, the stress is on break, so we say breakable. So, break gets stressed. I have

indicated in your slides, I have indicated the letters in the capital, which indicate that this is the part which is carrying stress in this word.

Friendly, friendly so this word friend is stressed. So that is, to a great extent an observable pattern and we see that this is how it works.

**(Refer Slide Time: 17:03)**

- With most of the **disyllabic nouns and adjectives**, stress is on the **first syllable**.

Examples: Nouns

PRE-sent  
TI-ger  
BREAK-fast

Adjectives

HAND-some  
EA-sy,  
HA-ppi



Now talking about nouns and adjectives, when you see them in two-syllable words, now first we talked about words which were derived from nouns and or adjectives. Now we are looking at nouns and objectives which are not derived ones, the actual nouns, actual adjectives. And if there are two syllables in there, then it works in the same way, in the sense that the first syllable of noun or adjective will be stressed. So, if you are looking at nouns and adjectives and if there are two syllables in them, what you are going to see is the first syllable is going to be stressed.

When you see examples like present, present obviously I am saying it in a way so that you can see the stress on the first syllable. In a normal speech, speakers may not be that obvious about letting you see the stress. Nonetheless, when you pay more and more attention to these things, you get to see this stress. You train your ears for finding this stress, and this kind of training makes us not just impressive but and others understand us clearly.

And when we are trained, then we hear others also very clearly. So, the first one is present, so the first syllable is stressed. The first syllable TAI is stressed in a word tiger. In a word like breakfast, this one is stressed. So, in a word like handsome, the first one is stressed; in a word like easy, so these are adjectives, the first one is stressed. Happy, this one is stressed. So, this is again the general pattern which you can see.

### (Refer Slide Time: 19:41)

- With most **disyllabic verbs**, stress is on the **last syllable**.  
Example: in-CREASe, be-GIN
  
- To differentiate between **a noun and a verb** with the same spelling, **stress position changes**.  
Example: a DEcrease (Noun)      to deCREASE (Verb)  
an OBject (Noun)      to objECT (Verb)
  
- In **compound nouns** (two words merged into one) the stress is on the **first part**.  
Example: BOOKshop, NOTEbook

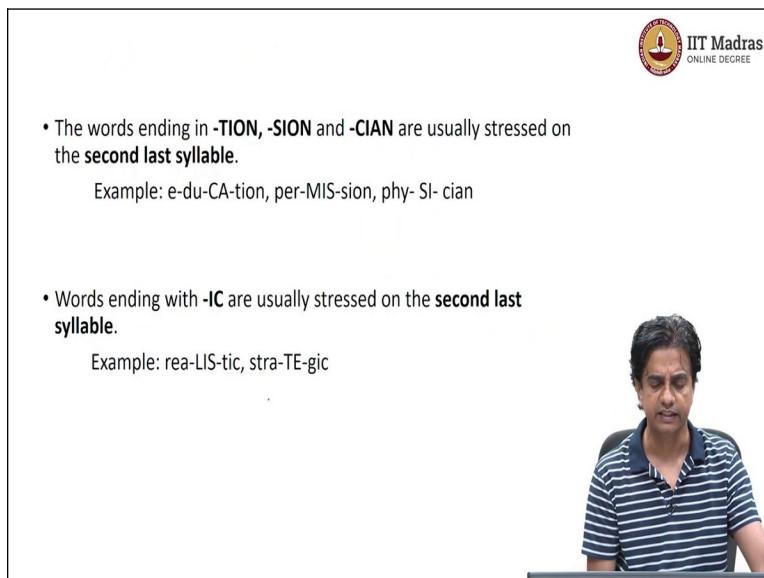


But, what happens in disyllabic words, the second syllable is stressed that is we are calling it last syllable because we are talking about disyllable words. So, in a word with two syllables, the last syllable is the second syllable. So, if we have a word like in this ‘to increase’, so, the second one gets stressed ‘inCREASE’ ‘beGIN’ ‘beGIN’ this one will get stressed. be-GIN, to be-GIN. Now you see; you look at it further, so if you know that lot of words are used as nouns and also as verbs. How do we distinguish when it is a noun anyway when it is a verb?

Stress plays an important role in that. So, with this much of information in a word with two syllables, if it is a noun, first one will get stressed. If it is a verb, the second one will get stressed. When we say a Decrease, you know that the first one is getting stressed.

An Object, you know this is getting stressed. When we use the same thing as a verb like we saw in inCREASE and beGIN. We see to deCREASE, so the second one is getting stressed. To object, this one is getting stressed. Similarly, we see yet another pattern that when we say compound nouns like BOOKshop and NOTEbook again, the first one is stressed. So, in a BOOKshop, the first one is getting stressed. NOTEbook, first one is getting stressed.

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The words ending in **-TION**, **-SION** and **-CIAN** are usually stressed on the **second last syllable**.  
Example: e-du-CA-tion, per-MIS-sion, phy-SI-cian

Words ending with **-IC** are usually stressed on the **second last syllable**.  
Example: rea-LIS-tic, stra-TE-gic

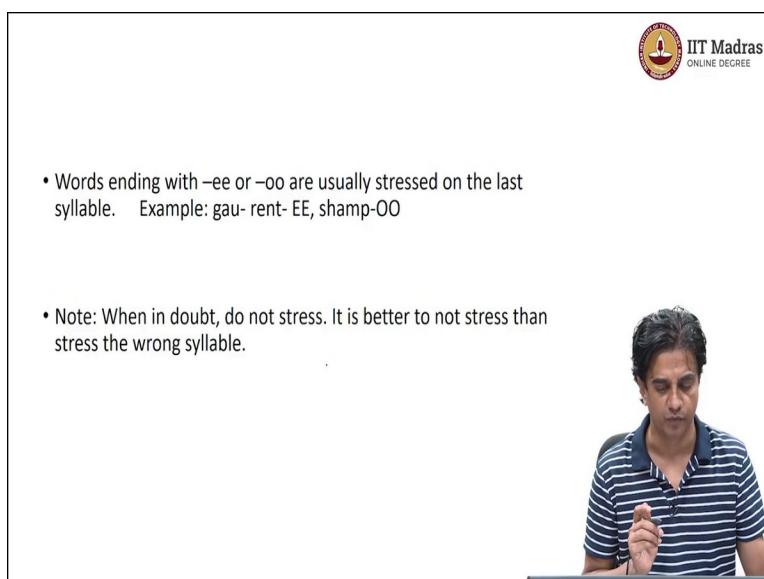
So, this much is the general pattern about nouns and verbs. Derived nouns, derived adjectives and how to differentiate between two things when the same word is used as nouns or verbs. And when we look at compound nouns, rules are pretty much clear that as long as it is a noun, the first one is stressed. If it is a verb, the second syllable is stressed. We see some more pattern when we go to the second level of observing patterns; we see some more patterns.

Such as you know, there are a lot of words in English. I am going to talk about sounds which end with TION like when we spell them in a word; we end the spelling with TION or SION or some words end with CIAN. So, in a word like station, education. In a word like permission, in a word like physician. So, we notice that the stress is on the syllable which is right before these things tion or sion or cian or tion or cian, the stress is on the syllable right before that.

So, in a word like education, this has four syllables e-du-CA-tion, but we see the stress on this one CA. In permission, stress is on this one, and physician stress is on this one. Similarly, if there is a word which is ending in IC, a lot of words end with that in English. Rea-LIS-tic, again the stress is on the second last syllable or the syllable before this marker. Stra-TE-gic, the word end with this, the syllable, this syllable second this second last syllable, so in both these words there are three syllables.

So the second syllable is stressed. But remember, we can say the second syllable gets stressed, what we can say is the second-last syllable gets stressed.

**(Refer Slide Time: 24:58)**



The slide contains two bullet points:

- Words ending with -ee or -oo are usually stressed on the last syllable. Example: gau-rent-EE, shamp-OO
- Note: When in doubt, do not stress. It is better to not stress than stress the wrong syllable.

And we observe these patterns. Okay. When similarly there are things like, when a word ends in ee or oo like gua-rent-EE or shamp-OO, in such cases, the stress is on the last syllable with these sounds not just because of that but also because they are vowel sounds. So, when you were like guarantee, the last syllable gets stressed. Shampoo, the last syllable gets stressed. So, we do find some patterns; we do observe some patterns when we hear people closely.

But, as I mentioned in the beginning, stress is intuitive to speakers. You can develop your intuition about this with practice. But if it is not coming right way, that should not lead us into not speaking. We can learn these things; we can acquire this intuition only when we begin to

speak. So, keep speaking what will happen is initially, you will not get stress. So, I have tried to put it here that when you are in doubt, don't stress any syllable, speak normally. Okay.

Of course, it is going to be a little tough for people to understand. But atleast you will get away from the fear of putting stress in the wrong syllable. Okay. So, for speakers learning to speak English at a later stage normally, we observe that they do not stress any syllable in a word. It is okay. But, learning to observe which one syllable, which of the many that is if there are 2, 3, or 4, which one of these syllables is stressed. That itself can improve our speaking dramatically, and we sound impressive.

So, with this little idea, our effort in noticing syllables that is what we call as syllabification. And then at the second stage, our effort in noticing which one of the syllables are stressed is an important area to pay attention. Thank you so much.

**English-I(Basic English)**  
**Prof. Rajesh Kumar**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
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**Lecture-14**  
**Plurality in English**

Welcome to the class. Today, we will look at plurals in English, i.e., is plural words. Plurality is one specific feature of nouns in English or for that matter in any language. But we are going to look at English nouns to learn English.

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Words (nouns)

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- Nouns are naming words.
- All words denoting/referring to names are nouns.
- They could be:
  - Singular
  - Plural



So, we know that there are lots of other categories of words in any language like nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, prepositions and so on. We are going to look at those descriptions in other classes, but today we will talk specifically about nouns and one specific feature of this noun which is called plurality. So, given this, what we see is nouns can be of two types; i.e. singular nouns and plural nouns. So, this is important; singular nouns and plural nouns.

We also need to know what is a noun. As I said, we will look at these things in details in some other class. But, for the purpose of this class and, for the purpose of definition, if we say a noun is a word which denotes the name of anything in short; nouns are naming words. Names of

anything is a noun. That will cover all other definitions like a person, place, thing, i.e. when somebody says noun is a word which is the name of a person, place or thing.

We can reduce that also to the following that nouns are naming words. So, that is about nouns. So, when we talk about nouns, they can be of two types one is singular and the other plural. To be absolutely clear about that; singular is one. Anything that is denoting one element is called singular; that is the singularity feature of a noun. Plural is more than one. In English and in many other languages, anything that is more than one is considered plural.

**(Refer Slide Time: 03:14)**

Singular and Plural Nouns

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dog</li><li>• Friend</li><li>• Judge</li><li>• Bench</li><li>• Baby</li><li>• Book</li><li>• Cap</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dogs</li><li>Friends</li><li>Judges</li><li>Benches</li><li>Babies</li><li>Books</li><li>Caps</li></ul>
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So, with this information about nouns and the meaning of singular and plural, we need to see what is it; how is it that we see plurals or plurality indicated on English words. How do we learn it? So, when we start observing patterns, we see the following things. Look at some of these nouns, very commonly used nouns like talk, friend, judge, bench, baby, book, cap.

What we see in these nouns is when we make them plurals we see these are the plural words. You can read these words for yourself. Plurals are dogs, dolls, friends, judges, benches, babies, books, caps. This is how these words sound. These are singular forms, and these are plural forms. Singular forms are dog, friend, judge, bench, baby, book, cap. Read it for yourself- dog, friend, judge, bench, baby, book and cap. Plurals are dogs, friends, judges, babies,

books, caps. If we are asked to indicate what marks plurality on these words, we can indicate like this.

(Refer Slide Time: 04:59)

The slide has a header 'Plural Marking sounds' and the IIT Madras logo. It lists words with their plural markers underlined and circled:

- Dogs /z/ - (circled 2)
- Friends /z/ - (circled 2)
- Judges /iz/
- Benches /iz/
- Babies /z/
- Books /s/
- Caps /s/ - (circled 3)

Handwritten notes on the right side of the slide explain irregular plurals:

- teeth ← tooth
- oxen ← ox
- children ← child.
- childs

A photograph of a teacher is visible in the bottom right corner of the slide frame.

We can indicate that in a plural word, we add s or es or ies. So, we see s as you see in many examples, dog, friend, judge and book and cap and in some examples, we are adding es like bench and baby. ies in babies and there are more. For example, a word like knife, there are more words where we see different types of plural markers. But we will stick to our discussion on some simple words.

Among the different types of descriptions, what we want to specifically mention and leave them aside are words like teeth which is the plural of tooth. Words like oxen, which is the plural of ox and children, which is the plural of child. We want to leave these things aside, not because we do not want to discuss them but because these are some reminiscences of old English. You know, languages change time to time, languages develop some patterns, and people acquire those patterns, and this refers to the dynamic nature of language.

Due to some process in the language, certain things do not change, and they remain in the older format. So, these are the examples of certain older formats, and we carry them forward in English, maybe at some time, they will also change. Maybe we will see some people say instead of children, childs. We do not know, but as of now the plural of child is children. So we will

leave them aside. I want you to focus on this pattern where when we see the pattern; we see that we add either S or ES or IES or maybe a few more.

So what is the rule of plural formation in English? How do we learn it? There are a lot of words, a lot of nouns in English. We need to know about that because we are going to be using plurality all the time. To understand this, there is a very simple rule. That rule first makes us pay attention to something else which is, instead of looking at how these words are written in singular and plural, we need to look at how these words are spoken in singular and plural.

Please hear it out one more time. Instead of looking at how these words are written in their singular forms and plural forms, we need to look at how these words are spoken in their singular forms and plural forms. What will be the difference if we change this pattern, i.e., if we look at how words are spoken, what will be the difference? The difference is we are going to be paying attention to the sounds.

And in particular, the last sounds of these words. What is the last sound in these words? If you look at singular, go back and look at singular words. What was the last sound in these words in their singular form? In a word like dog, the last sound is g. In a word like friend, the last sound is d. In a word like judge, the last sound is j. In a word like bench, the last sound is ch. In a word like baby, the last sound is e; it is a vowel sound. In a word like book, the last sound is k, and in a word like cap, the last sound is p. In a word like cat, the last sound is t. So, take any word and look at the last sound.

So, what we add as the plural marker is also important to look at it. So, how does the plural marker sound in these words? Now read the plural markers. How does it sound? When we say dogs, it sounds as z. Dogs, friends, judges. So look at it. It looks like; we are adding s.

But when you are looking at this, we are adding z; we are adding z. But when we come here, we need to add z, because this preceding sound is also a consonant and thus such a sequence will make it very difficult to speak, we add a short vowel here which makes it sound like iz, judges this is why you see it here iz. Bench-benches because z and iz these are alveolar or sounds from

palatal region depending on who speaks. These things we are just inserting another vowel; otherwise, it is z.

In a word like babies, remember the last sound of baby? The singular form was e. Anyway, what we are doing here is, we are adding only z, and it becomes babies. And in a word like books, we are adding s and in a word like caps, we are adding s again. So, when we look at this, we see there are two distinct patterns. In some words, we are adding s, in some words we are adding z. This pattern emerges when you look at how these words are spoken.

So, in the process of learning, we can also say instead of saying in some place add s, in some place add es, in some place add ies, we can simply say, speak the word and then add either s or z to it because there are only two plural marking sounds in English. You only need to know where we need to add s and where we need to add z. This is the most critical part of learning plurality in English. Once we figure this out, we are done with plurality. It is a very simple rule and helps us capture most of the words in plurality and understanding plurality in English.

And in return, it also helps us improve our pronunciation; it also helps us improve how we speak. So, we do not want to say it sounds like dogs. We do not want to say word dogs as dogs, friends; we want to say the way it is spoken like dogz. I also want to remind you to do this exercise for yourself. Take any 15 to 20 words for yourself. Take your note again, the same pattern of exercise. Take a notebook, close your eyes, think about some nouns or if you are not finding them look around yourself whatever you see chairs, computers, TV, plates, clocks anything that you see just write down the name because you know nouns are naming words. You see door; you see window. Anything that you see, just try to write down the plural form. Observe the plural markers, what they are, and to learn that, here is the rule that we are going to talk about.

The rules are very simple. Now, before we look at the rules, look at these two sounds s and z. If you apply your learning of places of articulations of these sounds, you will see that s and z; both are fricative sounds. The only difference is this is not voiced, and this is voiced. Remember, when we speak a voice sound, we see some vibration on this one in our vocal cords. So, when

you say s, put it here, try it for yourself and see when you say s, you would not feel any additional vibration here.

But when you say z, you will feel some vibration coming from here. So, this vibration from the vocal cord while saying the sound z, which is technically known as voicing makes the difference between s and z. So, in one way, we can say it is the same sound with the difference of voicing. In one situation, it is not voiced, in one situation it is voiced. But let us take them as two different sounds s and z. Now we only need to know where we use s and where we use z. The rule is pretty simple.

**(Refer Slide Time: 16:26)**

## Understanding Plurals in English



- In words ending in sounds /p/, /t/, and /k/, the plural markers sound as /s/.
- Every where else the plural marker in English is /z/.
- There does not seem to be much of a difference between /z/ and /iz/.



The rule is very simple in English if the word ends with three sounds, p, t, k, any noun in English which ends with these three sounds, i.e. if the last sound of a word is either p, t or k, use s sound. Everywhere else the plural marker is s. Look how simple it is, if a word does not end with p, t, k, safely you can add plural markers z. Look at a word like clock, this word ends with k. Very simple; plural is clocks.

Take any other word window. What is the last sound of this word? o, it is a vowel sound, and more importantly, it is not one of these that is p, t, k. Very safely, you can say the plural marking sound at the end of this word is z. Keep in mind that we are not talking about how we spell it, in

our spelling we may add s, but, when we say the word plural word of window, it sounds as windowz and that is z sound. This is what we are talking about.

So the last sound was o, a vowel sound, which means not one of these three. So, safely the plural marker is z. If a word has one of these sounds, the plural marker is s. That's all is the rules of plurality in English. As we know, there is not much of a difference between these two. A vowel sound comes here just to break the continuity of two consonant sounds. In a word like judges or benches or some other words also wherever it comes in, i.e., wherever there is not a vowel sound already at the end of the word.

So, if you go back and look at the words, it makes sense. The last sound of this word book is k, so the plural marker is s. Last sound of the word cap is p, so the plural marker is s. So, last sound of this word cat is t. So the plural marker in a word like cat could be s, or in a word like window, the plural marker could be z. It is windows. Take any word computer, bottle, irrespective of how we write the word, we add s in computer, but it sounds computers, bottles.

Take any word that comes to your mind, rose, so the last sound is z. So, here we will need to add a vowel in it, to make it sound like roses—the same thing which we were adding in judges or benches. So, plural marking is a pretty simple phenomenon in English nouns. The only thing we need to look at is, how we speak these things, how these words sound. And then additionally, we need to learn how they are written. That is pretty simple.

So, to do this exercise, I sincerely request you, I urge you to first look at 15 to 20 words that come to your mind without looking at anything. Then take a set of nouns, take a set of 20 words and identify nouns in those 20 words and repeat the same exercise. Say these words to yourself in the singular form first. Identify the last sound in the plural form, last sound in the singular form.

Then, decide what will be added to these words. In other words, when you add plural markers in words when you have identified the last sounds of the singular words, be very sure and comfortable that if the word does not end with p, t and k, only these three sounds, then

everywhere else you can use z, with these sounds you can add s. What is common in these sounds is not very important for the purpose of speaking English. But, when you know about a sound, about sounds and commonalities between these sounds, you will feel better, happier.

What is common is all these things are, all these sounds p, t and k, they are coming from three different places of articulations like p is a bilabial sound, t is an alveolar sound and k is a velar sound. Nonetheless, all three of them are stop sounds. So, we will see the importance of these sounds being stop sounds in English and how they help us observe more patterns later. But at this point, they help us conclude this discussion on plurality in English very safely and very confidently.

So, do this exercise for yourself, add them confidently and try to improve your speech confidently by looking at these patterns. So, you clearly know what accurately the plural markers are and how accurately those nouns are pronounced when we speak English. With that, we stop here. Thank you. See you soon.

**Lecture-15**  
**Aspiration in English Words**

Welcome to the class. Today, we are going to look at some aspirated sounds at the initial position of a word in English. Now, you know about words; you know a little bit about aspirated sounds as well. Remember the distinction between k and kh. K is a velar sound, but it is unaspirated, i.e., there is not much additional flow of air with it. But when we say kh, then we see an additional flow of air with the sound. To check this thing, what you can do is put your palm in front of your mouth, just say the sound k. You almost do not feel any flow of air in your palm. But when you say kh, you see, you feel the additional flow of air on your palm.

So, this additional flow of air with the sound is known as aspiration. In English, when we pronounce some words, in the process, some of the sounds get aspirated. That is, when we want to say k, a, r, you remember what will be the word with these three sounds k, a r, it is car.

In English, it sounds as kh a r, kh a r. When we want to say pen, pen, it sound says pen. What causes this aspiration in the initial position of a word is what we are going to discuss today. Therefore, I have called it aspiration in English words, and we will try to look at this once again. I would like to underline the point that when you pay attention to this feature of English sounds, you know that sounds come in a particular order to make words.

So, when we speak a word and we pay attention to these arrangements, to this specific feature of how certain sounds become aspirated at the initial position of the word. First, we pay attention to them; second, we try to understand, third, we try to find out if there is an underlying pattern in it. Once we understand the pattern, we are going to see that the basic meaning of the pattern is such that it is going to apply across the board. So, once we understand the underlying pattern, it becomes so easy for us to hear others, and we apply it when we speak.

It becomes very easy, straightforward, and that makes us confident, and at the end of it, we sound impressive. And such intuitions, trying to find pattern underlying native speakers intuition is what is going to make us sound better in the process of learning of speaking English. Therefore, I want your attention at this point, and I am confident that it will make you confident.

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The slide contains the following text and IPA breakdowns:

- Pen /pɛn/      IPA: p -asp -voice      pʰ +asp +voice
- Pin /pɪn/      IPA: p -asp -voice      pʰ +asp +voiced
- Pan /pæn/      IPA: p -asp -voice      pʰ +asp +voiced
- Car /kɑːr/
- Can /kæn/
- King /kɪŋ/

So, the words that I want your attention at, are words like these that is a word like pen, pin, pan, car, can, king. You see, in each word they are all monosyllabic word. Now we understand syllables. It is possible that a word in English may have than one syllable and the bigger the word, the number of syllables are too many. So, we start with words which have got one syllable, i.e., the word itself as a syllable, we understand it first. Then we will try to see the application of this in English words.

So what is the word here and sounds in this word are also p, a and n, so there are three sounds, two of them are consonants beginning in the initial position, at the end position. In the middle of it, there is a vowel sound. So, what we see is such a sound, such a word, and p in this word becomes aspirated when speakers of English speak this word, it becomes pen. It sounds as pen; intuitively it comes as pan. What that what is happening first, you will be able to see that only when you have looked at the distinction between p and ph; p is a bi-labial sound, but it is not aspirated.

Whereas ph, is a stop sound, but it is aspirated; i.e., it has an additional flow of air. So, this aspiration appears here on this word, so it sounds as pen. So, the first point that I want to underline is our effort in understanding the place of articulation of the sound or the sound or certain additional features of this sounds like whether they are aspirated or not, whether they are voiced or not. Both of these are non-voiced sounds.

And similarly, when we see a sound like b, we know that this is not as aspirated, but this is voiced. Remember, voicing means additional vibration in the vocal chord. Voicing means again when you put your palm here and around your neck and you say the sound b; b. Say it a couple of times to observe this distinction for yourself. You see additional vibration on your palm as opposed to the situation when you say bh or ph. So that makes it a voiced sound.

These things yield to a great deal in our understanding of the underlying patterns, and thus they play a great role in us improving to speak English. So, now we know that this is not a voiced sound, but this is an aspirated sound. So what happens actually in certain situations in English, some sounds at the initial position of the word gets aspirated. So, when we see the first sound getting aspirated, the first thing we notice in each one of these three words p is at the initial position of a word, i.e., at the beginning of a word. So, the first thing that we conclude is, a sound like p is becoming aspirated at the initial position of a word. Then we notice it is not just p; there are more, so, pen pin, pan good. Then we see it is not just p; there are more sounds which are getting aspirated. So, now try to find sounds in this word.

What is the sound? k aa r and so we see that this sound is also getting aspirated. It is becoming kh,kh. So we know that in each one of these words k is at the initial position of the word. So, we see along with p, k is also getting aspirated and then when we move further, we see some sounds with t getting aspirated like tin, table. Okay. So we see these sounds getting aspirated. So, we see that sounds like p, t, and k are getting aspirated at the initial position of the word. So, these are the different stages of us noticing it. First, we notice the initial position and then we notice that there is a similarity between p, t and k. So, we can easily formulate a rule which is known as an underlying pattern, and then we see this applying across the board. Thus, when we pay attention to that, we see our speaking getting improved. Let us look at some more examples.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:05)

Aspirated or non-aspirated ?

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Pi	Spy
Pan	Span
Pin	Spin
Pot	Spot
Top	Stop
Cot	Scot
Cat	Cube
Tame	Happy
Kite	Lucky



So, what we see that these sounds get aspirated only at the initial position. They do not get aspirated elsewhere, i.e., when they are not at the initial position, for example, look at this; look at the following examples to see the pattern. A word like Pi, it sounds as pi, pan, pin, pot, top, cot, cat, tame, kite. Each one of these words has either p, t or k in the initial position of these words, and they are all getting aspirated.

But, the same sounds when they are not in the initial position of the word, are not aspirated, i.e., when we say spy, it is unaspirated p. Span, when we say this word, pan, it sounds as phan. But, when we say this word, it is span, span. Right here, I want you to understand this word is different from English word like fan. So aspiration in pan (phan) is different from f in fan. This is a labial dental sound, and this one is an aspirated bilabial sound. Okay.

So these distinctions are also quite observable when we pay attention to these words. So, let us get back to the point. p sound in the word span is not aspirated. Likewise, spin, p is not aspirated. Spot, p is not aspirated. Stop, t is not aspirated. Scot, k is not aspirated. Happy, p is not aspirated. Lucky, k is not aspirated. So, what do we observe? We simply observe that p, t, and k as stop sounds, get aspirated only at the initial position of a word. That is our simple rule.

If we understand this much, then we understand a big thing which plays such a crucial role and makes such a big distinction in our speaking. We understand this with clarity. However, when we start looking at this, and we try to see a few more things, it becomes even clearer.

(Refer Slide Time: 14:32)

[p], [t], [k] .... Voiceless stop sounds

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- [p] [p<sup>h</sup>]
- [t] [t<sup>h</sup>]
- [k] [k<sup>h</sup>]

So, this picture gives you the summary of it that p, t, k which are voiceless stop sounds, they become aspirated. So, this is not aspirated; this is aspirated. So, I was talking about what kind of difference does it make. What other things that we see. Keep in mind. Now we know about a certain feature, we know certain features of sounds, i.e., we know about places of articulations and manners of articulations.

We see how our paying attention to these things are helping us understand these. Recently, we have learnt about syllables; we have also learnt about stress. I want to bring our understanding of these two things into this for you to apply them to your understanding. At this point, I want you to do certain exercises, very small one. Again, try to find words where you have p, t, k either in the beginning position or anywhere else in the word and try to practise applying this pattern.

A, it will improve your vocabulary, it will also improve your speaking. Primarily it improves your speaking, i.e., the way you speak, and in turn, it also helps you build your vocabulary. Now, to find these words, when you pay attention to certain things, then you see that syllables and

stress and our understanding of these two are also going to be critical for this and I want you to find out the role that these two things play in this. I will give you a hint here.

That hint is very simple, which is, look at these words. All these words are words which has got only one syllable. So, when we see words with two syllables, we see that p, t, k are not only getting aspirated at the initial position of a word. Rather they are getting aspirated at the initial position of a syllable. So, if we have a word with two syllables and in the second syllable, if we have p, t and k, in the beginning, that also gets aspirated.

But, if that syllable is stressed, then they do not get aspirated. So, this is called constraint on this. So, we understand this thing by combining them together. We see very obviously that p, t, k as voiceless stop sounds in English, get aspirated at the initial position of the word. No problem with that. We also see that they are getting aspirated at the initial position of a syllable. It becomes important only when we find words where they appear at the initial position of a second syllable in the word, and that also gets aspirated.

I want you to find these examples for you. If those syllables are stressed, then they are not getting aspirated. So, how does this pattern help us and in what ways this kind of constraint is helping us? It is important to pay attention to these constraints also. Otherwise, if we just know that these sounds get aspirated, and we do not look at the constraints, we will end up aspirating these sounds everywhere in the process of learning, and then we will sound awkward. We will not sound appropriate.

So, for achieving appropriateness in our pronunciation, these constraints are important, and I will take you to these examples as well. First, I want you to look at your exercise when you look at your own words.

**(Refer Slide Time: 19:46)**

## Understanding Plurals in English

- In words ending in sounds /p/, /t/, and /k/, the plural markers sound as /s/.
- Everywhere else the plural marker in English is /z/.
- There does not seem to be much of a difference between /z/ and /iz/.



The last point for today that I want to add to your understanding is, we have looked at plural formation in English. At that time as well, I talked about the role of p, t, k, i.e., when a word ends with p, t or k, we see that at the end of this word, a plural marker sound s and everywhere else it is z. So, what we are saying is, z is a voiced sound and unvoiced sound. So, this voiced sound is becoming devoiced when it comes next to an unvoiced sound.

In this process, as well the role of aspiration and the role of the manner of articulation, the role of place of articulation is important to understand aspiration. This process makes our understanding of underlying patterns clearer and helps us confident when we speak. We see this p, t, k in the plural markers. In words ending in sounds p, t and k, we get s. Everywhere else, it is z.

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## Plural rule

- The rule is:

- /Z/ becomes /S/ in the environment of /p/, /t/, /k/
- Everywhere else it remains /z/.
- The reason for this is the following: /p/, /t/, and /k/ are voiceless sounds, where /z/ is a voiced sound. In the environment of a voiceless sound, a voiced plural marker becomes voiceless. The default agreement is a voiced sound.



So, this becomes an important rule for us, and we get to understand these rules with these features with clarity. Please work on your exercises, and I will come back with more, to help you make your speaking impressive. Thank you.

**English-I (Basic English)**  
**Prof. Rajesh Kumar**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology – Chennai**

**Lecture-16**  
**Aspiration at the Syllable Initial position in English Words**

Welcome to the class. Today, we are going to look at aspirated sounds in words. You know, some sounds get aspirated in English at the initial position of a word.

**(Refer Slide Time: 00:37)**

[p], [t], [k] .... Voiceless stop sounds  
- voice

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [p]</li> <li>• [t]</li> <li>• [k]</li> </ul> <div style="margin-top: 10px; border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> <span style="color: red;">[-voice]</span> <span style="color: red;">[-asp]</span> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[p<sup>h</sup>]</li> <li>[t<sup>h</sup>]</li> <li>[k<sup>h</sup>]</li> </ul> <div style="margin-top: 10px; border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> <span style="color: red;">[-voice]</span> <span style="color: red;">[+asp.]</span> </div>	<span style="color: red;">bilabial</span> <span style="color: red;">alveolar</span> <span style="color: red;">Velar</span>
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Those sounds are p, t, k. These are voiceless stop sounds in English. They come from three different places of articulations; one is bilabial, the other is alveolar, and this one is a velar sound. So, each one of these sounds is from different places of articulations. Like, p is a bilabial sound, t is an alveolar sound and k is a velar sound. But they are all voiceless stops. There is no voicing in each one of them.

So, this is no voiced and no aspiration, and this is no voice but, plus aspiration. So, the point is some sounds like p, t, k in English words become aspirated like ph, th, kh at the initial position of the word. We have done this exercise; we have talked about these things. But, today we are

going to look at our discussions one more time and go slightly deeper into understanding how aspiration works.

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Elements of word

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- Aspiration – Additional flow of air (puff) on sounds
- Syllable – A unit of sound/sounds in a word
- Stress – A feature on vowel sounds in a syllable



As you know, all these things are discussions about words. We are still discussing words, and one of the important things about words is when we know how to pronounce the word properly, it is going to make our speech impressive, and in return, it is going to make us confident. So what we are going to do? What we are doing in this process is, we are looking at certain features that come into play when we speak a word.

Today, we are looking at one specific thing in slightly more details. So, for understanding particularly this aspect of word in English, we need to keep three things in mind. One is aspiration, i.e., as you saw, aspiration is one specific feature of sounds. This is about the manner of articulation because this is what we know as places of articulation and then, what these features are according to their manners of articulations.

So, what we know is, in a certain condition, i.e., at the initial position in a word, this p becomes ph. So, aspiration simply means that in the production of the sound, there is little extra flow of air as air puff. When we pronounce that, you can put your palm in front of your mouth and say

the words. Say the sounds like ph, th, kh. And you can put a paper in front of you, and when you say ph, you will see paper moving away from you. So this is one aspect of the word.

The second thing is syllable, and the third thing is stress. We have talked about each one of these things separately. Now we are looking at how our understanding of these things is going to make our pronunciation impressive. So look at it.

Moving ahead, what do we know about syllable? A word is made of sounds, so it is a syllable. A syllable is a unit of a word, and it is made of sounds. So, a syllable could be one single sound also, and it could be a group of sounds, but eventually, it is a unit of a word. What is a unit in a word? It is made of sounds. And stress is a feature on a vowel sound in a syllable or a word. So, when we try to understand stress in English words, two very critical things that we need to know are, one, if there are two syllables in a word, one of the two will definitely be stressed syllable, i.e., anytime you have more than one syllable in a word, one of the syllables is going to be stressed and only one syllable will be stressed.

This is a rule of thumb in English words. In a monosyllabic word, when the word itself is just one syllable, and it is not possible to divide it further, then, if non- aspirated sounds are there in the initial position of the word, then they become aspirated.

Stress is a feature on a vowel sound in a syllable or a word. So, we need to understand these three things with clarity and look at the interplay of these things in a combined way. So, let us look at the words now.

**(Refer Slide Time: 07:43)**

Some English Words

• Pen      /pʰeŋ/      CVC  
 • Pin      /pʰɪn/      CVC  
 • Pan      /pʰæn/      CVC  
 • Park     /pʰɑːk/      CVC

(E<sup>aspirated</sup><sub>Voice</sub>) → [t<sup>aspirated</sup>] / -

• Tan      /tʰæn/      CVC  
 • Truck    /trʌk/      CVC  
 • Trick    /trɪk/      CVC  
 • Team     /t̬eəm/      CVC

• Car      /kʰɑːr/      CVC  
 • Can      /kʰæn/      CVC  
 • King     /kʰɪŋ/      CVC  
 • Crush    /kʰrʌʃ/      CVC

We have discussed this earlier also. So, what we mean is, a voiceless stop, a voiceless, i.e., a voiced stop sound, will become voiceless, an un-aspirated stop will become aspirated. This is what we are talking about when they become aspirated at the initial position of a word. This is the rule. So, this is the initial rule. So, when we see a word like pen, pin, pan, park. In each one of these words, we have an unaspirated voiceless stop at the initial position of a word.

And this sound at the initial position of a word is going to be aspirated. So, each one of these words is going to carry this sound in it. So, it will sound like pen, pin, pan, park. In these words again because t sound is at the initial position of a word, so, it is going to be aspirated, and this word is going to sound tan, truck, trick, team. This is what is the aspiration. This is what happens to these sounds at the initial position it.

Sounds like k at the initial position, will also become aspirated and it is going to sound like car, can, king, crash. So, this is what happens to these words; keep in mind these are monosyllabic words. These words cannot be divided into two syllables. So, when we look at more words; so in these words, we see these are monosyllabic words and a syllable or a word is possible only when there is a vowel sound in it.

So, we see there is a vowel sound everywhere in this. So, now pay attention to these words, truck and trick. Pay attention to crush. What is the difference between these three words and the rest of

the words? In the rest of the words, right after these unaspirated stop, you have a vowel sound. So, this is C V C whereas these two are C C V C, meaning there is a cluster. Here again, we see C C V C, so when we see there is a cluster, and still, we see the first sound getting aspirated because the second sound in a cluster is a raw sound. Usually, this is a voiced sound. But, in the environment of a voiceless stop, this also remains a voiceless sound. It becomes a voiceless sound. So, just like a vowel sound and therefore, it allows aspiration at the initial position.

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•Cry	/k <sup>h</sup> raai/ r is voiceless l is voiceless	<u>CCVV</u>	 
•Try	t <sup>h</sup>		
•Plot	p <sup>h</sup>		
•Clock	k <sup>h</sup>		
•Crime	k <sup>h</sup>		
•Tie	t <sup>h</sup>		
•Town	t <sup>h</sup>		
•Tank	t <sup>h</sup>		

These words are going to show you that in a word like cry, how this word sounds. This word has k<sup>h</sup> raai. It is basically a C C V V, so this first sound k<sup>h</sup> is getting aspirated in the presence of r which eventually becomes voiceless in this environment, and therefore this gets aspirated. In this word like try, this sound is aspirated. In the word plot, this sound is aspirated.

Remember this one, r and l; both is voiceless. So, you see r in the word like cry and try. But in a word like plot, you see l sound. Clock, you see l sound. Again in a word like crime, you see r sound. So, p sound in plot also gets aspirated, k sound in clock also gets aspirated. Tie, it is a normal word, so this is aspirated. In monosyllabic words like town and tank, initial sounds are getting aspirated. That is a simple point.

If we want to summarize this, we need to pay attention to when we hear others. When we want to practice this, we need to keep in mind that these voiceless stops like p, t, k are becoming aspirated in English at the word-initial position. That is what is important to look at. So, pay attention to more words and make a list of 20 words. Take a pen, and a paper, make a list of 20 words, go through your memory, go through your vocabulary, or you can quickly look at words which begin with p, t or k sounds in a dictionary.

Then make a list of 10 each from these three sounds, you will have a series of 30 words and then see if those words are monosyllabic. If they are not, then find monosyllabic words and for practice make them sound like aspirated sounds. This will be a nice practice to do at this stage. This is one point to understand and in the process of our learning of pronunciation, our understanding of sounds in words and our effort in trying to find out underlying patterns, to see underlying rules with clarity so that we can apply these things when we speak English. This is going to yield a much better result, and you will see the impact of this in the back of your mind soon when you start speaking freely.

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Rules:

- Voiceless stops [ /p/, /t/, and /k/] are aspirated at the beginning of a word.
- [ /p/, /t/, and /k/] are aspirated at the beginning of a stressed syllable.
- Voiceless stops remain unaspirated at the beginning of an unstressed syllable. They're also unaspirated in any other position, like at the end of a syllable or the end of a word.
- Even if a syllable is stressed, a voiceless stop is unaspirated if it follows [s].
- Voiced stops are never aspirated. They're always unaspirated.



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So far, we can see that there are several parts of this rule. I will come back to that, and this is what I meant when we are going to look at it in details. The rule is voiceless stops such as p, t and k are aspirated at the beginning of a word. We have looked at this part. We have looked at these things earlier also, and last time we stopped right here. Now, we need to move a step

forward to understand these things in more detail so that we understand better nuances, and we understand this issue in a nuanced fashion to improve our speaking further.

P, t and k are aspirated at the beginning of the stressed syllable. So, the main idea is, if there is a monosyllabic word and there is a vowel sound right after these sounds in a word like pin, pan, tank then these vowel sounds are stressed anyway. They are allowed to be aspirated. But, what happens in words which have more than one syllable becomes very interesting to pay attention. So, let us observe some patterns to learn more about this issue.

Point one is very clear to us. We are going to look at 2. And then we will look at the issues where aspiration is ruled out. So, we are going to look at how p, t and k are also aspirated when they are not at the initial position of the word, but they are at the initial position of a syllable which is getting stressed in a word in English.

Our understanding of stress patterns in English is going to play an important role in our understanding of this aspiration so that we can revise our understanding of this aspiration and of course we can say voiceless stops get aspirated in the initial position of a word in English. In other words, p,t,k, are going to sound like ph, th, and kh at the initial position of a word in monosyllabic words or even in words with two syllables if these sounds come at the beginning of a word, they are going to get aspirated. If they are coming at the initial position of the first syllable of the word, they are going to get aspirated. That is for sure.

But in some cases, they get aspirated even when they are not at the initial position in the word. Rather they are elsewhere. But the rule is, if that syllable happens to be in a stressed syllable in English, then, stressed syllable would allow aspiration of these sounds as part of the second or third syllable as well. So, we are going to pay attention to those rules and, we will come back to this rule again.

But, we need to keep in mind that such stops like p, t, k they remain unaspirated at the beginning of an unstressed syllable. So, if you find these sounds at the syllable initial position in a word i.e., inside the word and the syllable initial position of a second or third syllable but if those

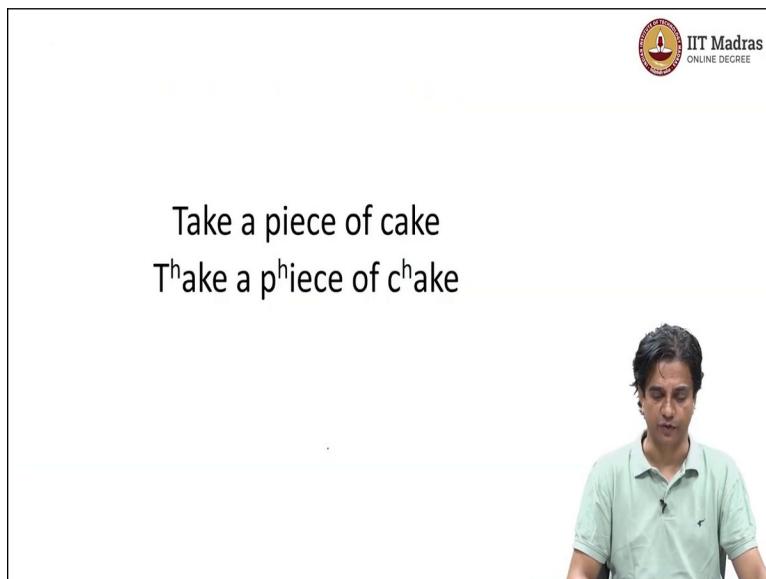
syllables are not as stressed, then the sounds remain unaspirated. Therefore one more time, I will stress this point that our understanding for clarity in syllabification and understanding which syllable out of multiples is the stress in the word is going to play a very crucial role in our speech, in how we sound.

So, what we need to know is all these rules apply only to unaspirated voiceless stops. Voiced stops? None of these rules applies. So, we do want to say this thing here, but it follows from the rule anyway that voiced stops are never aspirated. So, they always remain unaspirated in English, and these rules do not even apply to them. So we are just overstating this rule. So as you can see, this is an overstatement over a specification.

But the important point for us to look at is 1 and 2 and with a caveat of this number 3. So, having described this rule to you, I appeal to you not to memorize these rules. I want you to understand these rules by looking at the application of these things in the examples. And those examples will definitely make things clearer so that you can say these rules at any point by yourself. All you need to know is what aspiration is? What is a syllable? And what do you mean by stress?

So, as you know, stress is emphasis making a particular syllable stronger with a little bit more force when we speak. When we look at syllables, we are going to see that.

**(Refer Slide Time: 22:58)**



The image shows a video frame. In the top right corner, there is a logo for "IIT Madras ONLINE DEGREE" featuring a circular emblem with a lamp and text. The main part of the frame shows a man with dark hair, wearing a light green polo shirt, speaking. On the left side of the frame, there is text: "Take a piece of cake" and "Thake a p<sup>h</sup>iece of ch<sup>h</sup>ake".

Before we go there, here is an interesting sentence. How do we read the sentence: Take a piece of cake. This is an imperative sentence; we will be looking at sentences little later. But there are three words in this sentence: take, piece and cake. In each one of these words, there is p, t and k at the initial position, and they are all aspirated. Just wanted to bring this sentence to you to see all three sounds are aspirated in one sentence.

(Refer Slide Time: 23:55)

Aspiration in stressed syllable

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• Potato	/p <sup>h</sup> o T <sup>h</sup> AE to/	(3)
• Hotel	/ho T <sup>h</sup> EL/	(2)
• Nepal	/ne P <sup>h</sup> AL/	(2)
• Intense	/in T <sup>h</sup> ENS/	(2)
• Intension	/in T <sup>h</sup> EN shan/	(3)
• deeper	/DIIP er/	(2)
• Institute	/IN stii tute/	(3)



Now let us look at words with more syllables, and here we are going to look at aspiration in stressed syllables. So, when we look at a word like potato. Now, keep in mind, I have tried to indicate stress on the syllable by using uppercase symbols; what we also know is capital letters. So, this word has three syllables, and I am indicating the number of syllables here in this margin. This word has three syllables; the first syllable has a sound p, it is at the word-initial position, so that is going to be aspirated if following the first rule.

Voiceless stops are aspirated at the beginning of the word. The second syllable is a stressed one, but it has t sound at the beginning of it. So it is going to be aspirated too. So, how does work in the word potato? So, this sound is also getting aspirated because it is at the initial position of a stressed syllable.

Look at the second word, hotel. The second syllable in this word is stressed, and it happens to be that t is at the initial position of this stressed syllable. So, this is going to be aspirated. I am indicating aspiration with this symbol h, and I am indicating stress with capital letters, uppercase symbols. So keeping this in mind, look at these words. I want you to look at one specific thing here while talking about stress; we talked about a rule that most nouns are as nouns and adjectives are aspirated, are stressed, that is nouns and adjectives carry stress on their first syllable.

If there are two syllables in a word, and if the word happens to be either a noun or they fall in the category of adjectives, the first syllable will get stressed. That is the generic observation which we state as a rule as you can also understand that I have mentioned that this syllabification and stress on a syllable is quite innate and intuitive to speakers of English. So, we get these things about syllabification, how many syllables in a word, where the syllable boundaries are and which one of the syllables is stressed if we start learning English from very early in our age.

But if we are learning this language later, then it becomes a very tough thing to notice. We can still learn the language, we can still learn to speak much better, we can always improve, but it becomes difficult. Therefore, if we look at these patterns and we understand why these things happen, then probably it will be much easier to practice and improve these things for us to sound better. Moving ahead, so this noun hotel is an exception of that rule. This is a noun, but it has two syllables, the second syllable is getting stressed here, not the first one.

So this is a small counter example to the previous rule, but nonetheless, this is how it is spoken. So, we say /ho T<sup>h</sup> EL/, /ho T<sup>h</sup> EL/ because the second syllable is stressed. This word, it is the name of a country, Nepal. Many English speakers when they speak this word because it has two syllables, and the second syllable is stressed, and at the beginning of this stressed syllable, there is a p sound. So, they make it aspirated as /ne P<sup>h</sup> AL/, /ne P<sup>h</sup> AL/..

Now this word intense, the second syllable is getting stressed and in the initial position you have t, so that is getting aspirated. /in T<sup>h</sup>ENS/, /in T<sup>h</sup>ENS/. In the next word intension, you have a word with three syllables. This syllable is stressed, and a voiceless stop is at the initial position of the syllable. Therefore it is getting aspirated, so the way it sounds is /in T<sup>h</sup>EN shan/, /in T<sup>h</sup>EN

shan/. If you practice it this way, applying these things, then your pronunciation gets much improved.

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Aspiration in stressed syllables

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- attention /aet T<sup>h</sup>EN shan/ (3)
- retain /rii T<sup>h</sup>AEN/ (2)
- retention /rii T<sup>h</sup>AEN shan/ (3)
- impossible /im P<sup>h</sup>OS si bal/ (4)
- impatient im P<sup>h</sup>AE shant/ (3)



Keep in mind, some of some other things that we have seen here. As part of this rule, that voiceless stops remain unaspirated in any other position, i.e., at the end of the word or the end of a syllable, they do not get aspirated. So look at this. This word deeper, so first syllable is stressed. At the end of the syllable, there is a p sound, but this does not get aspirated. In Institute, the first syllable is stressed, the third syllable has a t sound at the beginning of the syllable, but it is not getting aspirated because this is not a stressed syllable. So we say /IN stii tute/, /IN stii tute/.

I will show you more such examples. So, moving ahead, when we want to observe words with more than one syllable and we see we are paying attention to stressed syllables, we see unaspirated voiceless stops getting aspirated at the syllable initial position of a stressed syllable. In all these words like attention, this is the stressed syllable t at the syllable initial position gets aspirated what becomes /aet T<sup>h</sup>EN shan/.

In this word retain, the second syllable has two syllables. The second syllable is stressed in the initial position of the syllable. We have a voiceless stop t, and it is getting aspirated, /rii T<sup>h</sup> AEN/. In a word like retention, three syllables are there. Here, the stressed syllable has voiceless

stop t, at the syllable initial position in a stressed syllable. Therefore, it gets aspirated, and we have a word sounding like /rii T<sup>h</sup> AEN shan/, /rii T<sup>h</sup> AEN shan/.

Impossible is word of four syllables where p is at the initial position of the stressed syllable. In this word, therefore, gets aspirated even though it is not at the initial position of a word. So, all these examples count as we are looking at the application of another part of the rule. Not just the first part, because they are not at the word-initial position. So, /im P<sup>h</sup>OS si bal/, /im P<sup>h</sup>AE shant/, /im P<sup>h</sup>AE shant/, three syllables p sound at the initial position of this stressed syllable, therefore it becomes/im P<sup>h</sup>AE shant/.

Now continuing these things, there are a lot of such words in English, and that indicates that it is a very productive pattern but a very robust rule, for us to observe. In the word department, the second syllable is stressed; p at the initial position is getting aspirated in this stressed syllable. Look at this word, competition. The third syllable is getting stressed, and therefore, t at the syllable initial position in this syllable is getting aspirated. /kom pii T<sup>h</sup>ii shan/, /kom pii T<sup>h</sup>ii shan/. Four syllables in this word.

The next two words are important for us to look at. We have discussed these towards earlier as well. The first one is decrease. Say this word has two syllables. If it is used as a verb, the second syllable is stressed. If it is used as a noun, the first syllable is stressed. But, it becomes important for what we are discussing now. When the second syllable is stressed, when this is used as a verb, then at the initial position of the stressed syllable we have k sound. Therefore it gets aspirated. So, it becomes /di K<sup>h</sup>RIIZ/. But, when it is used as a noun and the first syllable is stressed, then the same sound k at the initial position of an unstressed syllable is not getting aspirated. So, this word sounds like /DI kriiz/, /DI kriiz/. So, this follows from this rule that voiceless stops remain unaspirated at the beginning of an unstressed syllable.

So, in this word, decrease as a noun because /DI kriiz/ /DI kriiz/ remains unaspirated because the second syllable is unstressed. In this word institution again, this syllable is stressed; therefore, this term at the initial position of the stressed syllable is getting aspirated.

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Stress on 1<sup>st</sup> syllable – 2<sup>nd</sup> syllable unstressed and unaspirated



- Purple /P<sup>h</sup>AR pal/
- Practice /P<sup>h</sup>RAK tis/
- Circle /SAR kal/
- Turtle /T<sup>h</sup>AR tal/
- Sample /SAM pal/
- Temple /TEM pal/
- Happy /HAP pi/



Now, look at some more examples, some more words to understand the application of these patterns clearly. Let me take you through these words to show you that in these words, we have stress on the first syllable. In each one of these words, we have stress on the first syllable of the word. All these words have two syllables, and the first syllable is stressed. So, how does this application work?

In a word like purple; look at this word. Stress on the first syllable. P at the initial position of the word gets aspirated because this is also stressed. So, application of the rule. But p at the initial position of the second syllable which is not as stressed, is not getting aspirated. So, it remains as /P<sup>h</sup> AR pal/. This is how we have put all these words in a way they sound. So, the next one is practice. The first syllable is stressed, the second syllable has t sounds in the initial position but not the stressed syllable, therefore no aspiration.

Circle, the second syllable is not stressed because the first one is a stressed k in the syllable initial position; no aspiration. Therefore we are saying that when the stress is on the first syllable; the second syllable is unstressed and unaspirated. What I mean to tell you is, the unaspirated sound remains unaspirated because it is an unstressed syllable. Circle, turtle, here t in the stressed syllable also because it is at the word-initial position, gets aspirated. But, t the other syllable which is not stressed, is not getting aspirated.

Sample, the first syllable is stressed. In the second syllable, we have a p sound, but it is not getting aspirated because it is not at the initial position of a stressed syllable. Temple, the first syllable, is stressed. The second syllable has a p sound but not getting aspirated. Look at this word happy. This word has two syllables; the first syllable is stressed. But, p in this syllable is not getting aspirated because a: it is at the end of the syllable and not at the beginning of the syllable. Therefore, it is not in the beginning position of the word. Therefore, it is not getting aspirated.

But the second p in the second syllable is also not stressed, is not aspirated because that syllable is not stressed. So, when you look at these examples, we see the rules, what we call as the rules are this kind of underlying pattern and the interplay of these three elements in the word like stress, syllables and aspiration. Together they are going to help us improve our pronunciation and understanding of English words.

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2<sup>nd</sup> syllable stressed – first sound aspirated

- Platonic /plae ThoN ik/ (3)
- Iconic /aai KhON ik/ (3)
- Atomic /ae ThOM ik/ (3)
- Compassion /kom PhAE shan/ (3)
- Complete /Kom PhLIIT/ (2)



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In these words, we have the second syllable again stressed because the second syllable the initial position has p, t and k in the stressed syllable. So, they are getting aspirated. Such words like platonic; you remember there is a pattern that in most of the words where you see the words ending in ik suffix, then in those words the penultimate syllable, the syllable before this ik sound

gets stressed. That is the rule to identify stress in a word when it has more than one syllable. So, /plae THoN ik/ we know that this syllable is stressed. But, it so happens that this has t sound in the initial position of this stressed syllable. Therefore it is getting aspirated. In iconic, k sound in this, the stressed syllable is getting aspirated in the word /aai KhON ik/. T sound at the syllable initial position of this stressed syllable in the word /ae ThOM ik/ is getting stressed. Hear this word again, /ae ThOM ik/, /ae ThOM ik/.

So this is the first syllable: just one sound, nucleus vowel. In atomic, there three syllables in this word. The second syllable has t sound at the initial position of a stressed syllable. Therefore it is getting aspirated. Compassion, again this is a stressed syllable, p at the initial position is getting aspirated in this word, and it sounds as /kom PhAE shan/. The next word, has p at the initial position of the stressed syllable, which is the second syllable and the word sounds as /Kom PhLIIT/, /Kom PhLIIT/, /Kom PhLIIT/.

Say these words to yourself several times following this pattern. They will have an effect on other words that you speak. They will help you make your understanding of aspiration stronger; they will make you understand words in a better way and they will also make you confident when you speak these words. Thus, we see that an understanding of stress patterns, syllabification and aspiration as a feature of sounds together, can help us a lot improve the way we speak.

Hope, you will be able to do some practice with this to be able to speak these words. You find a set of words with p, t, k at the initial position of a word, particularly in a monosyllabic word and see how they are getting aspirated and do some practice. I am positive that this will yield a much better result in you in learning to speak impressive English. Thank you.

## **English-I (Basic English)**

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### **Lecture-17**

#### **Syllables and Stress in Words**

I welcome you to this module. Today's module is titled Syllables and Stress in Words. In this module, we are going to be looking at the rules of stress and syllabification, when we speak a word that is when we pronounce the word. Let's get started.

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The slide has a decorative border with small leaf-like icons. At the top right is the IIT Madras logo with the text 'IIT Madras ONLINE DEGREE'. The title 'SYLLABLES' is centered above a horizontal line. Below the line is a list of points:

- A syllable is a unit in which the word is divided while pronouncing it.
- A syllable should have a vowel with one or more consonants.
- One syllable words : cat, buy, force, drink , walk etc.
- Two syllable words : begin, bury, equal, happy, funny etc.
- Three syllable words: mosquito, september, department, camera, vitamin etc.
- Four syllabled words: information, january, american, discovery, dictionary etc.

Below the list is the quote: "That's not all ! There are words with many more syllables." To the right of the text area is a photograph of a woman with glasses, wearing a grey polo shirt, standing and speaking. She is holding a small object in her hands.

A syllable is a unit in which a word is divided by pronouncing it, and the golden rule is that every syllable has to have a vowel but not necessarily a consonant. So let us look at a few words and see how many syllables these words have. So, let us first look at one-syllable words. Cat, buy, force, drink, walk etc. are one-syllable words or monosyllabic words. Example of two-syllable words or disyllabic words are, begin, bury, equal, happy, funny etcetera.

Examples of three-syllable words are mosquito, September, department, camera, vitamin etcetera. Now examples of four-syllable words are information, January, American, discovery and dictionary. But that is not all; there are words with many more syllables.

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The slide has a decorative border with small leaf-like icons. At the top right is the IIT Madras logo and text. The title 'SYLLABIFICATION' is centered above two columns of word lists.

ONE SYLLABLE WORDS	TWO SYLLABLE WORDS
1. Cat - /kat/	1. Begin - /bih-gin/
2. Buy - /bahy/	2. Bury - /ber-ee/
3. Force - /force/	3. Equal - /ee-qwul/
4. Drink - /dringk/	4. Happy - /hap-ee/
5. Walk - /wahk/	5. Funny - /fun-ee/

Now let us look at syllabification. Let us see how many syllables these words have. Cat, buy, force, drink, walk. So, one test of syllabification is, you keep your hands under your jaw, pronounce the word and see how many times your jaw drops and that many syllables a word has. So, in this case, cat, buy, force, drink, walk; you see my jaw drops one time, every time I pronounce these words. So, it has one syllable. But, non-native speakers, have difficulty in understanding syllabification because it's quite intuitive to the native speaker's knowledge of the language. Look at two-syllable words; begin. Let us try it with the jaw drop experiment.

Begin /bih-gin/, bury /ber-ee/, see my jaw drops two times. So, /bih-gin/, /ber-ee/, /ee-qwul/, /hap-ee/, /fun-ee/ are all two syllable words.

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## SYLLABIFICATION

### THREE SYLLABLE WORDS

1. Mosquito - / muh-skee-toh /
2. September - / sep-tem-ber /
3. Department - / dih-pahrt-ment /
4. Camera - / cam-er-a /
5. Vitamin - / vi-ta-min /

### FOUR SYLLABLE WORDS

1. Information - / in-for-may-shun /
2. January - / Jan-yoo-air-ee /
3. American - / uh-mer-i-kun /
4. Discovery - / dih-skuhv-er-ee /
5. Dictionary - / dih-skuhv-er-ee /



Now, let us come to three-syllable words such as mosquito, September department, camera, vitamin. So, these are all three-syllable words. Now, coming to the four-syllable words; information, January, American, dictionary, discovery. So, for example, /in-for-may-shun/, my jaw drops four times. An important thing that you need to look at is, just ask yourself do you pronounce them, do you pronounce all these syllables the same way?

For example /Jan-yoo-air-ee/. Is that so? Is that so? No. But you have an added force or stress on one of the syllables; right. So, next, we are going to look at stress and see how a word can be pronounced with stress.

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## STRESS- POINTS TO KNOW

Syllables uttered with greater degree of force is said to be stressed. The three golden rules of stress in English words are :

1. A word can only have one stress.
2. Only vowels are stressed, not consonants.
3. There are many exceptions to the rules.



So, what is stress? Syllables uttered with a greater degree of force, is called a stressed syllable and the rest are called unstressed syllables. The three golden rules of stress in English are; the first one, a word, can have only one stress. The second one, only vowels, are stressed and not consonants. Only vowels are stressed and not consonants. And what is the third rule, there are many exceptions to these rules.

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WORD STRESS & RULES

1. water: **wá-ter**
2. people: **peo-ple**
3. television: **tel-e-vi-sion**
4. together: **to-ge-thér**
5. potato: **po-tá-to**
6. Banana: **ba-na-na**
7. begin: **be-gin**

So, keep these in mind and let us get started with word stress and rules. Now let us see how water is pronounced? The - divides this word and shows how many syllables it has, it basically shows a syllabification and here understand that stress applies on the syllables that are marked with bold. Example water here **wa** is elongated and said a little louder than the next syllable **ter**. So, how do you say that **wa-ter**.

The next word is people, **peo-ple** television **tel-e-vi-sion**, together **to-ge-thér**, potato **po-tá-to**, banana **ba-na-na**, begin **be-gin**. So, you see the bold syllables are stressed. **Water**, **people** **television**, **together**, **potato**, **banana** and **begin**.

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## Two-syllable nouns & adjectives

- Rainy , Samples , Carton, Content
- In **most** two syllable nouns and adjectives, the **first syllable takes on the stress**.
- RAI-ny
- SAM-ples
- CAR-ton
- CON-tent



Now, let us see why those syllables are stressed? What are the rules for finding out the stress that is applied in a word? We have some rules, but also keep in mind that these rules do not apply for all the words and there are a lot of exceptions. But, a lot of these rules apply to at least 80% of the words in that class. For example, now the first rule is, when you have a two-syllable noun or an adjective, the first syllable takes the stress.

For example, what are those words, rainy, samples, carton, content so with the stress how do you pronounce it RAI-ny, SAM-ples, CAR-ton, CON-tent. Let me repeat it, RAI-ny, SAM-ples, CAR-ton, CON-tent.

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## Two-syllable verbs & preposition

- In most two syllable verbs and prepositions, the **stress is on the second syllable**.
- re-LAX
- re-CEIVE
- di-RECT
- a-MONG
- About 80% of two-syllable words get their stress on the first syllable. There are exceptions to this rule, but very few nouns and adjectives get stress on their second syllable. Verbs and prepositions usually get stress placed on the second syllable, but there are exceptions to this too.



Now, two-syllable verbs and prepositions take the stress on the second syllable. So, it is re-LAX, re-CEIVE, di-RECT, a-MONG. Let me repeat that, re-LAX, re-CEIVE, di-RECT, a-MONG. So, as I have already said 80% of the two-syllable words get their stress on the first syllable, when it comes to two-syllable nouns and adjectives. Whereas, the second syllable takes the stress for two-syllable verbs and prepositions.

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## Suffix -Word ending in er, or and ly

- Stress is placed on the **first syllable**.
- 1. DI-rec-tor
- 2. OR-der-ly
- 3. MA-nag-er



Now, let us look at suffix. So, the first class of suffix is words ending in er, or and ly. Here the stress is placed on the first syllable. Understand that if a word ends with er, or or ly, then the stress is placed on the first syllable: example, DI-rec-tor, OR-der-ly MA-nag-er. Let me repeat that for you, DI-rec-tor OR-der-ly MA-nag-er.

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### Suffix -Word ending in er, or and ly

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- Stress is placed on the **first syllable**.

1. DI-rec-tor
2. OR-der-ly
3. MA-nag-er

Now, suffix that is word endings with consonants and Y. So, here when a word ends with the consonants and Y, then the stress is placed on the first syllable. For example, RA-ri-ty, OP-ti-mal GRA-di-ent. How do we pronounce that? RA-ri-ty, OP-ti-mal, GRA-di-ent.

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### Suffix – words with different endings

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- Takes stress on the **syllable right before the suffix**. This applies to words of all syllable lengths.
- The suffixes are – able, ary, cian, cial, ery, graphy, ial, ian, ible, ic, ical, ics, ion, ity, ium, imum, logy, tal

1. able:
  - Understandable /un-der-STAND-a-ble /
  - DURable /DU-ra-ble /
2. ary:
  - PRIMary / PRI-ma-ry /
  - Diary /DI-a-ry/

Now let us look at suffix, that is words with different endings. So, suffixes such as able, ary, cian, cial, ery, graphy, ial, ian, ible, ic, ical, ics, ion, ity, ium, imum, logy and tal takes the stress

on the syllable right before the suffix. So, these suffixes, I am underlining it for you. All these suffixes take the syllable right before the suffix. Now, for example, let us look at , able. So where does the stress come? So, this is how it is syllabified: /un-der-STAND-a-ble/. It is a five-syllable word, and what is the suffix in this? Able; right.

So, what is the syllable right before the suffix, it is STAND. So, the syllable STAND is stressed. So, how do you say that, /un-der-STAND/, /un-der-STAND-a-ble/. Similarly, if you see, the next word is durable, and the syllables are /DU-ra-ble/. So, able comes here, and the syllable that precedes the suffix is DU. So, you stress on DU so it is /DU-ra-ble/, /DU-ra-ble/. Okay.

The next word, the next suffix is ary, example primary, diary. So where does the stress come from? So, ary comes here. Look at this ary; right. So, now where does the syllable stress go? The syllable that is right before the suffix. So here it is PRI and in the second word its DI. So where do you stress, how do you stress and how do you pronounce it? /PRI-ma-ry/, /DI-a-ry/. Get it? Good.

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### Suffix – words with different endings

3. ible:

- Visible / VIS-i-ble /
- terRible, / TER-ri-ble /

4. ical:

- MAgical / MAG-i-cal /
- CRitical / CRIT-I-cal /

5. ics:

- GeNETics / ge-NET-ics /
- paedlAtrics /pe-di-AT-rics /

The third example is ible. Examples are visible, terrible. Again, both are three-syllable words; right. So, ible. So, now where does stress come? The syllable right before the suffix so; that is VIS and TER, so it is /VIS-i-ble/ and /TER-ri-ble/. The next suffix is ical, example; magical,

critical. So, again underline it, and the ical is underlined. What is the syllable preceding the suffix? MAG and in this case, it's CRIT, crit.

So how do you pronounce it? /MAG-i-cal/, /MAG-i-cal/, /CRIT-I-cal/. And the final one, the final suffix that we are going to look at is, ics—for example; genetics, paediatrics. Genetics is a three-syllable word and paediatrics is a four-syllable word. So, you see we underlined the ics, i.e., a suffix and look at the syllable before the suffix that is in this case; in the case of genetics NET and in the case of paediatrics AT. So, how do you pronounce it, /ge-NET-ics/, /ge-NET-ics/ and in second case it is /pe-di-AT-rics/, /pe-di-AT-rics/. Get it. Good.

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Suffix – words ending with ee, ese, ique and ette

the primary stress is placed on the suffix.

1. ee:

- agree /a-GREE/
- guarantee /gaur-en-TEE/

2. ique:

- unique /u-NIQUE/
- physique /phy-SIQUE/

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Now, let us look at the suffix that is words ending with ee, ese, ique and ette. So in such a case, for example, if the word ends with ee, ese, ique and ette, the primary stress is on the suffix. For example, agree, /a-GREE/. You see how e is elongated, agree. Then guarantee, /gaur-en-TEE/ so again this stressed. So, the final syllables are stressed. Next; ique, unique or physique, so how do you pronounce that /u-NIQUE/, /u-NIQUE/, /phy-SIQUE/, /phy-SIQUE/.

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## Prefix

- Usually, prefixes do not take the stress of a word.
- There are a few exceptions to this rule, however, like: un, in, pre, ex and mis, which are all stressed in their prefix.
- in: IN-side, IN-efficient, IN-terest
- pre: PRE-cede, PRE-ar-range, PRE-li-min-ary



The next one is a prefix. Usually, prefixes do not take stress, but then there are exceptions again. These prefixes are un, in pre, ex and mis. These are also the words that start with un, in, pre, ex and mis, are all stressed in their prefix: example, IN-side, IN-efficient, IN-terest. Similarly, PRE-cede, PRE-ar-range, PRE-li-min-ary, PRE-li-min-ary.

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## Compound words

- **Compound nouns** : a noun made out of two nouns in order to form one word. In a compound noun, the **first word** usually takes on the stress.
- SEA-food
- TOOTH-paste
- **Compound adjectives** : an adjective composed of at least two words. In compound adjectives, the stress is placed within the **second word**.
- Rock- SOLID
- Sparling- RED



Next is compound words, i.e., two words coming together to form a word. The first example is the compound nouns. So, a noun made out of two nouns, to form one word is a compound noun. So, in a compound noun, the first word takes the stress. For example, SEA-food. How do you pronounce it with stress? SEA-food, SEA-food. Similarly, TOOTH-paste, TOOTH-paste.

In compound adjectives, the stress is placed on the second word—for example, Rock-SOLID, Rock-SOLID, Sparkling-RED, Sparkling-RED.

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Phrasal Verbs

- Phrasal verbs are words made from a verb and preposition.
- In phrasal verbs, the **second word** gets the stress (the preposition).
- Black OUT
- Break DOWN
- Look OUT

Next, we are going to look at phrasal verbs. Phrasal verbs are words made out of a verb and a preposition. In phrasal verbs, the second word gets the stress that is the preposition takes the stress—for example, Black-OUT, Break-DOWN, Look-OUT. Let me repeat that for you, Black-OUT, Break-DOWN, Look-OUT.

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Reflexive pronouns

- Reflexive pronouns show that the action affects the person who performs the action. For example: I hit myself.
- The **second syllable** usually takes the stress.
- my-SELF
- Them-SELVES
- Our-SELVES

The next class of words that we are going to look at is reflexive pronouns. So, reflexive pronouns show that action affects the person who performs the action. For example, I hit myself; myself here is a reflexive pronoun. So, in reflexive pronouns, the second syllable is usually stressed—for example, my-SELF, them-SELVES, our-SELVES. Let me repeat that for you, my-SELF, them-SELVES, our-SELVES.

**(Refer Slide Time: 19:26)**

The slide has a decorative border with small green leaf icons. At the top right is the IIT Madras Online Degree logo. The word 'TIP' is centered above a horizontal line. Below the line is a bulleted list of four items. To the right of the list is a video frame showing a woman with glasses and a grey shirt, holding a pen and speaking. The video frame has a thin black border.

**TIP**

- Dictionaries are great tools for learning word stress.
- For every word, the dictionary indicates where the stress goes.
- For example by placing an apostrophe before the stress.
- Animation: /an'i'meɪʃən/

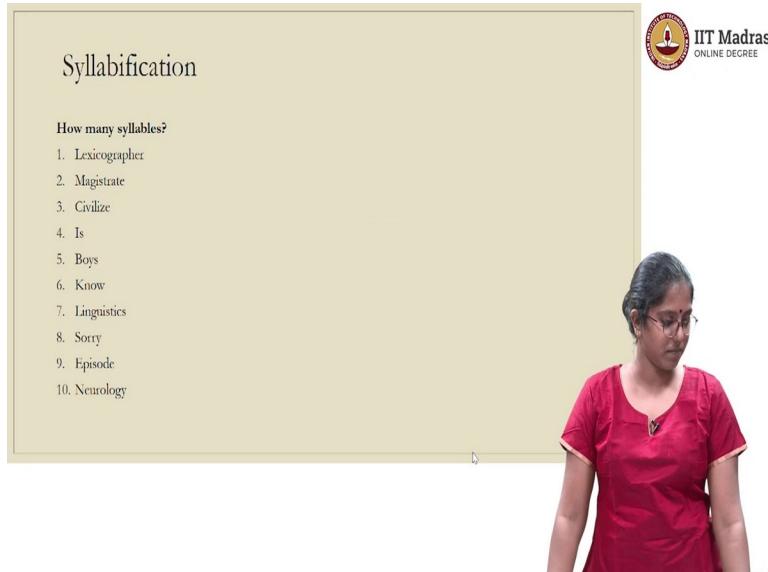
Before I conclude, let me give you a small tip on learning stress or understanding stress patterns in the English language. Use dictionaries; dictionaries are a great tool for learning word stress. In a dictionary, you see that the words or the syllable where the stress goes are marked with an apostrophe which means that is the syllable you need to stress, for example, animation, animation. So, with that, this module comes to an end and I will see you with another module on a different day. Until then, stay safe, happy learning.

**English – 1 (Basic English)**  
**Karthika Sathyananthan**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai**  
**Lecture 18**

**Aspiration, Stress and Syllabification**

Welcome back. So, today's module is going to be on Aspiration, Stress and Syllabification. We will have a few practise questions, and you will have to pause the video, work on the questions and then I will explain to you the answers. So, let's get started.

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The image shows a video frame. On the right, a woman wearing a red short-sleeved top and glasses is standing and looking towards the left. On the left, there is a large projection screen. The screen has a light beige background. At the top left of the screen, the word "Syllabification" is written in a black sans-serif font. In the top right corner of the screen, there is a circular logo for "IIT Madras ONLINE DEGREE" featuring a stylized lamp (diya) and the text "IIT Madras" above "ONLINE DEGREE". Below the title on the screen, the question "How many syllables?" is followed by a numbered list of ten words: 1. Lexicographer, 2. Magistrate, 3. Civilize, 4. Is, 5. Boys, 6. Know, 7. Linguistics, 8. Sorry, 9. Episode, 10. Neurology.

The first set of question is related to syllabification. So, this is the question. How many syllables are there in the following words? Lexicographer, Magistrate, Civilize, Is, Boys, Know, Linguistics, Sorry, Episode, Neurology. Let me repeat that for you. How many syllables are there in the following words? The first word is Lexicographer; second is Magistrate, third is civilize, fourth is is, fifth is boys, sixth is know, seventh is Linguistics, eighth is sorry, ninth is episode and tenth is Neurology.

So, before you pause the video, let me give you a small tip. How do you do syllabification? Make sure that every syllable has one vowel. Now you may pause the video and work on these questions. Once you are done with this, we will look at the answers.

(Refer Slide Time: 1:54)



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Answers

1. Lek-si-ko-gra-fe (5 syllables) /lɛk-sɪ-kə græfɪ/
2. Ma-gis-treit (3 syllables) /'ma-dʒɪs-treɪt/
3. Ci-vi-laiz (3 syllables) /sɪ-vɪ-lائز/
4. Is (One syllable) /ɪz/
5. Boiz (One syllable) /boɪz/
6. Know (One syllable) /nəʊ/
7. Lin-gwis-tics (Three syllables) /lɪŋ'gwɪs-tɪks/
8. So-ri (2 syllables) /'so-ri/
9. e-pi-sode (3 syllables) /e-pɪ-səd/
10. Nu-ro-lo-gi (4 syllables) /,njuːrə-'lo-dʒɪ/

Let us look at the answers now. Lexicography, so you are going to split it according to vowels looking at the number of vowels in syllables. You are supposed to have only one vowel in a syllable, and you are supposed to have only one vowel in a syllable. So, how do you split Lexicography? Lek-si-ko-gra-fe. So, what are the vowels in this? In Lek it is a, si it is e, ko is a, gra is a, fe is e. so, it is a five-syllable word.

The second word is Magistrate. Ma-gis-treit. So, it is a three-syllabled word. The third word is Civilize. Ci-vi-laiz. So, it is a three-syllabled word. The fourth one is Is; it is a one-syllabled word. The fifth one is Boiz, and it is a one-syllabled word. This is slightly tricky; some of you might have divided the word into two syllables looking at the vowel letters. This is where the confusion stems. Okay.

You need to look at vowels sound and not vowel letters. So, don't get misguided by the o and i there and then split them into two. In boys, the vowel sound o and i comes together to form a boy, oie. You get it; it is an oie sound. So, it is a single syllable. Boys is a monosyllabic word. The sixth word is know. Again, it is a one-syllabled word. The seventh one is Linguistics, Lin-gwis-tics. So, it is three-syllabled word.

The eighth word is sorry, so-ri, it is two-syllabled word. The ninth word is episode, e-pi-sode. So, it is a three-syllabled word. And the tenth word is neurology which is a four-syllabled word, nu-ro-lo-gi. Did you get them right? Did you get all of them right? Did you make a few mistakes, while don't worry, you can always get back to the rules, learn them, come back, practise, practise new words, use a dictionary, you can always improve.

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The slide has a yellow header bar. The title 'Consonant clusters' is at the top left. The IIT Madras logo with the text 'IIT Madras ONLINE DEGREE' is at the top right. The main content area contains the following text:  
Give three examples of each of the following consonant clusters:  
1. Initial – CC  
2. Final – CC  
3. Initial – CCC  
4. Final - CCC

The next question is about consonant clusters. So, give three examples of each of the following consonant cluster where the word-initial should have a consonant cluster of CC. Then, the word final position should have a consonant cluster of CC. The third is where the word-initial position should have a consonant cluster of CCC, and the fourth is where the word has a final consonant cluster of CCC. Now, you pause the video, work on the questions and come back.

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The slide has a yellow header bar. The title 'Answers' is at the top left. The IIT Madras logo with the text 'IIT Madras ONLINE DEGREE' is at the top right. The main content area contains the following text:  
1. Initial – CC  
Place (pl), tray (tr), dwell (dw)  
2. Final – CC  
Pump(mp), he~~p~~ (hp), adopt (pt)  
3. Initial – CCC  
Spring (spr), straight (str), scream (scr)  
4. Final – CCC  
Hands(nds) , solves (lvz), adopts (pts)

Now, let us look at the answers. Here, the words that you have come up with could be different from that of what I have chosen. I will explain to you why I chose these words so with that you can evaluate your answers. So, the first is words with an initial consonant

cluster of CC. What are they? I have chosen place, tray and dwell. In place, the consonant cluster is CC; it starts with p and l sound. Therefore, the consonant cluster CC.

In tray, it is t and r sound. Again, the consonant cluster CC. And dwell, it is d and v which are again consonant sounds and therefore the consonant cluster CC. Now, words with the consonant cluster at the final position. Pump, m and p. Help, l and p. Adopt, p and t. So, let me mark them for you. Place, tray, dwell, pump, help, adopt.

The third question is to come up with the initial consonant cluster pattern CCC. What is that? Spring, straight and scream. So, here if you see, it is s, p and r sound coming together. In the second word, it is, s, t and r sound coming together. And in the third word, s, k, r coming together. Now, the words with the final consonant cluster CCC. Hands, n,d and s. Solves, l, v and s.

Again this is slightly tricky. You might notice this vowel; you might notice a vowel letter e here and therefore assume that it does not have a consonant cluster CCC at its end. But that is not the case. You are supposed to look at the consonants sounds here. I am again reiterating that this is a place where a lot of people make a mistake. So, let me stress this again. Do not be misguided by vowel letters but instead, focus on the consonants sounds.

You need to check the sounds and not the letters. So, here you might see a e and might assume that it might not have a consonant cluster at the end. But that is not the case. In solves, it is l, v and z sound at the end of the word. They are the final consonant clusters present in the word solves. You do not say solve-s. It is solves. So, l, v and z. The third word is adopts, p, t and s.

So, did you all get them right? If yes, good; if no, it is fine. You can always practise, go back to your basics, understand consonant sounds and vowel sounds. And once you keep in mind this rule that you always need to evaluate and analyse words based on consonant sounds and not letters, half of your confusion is over. The rest half, you can always go back to the rules, study, come back, practise.

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## Word stress

Mark the stress on the appropriate syllable

1. Object (noun)
2. Object (verb)
3. Examination
4. Memorial
5. Dining room



Now, let us discuss the answers. The first word is object as a noun. So, the rule is when a two-syllable word is used as a noun or adjective, the stress is always on the first syllable. Of course, there are exceptions, but then this rule applies to at least 80 per cent of the words in that class. So, in this case, what is a syllabification here? Object. So, where does the stress come? On the first syllable.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:13)

## Answers

1. 'Object - When a two syllable word is used as a noun or an adjective, the stress is on the first syllable.
2. Object - When a two syllable word is used as a verb, the stress is on the second syllable.
3. Exam*nation* - Words ending in -ion have stress on the penultimate syllable. (the last but one syllable)
4. Me'morial - Words ending in -ial have the stress on the syllable preceding the suffix.
5. 'Dining room - Most compound words have primary stress on the first element.



Now, let us discuss the answers. The first word is object as a noun. So, the rule is when a two-syllable word is used as a noun or adjective, the stress is always on the first syllable. Of course, there are exceptions, but then this rule applies to at least 80 per cent of the words in that class. So, in this case, what is a syllabification here? Object. So, where does the stress come? On the first syllable.

So, how do you pronounce it? Object, object; the stress is on o sound. Let us pronounce it. Object. Good. Of course, again, there are exceptions. But then this rule applies to more than 80 per cent of the words in that class. So, in this case, again you syllabify the word, object ob and ject and the second syllable stressed that means j sound gets stressed and therefore, you pronounce it as object, object. The stress is on j sound here, object, object.

How is that different from the first word? Object. And the second word object, object. Did you get the difference? Good. Now, the third word is examination. So, we have discussed that words ending with the suffix ion have stress on the penultimate syllable. What is a penultimate syllable? It is a second last syllable or the last but one syllable. So, you know that the last syllable is the suffix ion. So, what is the syllable before that? n. It is n. So, the stress is on the n sound. So, how do you pronounce it? Examination, examination. Stress on the n sound there. Repeat it after me, examination. Good. Now, the fourth word is memorial. So, again words ending with the suffix ial have stress on the syllable preceding the suffix. So, what is the suffix? ial. Let me mark it for you, and what is the syllable before ial? It is mor.

So, where does this stress fall? The stress is on m sound there. So, it is memorial, memorial. Get it? Repeat it after me, memorial, memorial. Good. The fifth word is dining room. So, most compound words have primary stress on their first element. We have already discussed this in the previous module. Let me repeat the rule for you. Most compound words have primary stress on the first element. So, how do you pronounce it? Dining room. The stress is on d sound here. Dining room, dining room. Good.

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Aspiration

Which among the following words have aspirated sounds?

1. Stop ✓      Top ✓      stop ✗  
2. Pot ✓  
3. Cot ✓  
4. Oppose ✓  
5. Tame ✓



Now, the next set of questions is related to aspiration. The question is, which among the following words have aspirated sounds? The first word is stop; second is pot, the third is cot, the fourth is oppose, the fifth is tame. Pause the video, work on the questions, we will discuss the answers soon.

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### Answers

- Pot, cot, oppose and tame are aspirated.

Rules to remember

- Voiceless stops are aspirated at the beginning of a word, and at the beginning of a stressed syllable.
- Voiceless stops are unaspirated at the beginning of an unstressed syllable. They're also unaspirated in any other position, like at the end of a syllable or the end of a word.
- Even if a syllable is stressed, a voiceless stop is unaspirated if it follows [s].
- Voiced stops are never aspirated. They're always unaspirated.

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### Aspiration

Which among the following words have aspirated sounds?

1. Stop
2. Pot ✓
3. Cot ✓
4. Oppose ✓
5. Tame ✓

Top ✓ stop ✗

Let us get to the answers. So, what are the words that are aspirated? It is pot, cot, oppose and tame. Why? Let us look at the rules and then I will explain to you. So, the first rule is that voiceless stops that are the sound p, t and k are aspirated at the beginning of a word or the beginning of a stressed syllable. So, in that case, if you look at the question, let us go back to

the question; what are the words that start with a voiceless stop at the beginning of a word or the beginning of a stressed syllable?

The first word is not a voiceless stop. The second is pot, yes, p is a voiceless stop. Therefore, this is an aspirated word. Why? Because the voiceless stop is at the beginning of the word, get it? Now, second again k is a voiceless stop at the beginning of the word; therefore, cot is aspirated. By the by, what is aspiration? Aspiration is that extra puff of air that you produce when you pronounce certain sounds.

Now, the fourth word is oppose. Let us syllabify that, op and pose. And if you look at it, p sound is at the beginning of a stressed syllable because the stress is on the second syllable. Therefore, you pronounce it as oppose. So, the p sound there gets aspirated. So, this is also aspirated.

Tame again is aspirated because the voiceless stop t occurs at the beginning of the word. Now, let us go to the first word stop. Why is that not aspirated? Top is aspirated, top is aspirated, but stop is not aspirated. Why?

Let us again go back to the rules. Even if a syllable is stressed, a voiceless stop is unaspirated if it follows the sound s. Let me repeat that again for you. Even if a syllable is stressed, a voiceless stop is unaspirated if it follows the sound s. So, therefore, this explains why top is aspirated because t sound is a voiceless stop t occurs at the beginning of the word whereas, in stop, the t sound is followed by s sound.

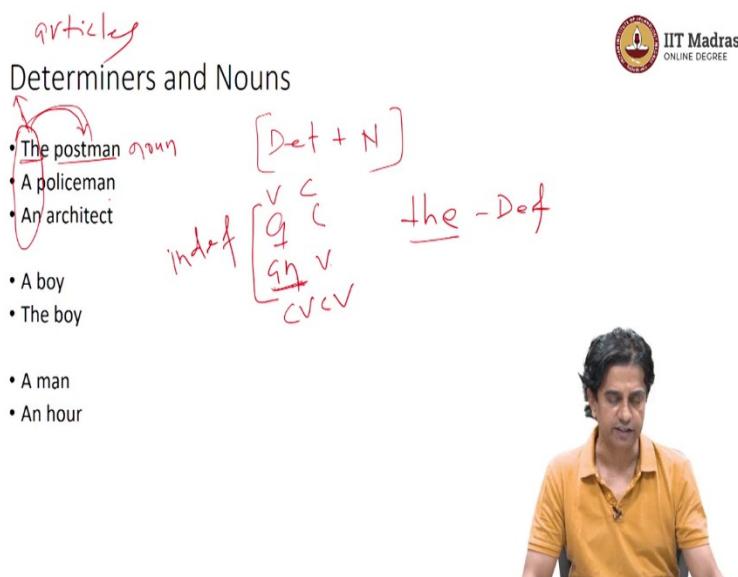
So, the rule says that even if a syllable is stressed, a voiceless stop is unaspirated if it follows the sound s. The third rule is that voiceless stops are unaspirated at the beginning of an unstressed syllable. They are also unaspirated in any other position like the end of the word or at the end of the syllable. The fourth rule that you need to keep in mind is voiced stops are never aspirated. They are always unaspirated.

So, with that, I think you have got a fair idea of how syllable rules, stress rules and aspiration rules work. So, with this, we come to the end of the session. I hope you like the session. I will meet you with a different topic, on a different day. Until then, stay safe, happy learning.

**English – 1 (Basic English)**  
**Prof. Rajesh Kumar**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Chennai**  
**Lecture 19**  
**Words and Phrases in English**

Welcome to the class. Today, we are going to talk about phrases in English sentences. The main point is to look at phrases. You must have heard this word; we want you to understand what a phrase is, how it is made of, and what is its role in language and how do we learn about it? What do we pay attention to understand phrases? These are some of the things that we will discuss. Let's begin.

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article

Determiners and Nouns

• The postman noun

• A policeman

• An architect

Indef [V C C]

the -Def

• A boy

• The boy

• A man

• An hour

We have been looking at words; we have also looked at what makes a word, to do that we looked at sounds. So, we saw that a particular combination of sounds in certain constraint ways makes a word. In the process, it also makes a syllable. So, while paying attention to these subtle details in the process of learning language, we learnt that a word is not a random collection of sounds.

We know, there are very few numbers of sounds available in any language. For example, in English, we have 44 sounds; we have 20 vowel sounds and 24 consonant sounds. So, all these 44 sounds are responsible for making millions of words. We say millions because we do not know the total number of words in English or for that matter, we do not know a total number of words in any language. So, we say, for all possible words of the languages, only these 44 sounds are responsible.

So, we put these sounds in certain orders, and we make a word, but that order is also a constraint, we have noted these details. We have looked at how consonants and vowels come together, what is the constraint in cluster formation, how we make a cluster with two consonants and how we make a cluster with three consonants. So, we have seen several aspects of sounds and words, and by now I need to underline this one more time that, paying attention to these subtle elements in language helps us learn, improve our speaking.

By now, I can confidently underline this part that when you look at stress patterns, you need to know about syllables, i.e., we need to understand syllabification in a word. We need to know that words have various syllables. When we want to understand how initial sounds are aspirated, again at this point, we need to know syllables because such aspiration occurs at a syllable-initial position.

So, for understanding right stress, i.e., which syllable is stressed and which syllables are not stressed, we need to understand stress patterns, we need to understand syllabification, we need to understand the arrangement of sounds in a word, and then we need to understand the feature of those sounds. Such things make us confident about words; such things help us become confident in speaking these words and sound impressive.

To continue this, I want you to look at phrases, i.e., when more than one word comes together before it can make a sentence, it makes a phrase. And in that process, a word is also a phrase by itself. What does it mean? And how does it work? Let us look at some of these examples that are there on your screen. When we say elements like the postman, a policeman, an architect or a boy or the boy, a man, an hour, we need to see that there are at least two words in this combination, i.e., 'the' and 'postman.' But this element 'the' has something to do with 'postman,' i.e., the word postman.

So, what is the combination? How are they related? And what is going on in this? If we need to identify these elements, we identify postman is a noun, and we identify this element as a determiner. So, this is a sequence of a determiner plus a noun. And so is this sequence, this phrase, this combination of determiner and noun gives you all of them, i.e., all these phrases. We will have a full-length discussion on determiners in English separately. However, since we have mentioned these things, I need to add a note on determiners.

In our languages, we do not have determiners as a category, i.e., we have 'a' and 'an' on one side, plus 'the' on the other side as determiners in English. This is called definite determiner, and these two are called indefinite determiners. This comes before a word which begins with

a consonant sounds because 'a' itself is a vowel sound, so it comes before a word that begins with consonants, and for a word that begins with a vowel sounds, we get 'an' because it gives us alternation of CVCV.

Check it one more time; this determiner before a vowel sound so it is vowel and consonant. This one, right before a word where the initial sound is a vowel to make consonant, vowel, consonant, vowel for us to get this alternation we have these two but these two determiners. But both of them are indefinite determiners, and this is a definite determiner. We will have another discussion on determiners some other time.

Since we mention the word, we wanted to add this much so that you know determiner as a class of words like nouns. So, this is also one of the identifying element for nouns. We can say very confidently that determiners only precede a noun phrase. You will get to see this thing more significantly when we have completed our discussion on phrases. For the time being, we can also say determiners precede only a noun in English.

More accurately, we need to say a determiner precedes a noun phrase. It is a defining element for us to identify a noun phrase. It is an identifying feature for a noun phrase. So, when it precedes, it is there the following word must be a noun or a noun phrase. So, there is no doubt about that. At the same time, we can also say the same thing in different words that what precedes, what comes as an element making a noun definite or indefinite, identifying a noun definite or indefinite can only be determiners. These things are also called articles.

So, the postman, a policeman, an architect these are the words. These are phrases, not words. Because there are two words, but since determiners, so, when we say the postman, we are talking about definiteness, i.e., the information about the postman is shared between the speaker and the hearer. So, when I say the postman, I mean that I am talking about the postman that both of us know; when we say 'a postman', it means any postman. So, that is about definite and indefinite determiners, but together they make a phrase.

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### Adjectives and nouns

- Big box
  - Brown monkey
  - Thick book
- 
- Nice person
  - Pretty girl
  - Good guy



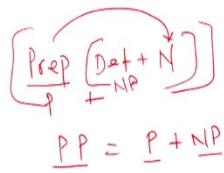
So, let us move on further to see. Even adjectives when they are combined with nouns, make a phrase. So, we can say things like big box; this is an adjective which is modifying a noun, meaning giving us more information about noun. What is the information? It is adding; it is talking about some quality, some specification of the noun; in this case, it is talking about the size of the box. Brown monkey, in this case, this adjective is talking about the colour of this monkey. Thick book, in this case, the adjective thick is talking about the size of the book.

Nice person, quality of the person. Pretty girl, again quality of a girl. Good guy, quality of a guy. So, adjectives also add some information about nouns, and they make a phrase; so this is also a phrase. So, as of now, we can simply say whenever two elements combine, where one element gives more information about the other one, together they make a phrase. We can say this much.

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### Preposition and nouns

- On the table
- In the classroom
- About a book
- In an empty box
- In a big brown empty box



Then, when we move forward, we see other elements coming into play and giving us a combination of words which amount to a unit, i.e., the combination amounts to the formation of a unit. How does it work? Look at this, in a phrase like this 'on the table'; we have three elements, where 'on' is a preposition. Then we have a determiner, and then we have a noun.

So, first, these two make a phrase by itself. In this case, the table and then preposition comes right before this, which is talking about something which also has to do with the table. Therefore, these three things together make one phrase. So, as of now, determiners and noun were making a noun phrase, and this noun phrase and preposition are together making a prepositional phrase which is a prepositional phrase.

The prepositional phrase has two elements, one preposition and the other is a noun phrase, and that is how we see elements combining to make a bigger chunk. And this chunk is what we know is a phrase. Now, the point to notice and underline for our understanding is, these are different categories of words, but when they combine, they do not remain indifferent from one another. There is a way in which they form a unit, chunk.

You can observe the same thing in each one of these phrases. Look at this, 'the classroom here', again a determiner 'the' and the noun classroom is making a noun phrase, and when we say 'in the classroom', we are again talking about 'the classroom', so this becomes a prepositional phrase. 'About a book' is another prepositional phrase. 'In an empty box', here, first, an adjective and noun make a phrase, then, this determiners comes to combine them as

one noun phrase. Understand? This must be a noun phrase because a determiner precedes it and then comes a preposition. Then we understand this is a prepositional phrase.

So, in this prepositional phrase again, we have a noun phrase, then we have another noun phrase, and then it makes a prepositional phrase. When we say 'in a big brown empty box', this is still one big phrase where we have two adjectives talking about the same noun which makes us understand that we can have more than one adjectives modifying the same noun and still coming to make one unit.

So, here we have three adjectives modifying, describing one noun box. Then this determiner comes in front of all of them to indicate the whole chunk is a noun phrase and then there is a preposition telling you this is a prepositional phrase. Thus, we see, the size of a phrase may increase, may become bigger, but there is a pattern, there is a pattern which follows to make a phrase.

So, all these things remain a phrase, and they do not get this status of a sentence. Therefore, we can say at this stage that a sentence is not just a combination of words; actually, what we mean by a combination of words is a phrase. So, several words together to be more precise, several categories together, and then we get words from those categories to make a phrase. This is how we understand the significance and the formation of a phrase in a language like English.

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### Phrases

- The student of English
  - Students from Chennai
  - The student of English from Chennai
  - \* The student from Chennai of English
  - The student of English from Chennai in long hair
- the student of English with long hair from Chennai



Now, to observe a little bit more about the phrase, to understand more about the phrase, let us look at these examples. What do these examples tell us? Here, the first one is the student of

English. In the first glance, you would agree that this is a phrase and not a sentence. But when we look at it very closely, we see, what is the nucleus of this phrase. Understand every phrase will have a nucleus, so the nucleus of this phrase is this student. There is another noun in this phrase which is English.

So, this noun and this preposition of English, they make one phrase together. First, let us say the prepositional phrase 'of English' and, this prepositional phrase is part of the bigger noun phrase. 'Student' because this prepositional phrase tells us something about this 'student', i.e., this is how we understand 'student of English', meaning, this student who studies English. And then you have a determiner here indicating that this whole thing is a noun phrase.

Look at it; we can say 'students from Chennai.' We see here that 'from Chennai' is again a prepositional phrase, and this thing tells us something about this noun 'students.' The 'student of English from Chennai', look at this chunk now. Here, we have two prepositional phrases; 'from Chennai' and 'of English.' We can say this as, one, and this as two. Both of them giving us information about this student, which is the nucleus of this big phrase and then this determiner coming in front of this whole chunk tells us that this is a noun phrase.

The whole thing is a noun phrase, i.e., 'the student of English from Chennai' is a noun phrase which has two prepositional phrases in it. We have started noticing something very important, and this must attract our attention. We can say 'the student of English from Chennai', but we cannot say in English 'the student from Chennai of English.' There is a star here at the beginning of the sentence. This tells you this sequence is not just unacceptable; it is ungrammatical because this is not a desirable sequence.

Now, what this ungrammaticality and unacceptability mean to us? So, what is the difference between the previous chunk, let us call it A and the second one B. So, what is the difference between A and B? The only difference is we have two prepositional phrases; 1 and 2. In the second one, we have reversed the order 2 and 1.

So, what we can say is, this prepositional phrase which we are indicating as 1 here, must be close to this noun 'student.' It must remain close to this noun 'student' to keep the chunk grammatically acceptable. So, again when we put this back, we can say 'the student of English from Chennai' in long here. It sounds better if you say a bit long here. So, if we say 'the student of English from Chennai with long hair' this sequence is acceptable.

So, here, this remains close to this one, and then you have 'from Chennai with long hair.' So, here you have 1, 2, 3 prepositional phrases. This is perfectly fine, and still, this whole chunk is a big noun phrase because it is preceded by the determiner. But keep in mind, we can change the sequence of 2 and 3 as PP; we can say 'the student of English with long hair from Chennai.' So, we can say 'the student of English with long hair from Chennai.' This is perfect; there is no problem in this sequence.

So, if we reverse the order of 3 and 2, there is no problem, but the order of 1 must not be disrupted. It must remain as one, must remain close to the nucleus that is the student. So, now we start noticing something very interesting in the sequence of words in a bigger phrase.

So, first, we notice that two words from two different categories together made a phrase. Then we see, two phrases together also or more than two phrases can also make one phrase, i.e., 'of English' is one phrase and 'the student of English' it is one big phrase, but it has another phrase inside it.

We see, 'the student of English from Chennai', it is one big phrase, noun phrase but we find, there are two smaller prepositional phrases within this bigger phrase. Then we see, there could be three prepositional phrases also in one big noun phrase, and then we see that we have something like 'the student of English from Chennai with long hair.' Very nice, no problem. But, right before that, we saw that there is something else emerging out of it that among two. There are two prepositional phrases we see, the sequence of the two matters, i.e., we have just seen that in examples A and B, we cannot reverse the sequence of these two prepositional phrases which are marked as 1 and 2. We cannot write them 2 and 1 because it becomes an ungrammatical sequence. We see in the larger phrase when we have three prepositional phrases as still 1 that is 1 must remain close to student. But we see that when we reverse the sequence of 2 and 3, it does not make a difference.

So, noticing these patterns help us understand not just the sequence but the patterning of elements in a phrase for grammaticality and acceptability. This is important for us to pay attention to. So, what is responsible for this? Why is this sequence important? This is what we need to understand. So, we do not need to get into jargons; we do not need to get into too many words. All we can say is, to understand the notion of phrase in English, even one word can be a phrase. When two words from two different categories come together, that also makes a phrase.

A phrase can also be part of another bigger phrase. There can be more than two phrases, two or more than two phrases inside a phrase. All these things are important, and then we see sometimes the sequence of these phrases also matter and sometimes sequence does not matter. So, the sequence of these elements is also important. So, what is required remains close to the nucleus of the bigger noun phrase and the required element is called the complement of the noun and the two other prepositional phrase which can change the sequence, they are called adjuncts.

We will discuss those things later to understand them in a different context as well, but at this time, if you just pay attention to these elements, you will understand the significance of a phrase and the making of a phrase for our understanding. This will also be a foundation for us to understand how words play a role in making a sentence. And this is how incrementally we build a sequence which is called a sentence.

So, we will continue looking at this; at this point, I want you to write several words to see; you can also write a sentence. You do not need to wait for us to start a discussion on sentence. And then you can start looking at the difference between these kinds of the sequence of words which are phrases and a sentence. What is the difference between the two? Why are these things, not sentences? Why do we call them phrases? What is the difference between the sentence and a phrase?

And when some words are together, how are they, how are they making a phrase? Work on this exercise, take any chunk of a spoken or written language and identify these elements for yourself that will work as a foundation for your understanding of these sequences, smaller chunks, bigger chunks in the language. We will come back with something else for you. Until then, thank you so much.

**English-I (Basic English)**  
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**Lecture 20**  
**Sentences in English**

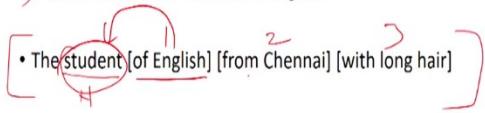
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### Phrases

- [The student [of English]] 
- [Students [from Chennai]] 
- [The student [of English]] [from Chennai] 

• \* The student from Chennai of English



Welcome to the class. Today, we are going to talk about sentences. We have looked at phrases in English. We understand how different words come together to constitute a phrase. Particularly, different words belonging to different categories of parts of speech come together and make a phrase. We have looked at this process in little detail.

Let us look at the summary of this one more time. Keeping in mind that these are longer chunks, but they are not sentences, and with the help of these, we will move forward to understand what makes the sentence. How do we get a sentence? We have very small sentences. Sentences can be very big too. So, what are the essential components of a sentence is what we are going to discuss today, or at least we are going to begin discussing today.

We understand a sentence; sentences are essential components of conversations; sentences are basic units in our speech. When we speak to others, we speak in sentences. Sentences combine to create a discourse. And we know that in the discourse, we do not have unrelated sentences. So, before we go to discourse before we go to understand how we listen to people, how we understand the context, how we understand, how we hear people, how we make sense when people speak, we need to understand various components of a sentence.

And more importantly, we need to understand what are the crucial factors for making of a sentence. We will discuss those things. We are going to begin with this thing. But, let us quickly summarize what we mean by phrases and how they make a phrase, how we make a phrase together.

So, start with this same example that in the noun phrase, 'the student of English', we have 2 nouns but this preposition and noun. i.e., noun phrase together make a prepositional phrase, and it becomes part of the bigger phrase, which is a noun phrase. So, 'the student of English' we can say, has another prepositional phrase embedded in it, and this is the process of how elements get combined within a phrase to make a sentence.

So, when we say, when we define a sentence, that a sentence is a meaningful combination of words. We need to say more than this; we need to say a sentence is a meaningful combination of words. Of course, but this combination is worked at within a phrase, to make a phrase and thus we understand the larger chunk that we know as a phrase.

'Students from Chennai', this phrase noun phrase has another PP in it, which is prepositional 'from' and NP 'Chennai.' So, again this noun phrase has another PP in it. We see that we can have more than one prepositional phrase in a noun phrase. Of course, it is going to become a bigger chunk, but we can have more than one prepositional phrase in this. In the next example, we see we have 2 prepositional phrases when we say 'a student of English from Chennai.'

And, at this point, we discussed that we had seen several nouns, 'student', 'English', 'Chennai.' But, these nouns are part of different phrases and thus combine hierarchically to make a bigger chunk of a phrase. So, this is called a structure building. So, this works as if we are building the structure or the foundation for the bigger structure and thus this works.

We noticed other interesting patterns in this structure building process as well, that we saw, remember? This star means ungrammatical and unacceptable. We saw that if we reshuffle the position of this PP; PP in 1 with PP in 2 which is, if we make it instead of 1, 2 if we make it 2, 1 then, this series sequence in ungrammatical. So, we do not say 'the student from Chennai of English'.

However, we can have three prepositional phrases as well. We say 'the student of English from Chennai with long hair', this is possible, and we also notice that the shuffling between 2

and 3 is possible in the sense that it does not result in the whole chunk into ungrammaticality. But still, the first one need not be shuffled.

In other words, in this total noun phrase, the big one, if the nucleus is 'student' as a noun, then we can say as the head of this bigger noun phrase. 'This is student' has this PP as a complement for it, i.e., required element for it. And PP2 and PP3 are additional subsidiary elements giving additional information; therefore, they are called adjuncts. One more time, these terms like compliment and adjuncts may not be too essential for you to memorize. But they help us understand this kind of rigidity within a phrase, which we observe quite often.

And when we build our understanding of phrases and sentences, these things become critical information, and therefore they are important for learning. We are going to look at a few more things about phrases little later. But, at this point, we need to move ahead, we are going to move ahead and look at sentences.

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## Sentences

- 1 • Please (you) sit down.
- 2 • (You) get up.
  
- 3 • This is a book.
- 4 • [Raju] (likes books).
- 5 • [Raju] (likes pizza with friends at the pizza-hut).



## Phrases

- [The [student [of English]]]
- [Students [from Chennai]]
- [The [student [of English]]] [from Chennai]]

• \* The student from Chennai of English



Look at these sentences; we can say 'please sit down.' This is a quite smaller chunk of words. We can also say very simply 'get up.' Now, look at this as a sequence of words; they are much smaller than these sequences. So, the point that we want to drive at home is the following: it is not about the number of words that become important in a sentence; it is something else. A large number of words can still not become a sentence. Therefore, a sentence is not simply a combination of words resulting in some meaning. This sequence also results in some meaning, but they are not sentences. Then, of course, we understand, we could see structure building, we could see certain constraints, we could also see how they are put together to build a bigger structure, but they are not sentences.

However, these smaller chunks are sentences. So, what makes it a sentence? How do we know they are sentences? And what are the essential components of sentences, let us look at that. So, first, let us look at more examples, we can also say, 'this is a book.'

'Raju likes books', we can also say, 'Raju likes pizza with friends at Pizza Hut.' Remember, we are trying to make this from smaller to bigger, so this is also a sentence. So, let me give you a number 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. So, as small as 2 is also a sentence, and as big as 5 is also a sentence. Therefore, it requires our meticulous attention at different components that are visible and certain things which are not visible.

I underline and stress this point, certain things which are not so easily visible are going to be critical in understanding the notion of the sentence. For our better understanding, we will come to each these things one after the another.

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## Subjects and Predicates in Sentences

• John [loves] Mary.

• John [likes] pizza with his friends.

In the evening, John . - - -



## Sentences

1 • Please (you) sit down.

2 • (You) get up.

3 • This is a book.

4 • [Raju] ([likes] books).

5 • [Raju] ([likes] pizza with friends at the pizza-hut).



So, the first important part is there are two parts of the sentences; both are equally required, one is subject and the other is called a predicate. It is very simple to know, if we can identify a subject in a sentence, everything else remains predicate. Everything else becomes part of the predicate, and in the predicate, all we need to identify is that there must be a verb. So, look at these sentences, and you will be able to see that this is a subject, and this is that whole thing is a predicate. This is a subject, and this whole chunk is a predicate. Of course, this as a verb is the main component of a predicate.

So, subjects are independent of a predicate. Subjects are outside the predicate in a sentence. So, the first thing we need to know is these two things. Remember, we are trying to look at these things by observing underlying patterns, i.e., what are the things that are common in all

sentences of English. We are only talking about English here, for our purpose to learn English in a better way. So, what can we say as an unequivocal rule, as a rule, which is not going to fail, which is not going to crash.

What can we say that applies across all sentences of this language. Two parts, subjects and predicates, both, must be there in a sentence. So, we can also say, we do not have a sentence without a subject; you do not have a sentence without a predicate. Is it not important to understand these elements? Because if we do not understand, and if we do not know how to pick what becomes a subject in the sentence, we do not understand a sentence.

And it is so basic, so basic for developing our speech, developing speaking that we know a little bit about sentence; a little bit in a more nuanced fashion to understand what a sentence is about. So, we do not have a sentence without a subject; in other words, there must be a subject in a sentence; there must be a predicate in a sentence.

Next, so identify what is a subject in the sentence and what is a predicate in the sentence. Again, having said only this much and before I say more about sentences, what I want you to look at is, and this is again a very simple exercise for you to do. Take a pen and paper and just write down 10 sample sentences like the ones I have told. You can come up with a real sentence that you would have ever spoken or you can just make a sentence.

Identify subjects and predicates in this. At this stage, I am only requesting you to identify subjects and predicates the way I have done here, which will help you understand when you have identified, underlined, bracketed subjects in your sentences, which shows you that you know how to identify a subject. Once you have identified the subject, try to find the rationale why those elements are subjects.

That will give you a much better answer for you to understand the subject of a sentence by yourself. Because you see, if I have to identify subject in these two sentences, I can very easily underline 'John' is the subject in both the sentences. But, if I am asked why these two elements are subjects in these two sentences, I need to say more.

Can I say, because they occur at the initial position of the sentence; looks like so? But, that is only given these two sentences, we can speak a sentence. We can come up with a sentence where there is something else at the beginning of a sentence, but that does not happen to be a subject. So, we can say 'in the evening John likes pizza with his friends.'

Now, in such a sentence, what is the subject? The subject still remains 'John', but 'John' is not at the initial position of the sentence. So, we can say 'in the evening' and add this sentence at the end of it. 'In the evening John likes pizza with his friends', now, 'John' is still the subject of this sentence. So, how do we know what becomes a subject in a sentence? Once you have identified subjects in 10 sentences that you have written in the piece of paper, you will probably get that part as well.

But, before we rush to that, let us look at a few more things. Also, when you identify the predicate, identify verbs in those predicates. That will lead you to find out once you have identified subjects. And once you have identified verbs what the other elements remaining in a sentence are.

For example, if I identify 'John' as the subject in this sentence, and we know this is the predicate, and within the predicate, we know this is the verb. Then, I will be curious to understand what is 'Mary.' Or for that matter in this sentence, when I have identified this whole chunk as a predicate, and I know this is a verb, then we need to know what is 'pizza.' What is 'with his friends.' What are these elements, what is their role?

So, all I am trying to do here is to help you navigate your curiosity about different parts of a sentence where you do not feel losing them. Rather, this process will interestingly increase your interest in these elements. And you will be restlessly curious to find out answers to these questions. But that happens when you look at it through this process. Take any sentence, find out the subject of that sentence. Then, find why that element is the subject of that sentence.

I am asking you to do this with responsibility, because when you start finding out the subject in the sentence, intuitively, you would have done this exercise for most of the sentences grammatically. Then, you need to find out why those elements are subjects. All you need to do is to observe the pattern which is staring you at you from your examples.

So, what we have seen until now and what we are going to see beyond this. What I mean by now and beyond is, until now, we have looked at a very small discussion on phrases. But, we have largely looked at words, we have looked at several processes and elements of words to develop our understanding about words and also about pronunciation, our speaking.

Now, we are getting into sentences. All that we have learnt is definitely important. But, what we are also going to find out is there are several things that we know intuitively but, what is

crucial in both parts is the underlying pattern. When you start noticing, searching for these underlying patterns, you find that you know a lot of this by yourself.

All you need to do is to sit down and find those patterns. So, when you find that, you will get to know if this is the verb, what is 'pizza.' And what is 'with his friends.' Trust me, this curiosity is going to make you restless and in a nice way that it will make you find an answer to these questions. And in the process, your understanding becomes better.

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The slide has a title 'Imperative Sentences' at the top left. To the right is the IIT Madras Online Degree logo. Below the title are three handwritten examples of imperative sentences:

- Come here.
- Sit down.
- Drink a glass of water.

Handwritten annotations include a red circle around 'you' in the first sentence, a red bracket under 'Come here.', a red bracket under 'Sit down.', and the word 'Pred' under 'Drink a glass of water.'

A video player window on the right shows a teacher in a green shirt speaking.

Look at these sentences, 'come here', 'sit down', 'drink a glass of water.' Now, when we start finding out subjects and predicates in these sentences, what is the subject of these sentences? Try finding it out. We see that these sentences begin with a verb; come, sit, drink. So, apparently, what we see is, we only have a predicate in these sentences.

We only have predicates, if that is so, then how are they sentences? Because we know that we need two things to make a sentence. There must be a subject and a predicate. True; these examples only have predicates in them. Then, this information, our understanding makes us observe that in each one of these sentence, the subject is common 'you,' i.e., the second person singular or plural pronoun.

It is just that it is not visible. So, we get to know; we get to learn more than just the subject. We know the subject is a required element in a sentence. We find out 'you' is the subject of these sentences. And, other parts that we see are predicates. But, we also get to learn that when we are certain that in a particular type of sentence, the subject that you can see can only

be one specific element. Then, with such kind of predictability following the principle of economy, it is possible to drop that subject.

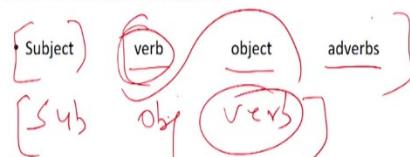
Even if we do not say it is easily retrievable, understandable and we can find it out. Therefore, we do not need to say it. And therefore, in imperative sentences, a cross-language is, in general, and in English, in particular, we drop the subjects, i.e., 'you.' But underlyingly it still fulfils the grid, for the purpose of the information that it is not breaking the rule of having a subject and a predicate for making of a sentence. That makes us understand a sentence to another level.

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Things to notice ...

- Only sentences have full stops.
- Imperative sentences have subjects (you).
- All sentences will have subjects and predicates.
- Order of words in a sentence



Imperative Sentences



- Come here.
- Sit down.
- Drink a glass of water.



## Subjects and Predicates in Sentences

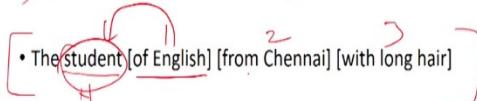
- John [loves] Mary.
- John [likes] pizza with his friends.
- In the evening, John . . . .



## Phrases

- [The [student [of English]]] NP
- [Students [from Chennai]] PP
- [The [student [of English]]] [from Chennai]]

\* The student from Chennai of English



With this, you can see that we need to pay attention to a certain common and more much simpler elements, i.e., if you look at these sentences; 'Come here'; 'sit down'; 'drink a glass of water'; 'John loves Mary'; 'John likes pizza with his friends'; 'in the evening John likes pizza with his friends.' Everywhere, you are going to notice the full stop at the end of it.

So, keep in mind that only sentences have full stops. We do not use full stops elsewhere. We do not use full stops at the end of the phrase. This still builds your understanding of language and your uses of the language in writing. In speaking, these full stops are marked by pauses. We pause and then start a new sentence.

In writing, we put a dot in English and in some other languages there are other symbols. So, only sentences have a full stop, and every sentence must end with a full stop. We also learnt that imperative sentences, where you have 'you' as a second person; singular pronoun

becomes the subject. And because it is so predictable, it is dropped across all imperative sentences.

Imperative sentences are also known as command and request sentences. All sentences will have subjects and predicates; these two parts are required. And the order of words is first you get the subject and then you have a predicate. If we look at the order of elements within the predicate in English, we see the first element as a verb inside the predicate and then comes the object and then adverbs.

In some languages, this position is reversed. For example, in a language like Hindi, Tamil or Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Punjabi, Odia, Bengali, you see objects coming first and then verb. But, the subject retains its position. So, we say noticing order of words in English; we say English is the language where the verb comes in the middle of the sentence, i.e., the verb medial language. And our languages are verb final languages because, in our languages, the order of objects and verbs is exactly the reverse. It is also known as a mirror image relationship.

So, that is how we notice some of the very simple things as concrete information about sentences. So, if you just keep this much in mind, this is almost universal. No sentence is going to violate this information. Then, having found this much, we need to know, we need to understand in moving forward that are these enough requirements for the making of a sentence or do we need to pay attention to more?

I am sure you would have figured it out by now. So, the answer is, we need to know more, we need to understand more to understand a sentence. Do the practice and try to revise these things as different pieces of information for developing your understanding of a sentence. With more information, we will be meeting with you shortly. Until then, thank you.

**English – I (Basic English)**  
**Prof. Rajesh Kumar**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
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**Lecture 21**  
**Command or Request?**

Welcome to the class. We are going to talk about the use of command and request in English sentences. We continue our discussions with sentences. We have been talking about the essential components of sentences. We will review that, and then we will start our discussion with one specific type of sentence which indicates command or request. Such sentences are called imperative sentences.

I am going to show you how it works, and how we understand this type of information in the process of our understanding of sentences. Again, to underline the part that we need to know this type of information to assimilate them for a better impact on the language, it helps us make our speaking impressive. It makes us sound confident when we speak. So, please pay attention to the two types of information that we are going to discuss today.

One, a little bit more about a sentence, i.e., to continue our discussion on sentences, and then we will talk about one specific type of sentence which is known as imperative sentences in English. They are indicative of command or request, how we understand imperative sentences and how we get the message of command or request.

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Things to notice in a sentence ...



- Only sentences have full stops.
  - Imperative sentences have subjects (you).
  - All sentences will have subjects and predicates.
- 
- Order of words in an English sentence
    - [[subject] [verb object] adverbs]]
  - Order of words in a sentence in Hindi or any other Indian languages
    - [ [subject] adverbs [object verb] ] ]



So, a few things that we need to keep in mind when we are talking about sentences, one more time I will repeat that all sentences end with a full stop. This is trivial. Still, we need to keep in mind that we put a full stop only at the end of sentences, not at the end of phrases or the end of a word. We will talk about punctuation markers when we talk about reading at some other time and then probably with other markers like comma, colon, semicolon, etcetera; we will discuss that later.

But at this point, it is important to keep in mind that sentences end with a full stop. And, since we are going to look at imperative sentences, so we need to remind ourselves one more time when we speak or write, we do not write or speak the subject of the imperative sentence. But we know that subject is always embedded, not visible but present in a sentence and the subject is always 'you.' And that helps us complete the understanding of the two required parts of sentences are subjects and predicates.

Without a subject or without a predicate, we do not have a sentence. This is much is important for us to keep in mind. One more time, what is also important is in English, we know the subject, this is the subject, and this whole thing is a predicate. But within the predicate, there are lots of other elements. However, a verb is a critical one. So, to begin with, we need to look at the position of a verb within the predicate.

Within the predicate, the position of the verb is initial. It is at the initial position in the predicate. When we look at the whole sentence, because the subject precedes the verb, the position of the verb in the English sentence is in the middle of the sentence. Therefore, it is called verb medial language. In our languages, namely Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, and almost all of them, within the predicate verb, comes at the final position. So, we call our languages as verb final language. So, this helps us understand the order of words in a sentence.

Languages differ from one another in terms of their position of verbs within the predicate. So, what is another critical point for understanding sentences that we need to keep in mind is in English sentences, we have the order of the first verb, then the objects, if there is one. In sentences in our languages like Hindi, we have the verb at the final position, and objects precede the verb. So objects are here, and in this case, objects are here. So, we need to keep this much in mind.

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Order of words (place of a verb) in a sentence:

- English (verb medial):

• Raju  pizza from the pizza hut.

- Hindi (verb final)

• Raju ko pizza hut meN  pizza pasand hai.



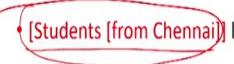
For example, when we say (verb) English as verb medial, see, the verb 'likes' is coming before the object 'pizza.' So, in a sentence, 'Raju likes pizza from the pizza hut', 'pizza' is following the verb 'likes.' And when a language like Hindi is known as verb-final, this verb “pasand hai” and 'pizza' precedes “pasand hai”. So, in English, pizza follows the verb, in Hindi, 'pizza' precedes the verb as an object. This is what we wanted you to look at. This information is important to understand imperative sentences or for that matter, any type of sentence.

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Phrases to sentences ...

•  is working in a printing press.

•  love music.

•  works hard in the institute.

•  came to meet with me yesterday.



So, how do we move from our understanding of phrases to sentence? We see that you see this whole thing that we have been discussing, 'the student of English is working in a printing press.' This whole thing is a phrase, and in this sentence works as a subject. This is a noun phrase, and this entire noun phrase is the subject of this sentence. The subject of the sentence is not just 'the student.'

Of course, it is an important part of that phrase, and therefore this is very important. But in the subject position, we have the entire noun phrase. 'Students from Chennai love music', so, who loves music? 'Students love music.' But this whole thing is in the subject position. 'The student of English from Chennai works hard in the institute', here again, this whole chunk is in the subject position.

'The student of English from Chennai with long hair came to meet with me yesterday', now this whole thing is in the subject position of this sentence. So, we are moving slightly ahead in understanding, in identifying subjects in a sentence. So, whatever comes in the position of a sentence, it is a noun phrase, it looks like a noun phrase and that noun phrase could be very small as one word or too big as the examples that you see here.

In the process of identifying subjects in a sentence, if we know about making of a phrase, it makes our lives much easier, and we can underline, identify subjects so easily. We still need to look at, why something is called a subject? But, we can very comfortably, easily, find out the chunk that is in the subject position of a sentence, and that is what is the idea here. So, we identify the entire chunk as a phrase, which is in the subject position.

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- Command or request?
- Please (you) sit down.
  - (You) get up.
- [you]
- Come home tomorrow. ←
  - Please give me a glass of water.
- Please bring a pen for me.



Now, for the other part that we wanted to discuss today, in order to understand sentences is a specific type of sentence, which is called imperative. Now, imperative sentences are pragmatically important for understanding two things. So, when we tell somebody 'sit down' or 'get up', it has the intention of the speaker involved in it as well. So, how does hearer figure out the intention of the speaker, i.e., is it a request or a command for me to do something.

It becomes pretty obvious when these things are spoken to us. Somebody tells us, 'sit down' or 'get up', as you can see here I am trying to isolate these two things with the use of the word 'please.' So, somebody can also tell you, 'please sit down', somebody can also say, 'please get up' or just 'get up.' In either case, whether these things are told to us with the word 'please' or without the word 'please', what is the intention of this, the speaker is important to know. And we want to pay attention to, how we figure it out, and what kind of role it plays.

Can we find it out, and how do we know that? That is what we are going to discuss. So we already know that imperative sentences will have subjects too. It is just not present, it is just not visible, but it is present, it is very much there. Because we know that all imperative sentences have the subject, second person you as the subject of all imperative sentences, since it is so predictable, it is dropped, i.e., it is not pronounced, it is not a spoken, but it occupies the subject position of the sentence. That is a crucial part for us which means it completes the requirement of a sentence. Now, having discussed that, when somebody says these things, how do we know what they intend? So, to read the intention of the speaker, here is what I need to add, the context

of the speech, the conversation or discourse and how someone speaks to you, tells you what they mean, i.e., whether they mean it in a commanding sense or request. Whether they are speaking requestfully, this becomes intuitively clear to us.

The use of the word 'me' and that is merely the use of the word 'please', does not necessarily make the sentence a request sentence. For example, when someone says, 'come home tomorrow.' As a hearer, you can immediately figure out whether in, and that comes from your intuition, which reads the intention of the speaker and your intuition categorically, clearly gives you the intention of the speaker that this is a request. How? It is complex, but it comes from the context, i.e., who speaks that.

So, if a person who can be very informal with you, a person you can be informal with, a person who knows you very well and you share informal linguistic space with that person. In such a situation, if such a sentence comes, it does not have to be preceded by, 'please.' And even if it gets preceded by 'please', it remains the same. If somebody wants to convey rage, somebody wants to convey an unpleasant situation, in such a context, one can still use the word 'please' and not sound requesting.

So we can say, 'give me a glass of water', it can be a request, and we can say 'please give me a glass of water', and still we can indicate some dissatisfaction. And we clarify that 'I did not like something.' So, the point is, the use of the word 'please' in an imperative sentence does not necessarily make it a request or tells you the intention of the speaker.

The intention of the speaker, i.e., whether it is a request or not, only your intuition figures out from the appropriate context. Intuitions, linguistic intuitions are very clear from the context; the hearer's intuitions read the speaker's intention very well. What is conclusive about that, otherwise any imperative sentence is an imperative sentence, the context and the intention makes it command or request, not the structure.

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## Subject in imperative sentences

- (You) come here.
- (You) sit down.
- (You) drink a glass of water.



It happens the same way. So, one more time I will tell you, how a person says 'sit down.' You walk in somebody's office, and somebody says, 'sit down', it is very clear whether the person is respectful or not. Even if somebody says 'get up', you can read the intention that, this is a request, not anything otherwise.

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## Hindi Imperative Sentences

- |                                    |                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • (aap) <u>baith-<u>iye</u></u>    | (You) please sit.     |
| • (aap) andar <u>aa-<u>iye</u></u> | (You) please come in. |
| • (tum) <u>baith-<u>o</u></u>      | (You) sit.            |
| • (tum) andar <u>aa-<u>o</u></u>   | (You) come in.        |



It is this particular aspect that requires a little bit of attention in some of the languages that we speak. Most of us, when we speak English or when we learn English, we do not all the time use the word 'please' in our speech, which could be offensive to many people. I want you to

understand why some of us ignore the use of, 'please.' Though, bringing the use of the word 'please' is always safe and good.

Using an imperative sentence without 'please' is not really good. So, as the rule of thumb, please try to embed, include the word 'please' when you speak an imperative sentence even though our intuitions help us understand the intention. It is always safe to use the word, 'please.' I want to just underline the point that speakers of different languages in the Indian subcontinent, in India particularly, do not tend to use this word 'please' for a very simple reason that there is no scope for this word in the languages that they speak.

What 'please' does in English is taken care of by the structure of the sentence in languages other than English; particularly languages of India. So, when we say, "aap baithiye", this is very requestful. The speaker becomes very respectful, as well. So, even if we do not say "aap" and we say "baithiye", we intend to use "aap" as the subject of my sentence. We drop it. There are two different types of second-person pronoun in Hindi. One is "aap", the other is "tum."

So when we say, "baithiye", "aayiye", these things have "aap" embedded in it and when we say "baitho", "ao", these things have "tum" embedded in that. So, when somebody says "baithiye", the use of the word 'please' from English as a borrowed word or use of anything, any Hindi equivalent of 'please' is redundant. Therefore, the speakers do not use that in a normal, regular speech, in their conversations.

So, if you say "please baithiye", the word 'please' sounds redundant and please look at this, languages do not like to use redundant elements. We know that everywhere in an imperative sentence, the subject is second-person pronoun. So we drop that pronoun everywhere in all languages. So, in one place we are trying to remove redundancy, and by bringing in the word please, we are bringing in redundancy. Therefore, a lot of speakers do not tend to use the word, 'please.'

So, when we bring this in our learning of English, we tend to drop please from there as well, which may not be a very attractive thing to do when you speak English. So for the purpose of speaking English, one single point information that I want to give you with this example is please use the word 'please' every time you use the imperative sentence. Without that, it does not

look good, even though your intuition helps you read the intention, that is the intention of command or request. That is very critical.

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### Tamil Imperative Sentences

- ningaa pongaa      (**You**) please go.
- nii po                  (**You**) go.
- ningaa waangaa      (**You**) please come.
- nii waa                (**You**) come.



Since I mentioned in our languages it happens, I can show you that it works the same way in Tamil. So, when we say “ningaa pongaa”, we mean the respect is embedded. We do not need to say "please ningaa pongaa." And when we say “nii po”, we know this is not same as “ningaa pongaa.” So, the way it works in Hindi, the same way it is working in Tamil.

We can make this one optional and when we say “pongaa” or “po”, we understand that when we say "pongaa", the intention of being respectful is embedded in the structure. When we say, “waangaa” the same thing is embedded in that. So "please waangaa" is something redundant. Therefore the speakers do not do that.

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## Malayalam Imperative Sentences

• ni-n~~gal~~poiikollu      (You) please go.

• nii po      (You) go.

• ningal wannukollu      (You) please come.

• nii waa      (You) come.



When we speak Malayalam, we simply say, “poiikollu”, it means “ni-ngal” not “ni.” So much so that “ni poiikollu” will not be a warranted sequence. The moment we say “poiikollu”, even when we drop the subject “ni-ngal” we know the subject was “ni-ngal.” Therefore, the speakers of Indian subcontinents have this issue of the use of the word, ‘please.’ I am only talking about those who may have this issue.

If, if it becomes apparent in your language, add the word 'please' with imperative sentences. So, the entire discussion about imperative sentences, command and request rests on just two points that I want to underline again as a takeaway. Use the word 'please' all the time in imperative sentences because your intention of what you say will be very clearly and categorically read by the intuition of the hearer.

We need to know why we do not use the word 'please' because it will help us do it. But, we know very well that it is not a problem and if we do not then, we just need to add it. This much information will help you improve your imperative sentences, your understanding of imperative sentences and the structure of imperative sentences.

As a part of the exercise, I would request you to pay attention to people when they speak imperative sentences. You write down 20 imperative sentences using 20 different verbs for this purpose and add 'please' in front of each one of those sentence and speak that. See how it sounds to you. This exercise will help you include the word 'please' in your speech and will make you sound more appropriate. Thank you.

**English I (Basic English)**  
**Prof. Rajesh Kumar**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Chennai**  
**Lecture 22**  
**Agreement in English Sentences**

Welcome to the class. Today, we are going to look at Agreement in English Sentences. Agreement, is an important component in sentences in general, and we need to pay attention to this particular aspect to learn the language for our accuracy. As you know, it is our confidence in accuracy which helps us bring in fluency. Fluency adds to our confidence and accuracy helps us bring fluency in our speech.

To do that, if we look at patterns of agreement in English sentences and we develop our understanding of this as an underlying pattern, we get these things straight and become more confident in speaking, in writing and in everything that we do with language. So, I invite you to take a look at these patterns that I am going to describe to you. This will raise your curiosity to a completely different level for understanding how these patterns work in language, how these patterns work in English when we speak it. So let us begin and look at that.

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Things to notice ...



- Sentences end with a full stops.
- All sentences will have subjects and predicates.
- Order of words in a sentence
  - [[Subject] [verb] object adverbs]]
- Subject and verb in predicate agree with each other.



A piece of very general information as an overview of this part that sentences end with a full stop. All sentences have subjects and predicates. So, these are the two things; one is very generic information, second, a piece of very specific information and the primary thing for us

to develop our understanding of a sentence. When we ask a question, what is a sentence, there is a lot that we can say about it in response to this question.

But, one thing, if we just need to look at one part, one single thing that is universal about sentences, then we need to say, every sentence must have a subject and every sentence must have a predicate. That is critical information for us to keep in mind. And then when we start looking in a subject, when we start looking in a sentence in English, what we need to keep in mind is that within the predicate, that is this whole thing, verbs are very important, and verbs precede the objects. Therefore, the entire order of words in English sentences is something where the verb is in the middle position not at the final position, unlike the languages that we speak that is in the Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Bengali, Odia, Punjabi, Marathi etcetera.

Why I listed those languages because in all those languages verbs are at the final position in the predicate, therefore, at the final position in the sentence as well and objects precede verbs in our languages, whereas in English, objects follow verbs, that much we know, and these are critical information about English sentences. Today, we are going to add one more specific part, which is very specific, which is required for all sentences, and it definitely requires our attention.

And once we get that right, we get the underlying pattern of all sentences in the language possible. So, I am going to aim at something really critical in the following way, what is that part? The critical word is agree; there we are going to look at the agreement. The two parts, i.e., subjects and predicates; by a predicate, we mean verbs in the predicate. They agree with each other, that is an important part. So what we mean by this agree, let us look at this.

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Please observe ...

- \* [John] [like] pizza.]
- \* I likes pizza. \* I are a doctor.
- \* We likes pizza. \* We is a doctor.
- \* They likes pizza. \* They is teachers.



Let us observe these sentences only for the purpose of observing and let me tell you why I want you to look at this. Is this a good sentence? 'John like pizza.' No, this is an ungrammatical sentence. 'I likes pizza', please read these sentences carefully. I have specifically designed these sentences as ungrammatical sentences, not a good sentence, i.e. ungrammatical sentence.

'We likes pizza'; not a good sentence. 'They likes pizza'; not a good sentence. I am purposely using simple sentences for us to get the point. 'I are a doctor'; not a good sentence ungrammatical sentence. 'We is a doctor'; not a good sentence ungrammatical sentence. 'They is teachers'; not a good sentence ungrammatical, very simple sentences. So right, in the beginning, I want to draw your attention to a very specific point that you can ask for each one of these sentences.

Why are these sentences not good, what is ungrammatical about these sentences. Let us go back to our definition of a sentence that we normally use. A sentence is a meaningful combination of words. This looks like a sentence from that perspective; there are words in this. These words have meaning, and they are combined together. If it meets all the requirement, then why are these sentences not good?

We added that every sentence must have a subject and predicate; each one of these sentences has a subject and predicate both. In the predicate, we have a verb, so the sentence has a subject, the sentence has a predicate, but why is it ungrammatical. The answer is very simple and critical. The answer is, in these sentences, subjects and verbs do not agree with each

other. It is important for the grammaticality of a sentence that the two parts of the sentence subject and verbs, i.e. verbs within the predicate agree with each other.

Such a thing is called an agreement, and once they agree, they become grammatical, i.e. once subjects agree with the verbs and the predicate, the sentences become grammatical. All these sentences can become grammatical if you take care of the agreement of these things.

So, I want to give you this part as the practice for this class, but we are going to discuss things further and then having discussed those things, I want you to come back to these sentences and fix them. If you know how to fix them, you would have already fixed these things by now. So, if you do not look at this, come back and fix them.

Even if you do know how to fix these things, please pay attention to the points that I am going to summarize because such points are going to be useful for understanding agreement between the subject and the verb in the predicate for all possible sentences of English and that is the relevance of understating this notion called agreement. In English sentences, agreements are sometimes visible and sometimes not visible. Even when they are not visible, they remain important, and this is what I am going to discuss next.

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### Subjects and Predicates in Sentences



- John loves Mary.
- I like~~O~~ pizza. \* I like~~O~~ pizza
- We like~~O~~ pizza.
- John likes~~S~~ pizza with his friends.
- John and Mary~~O~~ like~~O~~ pizza.



So, how do we see the agreement in that as we have seen in the previous sentences; all these sentences have just indicated to you that there is no agreement, how do we see that? When we say, 'John loves Mary', we see that there is some marker on the verb which is indicative of

agreement and thus the sentence is grammatical. In the next sentence, 'I like pizza' there is no marker, but I am going to indicate this no marker with zero.

So, zero as the marker which is no marker is important for this. Please hear me out carefully, zero as the marker which is no marker is important. Why? Because by bringing in zero, you are bringing in the idea that nothing else can come because if something else comes here, that will result in ungrammaticality. For example, if I say, 'I likes pizza', this sentence will become ungrammatical because we cannot bring this in.

This is prohibited because this space is already occupied with zero. Now, moving ahead, similarly, when we say, 'we like pizza', the sentence is grammatical because there is a zero marker at the end of the verb 'like.' Again, if we try to put anything else at that position, the sentence will become ungrammatical. So, we can say 'John likes pizza with his friends', you can have all kinds of things in the sentence, but just make sure that the agreement works properly.

So, here there is an agreement between the subject and the verb which is indicated by this element, and when we say John and Mary, there is zero markers on the agreement like John and Mary. Sorry, this zero comes here. So there is a zero marker on the verb, this zero is the marker of the agreement so that we know nothing else comes here. So what is important? Sometimes we see agreement, and sometimes we do not see, i.e. they are zero invisible, and this invisibility is important for understanding agreement. I hope we get this point. Let us move further and see.

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### Imperative Sentences



•(You) come here.

come Ø

•(You) sit down.

sit Ø

•(You) drink a glass of water.

drink Ø



The agreement between the subject and the predicate is critical in imperative sentences too. The only difference is, at all imperative sentences in the verb, the agreement marker is zero. So, an agreement marker is zero. It will become clearer why the agreement marker is zero in imperative sentences.

The answer is simple that agreement markers are zero. And, on the verbs, imperative sentences for the same reason why we have an agreement marker as zero in the sentence. We are going to look at that shortly.

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### Agreement in English



- Something between the subject and the verb in predicate is obvious.
- This is called agreement.
- How does this work.

• Number      SINGULAR      PLURAL  
• Person      FIRST      SECOND      THIRD  
Gender - Mas      fem



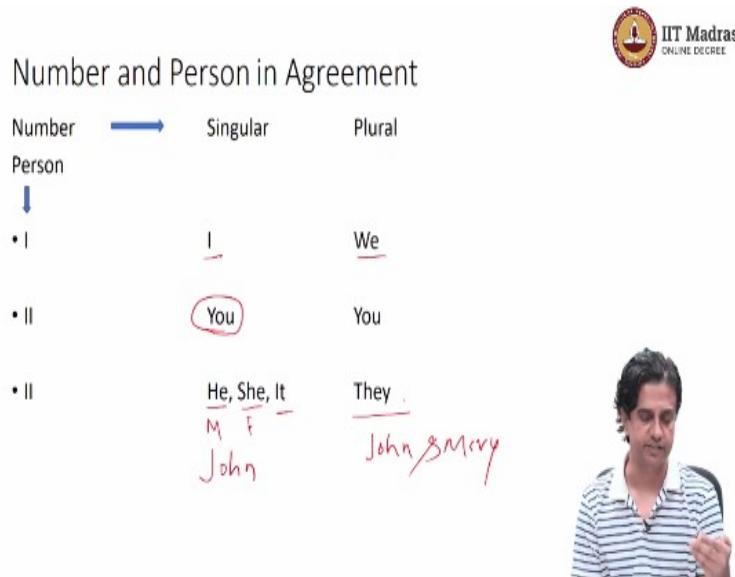
So, what is agreement about? So far, we have observed that there is something between the subject and the verb in the predicate that is becoming obviously critical, which is responsible for the grammaticality of a sentence. So, this something has to be taken care of between the subject and the predicate. It is this thing that is called an agreement, and we are going to look at how it works.

There are two parts that are important to understand agreement, only two things. One is called number and as we know, remember, when we were discussing nouns, we made it clear that nouns are of two types. One can be singular, and the other is plural. So that is called number. So, singular number and plural number and there is something called person which is first person, second person and third person.

Only these two things are important for us to understand the agreement in English sentences. In some languages like ours, there is a third thing which is important to know which is called gender, and it is also of two types that is masculine gender and feminine gender. So, number is of two types singular and plural, gender is of two types masculine and feminine, but only person is important, which has three types; first person, second person and third person.

For the purpose of English, we remember only two, because only two of them become critical in dealing with an agreement, in our understanding of the agreement. I am going to describe this to you how it works in a sentence.

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But, before that, we need to know the different form of numbers and persons and how they apply on different words. Very critically, so, this is person; first person, second person and third person. On this axis here, number; singular number and plural number. So, when we say, 'I', we are going to assume that, 'I' is the first person singular, 'we' is the first-person plural. 'You', has the same form in both, i.e. whether it is a second person, but whether it is singular or plural, it takes the same form.

Third-person singular is he or she, as you know they are the same thing except one is masculine the other is feminine, and 'it' is another third-person singular pronoun. There could be more, but we are just taking these examples. Then, when we have names, when we have proper nouns, i.e. when we have names depending upon whether they are if there is just one like John, that will be third-person singular.

And, if there is something which indicates more than one, two like John and Mary, then 'they' become plural. But, as part of the pronoun, 'they' is third person plural. When I mentioned that there are two things that we need to know for understanding agreement in English sentences, these are the two things. We need to know the distribution of numbers; singular and plural person in terms of their three types; first person, second person and third person. Let us see how they work in a sentence.

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Examples:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>I am/was</u> a doctor.</li> <li><u>We are/were</u> students.</li> <li><u>You are/were</u> a teacher.</li> <li><u>He/She is/was</u> a teacher.</li> <li><u>They are/were</u> teachers.</li> </ul>	$\begin{array}{ccc} \text{Sg-Sub} & \xrightarrow{\quad} & \text{Sg Verb} \\ \text{Pl-Sub} & \xrightarrow{\quad} & \text{Pl Verb} \end{array}$ <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <u>I</u> like-<u>0</u>  <u>We</u> like-<u>0</u>  <u>You</u> like-<u>0</u>  <u>He</u> like-<u>s</u>  <u>They</u> like-<u>0</u> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding-left: 20px;"> <u>pizza.</u>  <u>pizza</u>  <u>pizza</u>  <u>pizza</u>  <u>pizza</u> </td> </tr> </table>	<u>I</u> like- <u>0</u> <u>We</u> like- <u>0</u> <u>You</u> like- <u>0</u> <u>He</u> like- <u>s</u> <u>They</u> like- <u>0</u>	<u>pizza.</u> <u>pizza</u> <u>pizza</u> <u>pizza</u> <u>pizza</u>
<u>I</u> like- <u>0</u> <u>We</u> like- <u>0</u> <u>You</u> like- <u>0</u> <u>He</u> like- <u>s</u> <u>They</u> like- <u>0</u>	<u>pizza.</u> <u>pizza</u> <u>pizza</u> <u>pizza</u> <u>pizza</u>		



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So, I am going to talk about sentences of two types. One; where we see singular and plural playing a role as a verb in sentences, and they are also indicative of tense. We will discuss tense in English sentences some other time, but to begin with, I wanted to mention the following to you. So please pay attention to these sentences which I have put side by side.

So, we say, 'I am a doctor', remember this is present, and this is past. If I say, 'I was a doctor', then I am talking about past, so, one is the indicator of present tense the other is an indicator of past tense, but we say 'I am a doctor.' 'We are the students'; these sentences are fully grammatical. But I want to draw your attention to grammaticality now that is how the agreement is taken care of.

And then at the end of it, I want you to derive a rule out of it by you, you can do that on your own, and that is what becomes exciting to see and then to see how it applies in an exciting way to all possible sentences in English. So, we say, 'we are students', we say, 'you are a teacher' or 'you were a teacher.' 'She is a teacher', or 'he is a teacher', 'they are teachers.' So,

what is happening here? 'They' is a third-person plural, here we see agreement marker as a plural.

'He' is third-person singular; we see agreement markers as singular. 'You' in both the form singular and plural, it has the same form. Here we see the plural marker. Keep in mind, when it comes to the second person, the agreement always shows as a plural. So, we can also say that maybe this does not even exist. But, to this part, we come some other time. So we see, the second person, we can assume this is plural, and therefore, agreement markers are plural.

In the first person, 'I' is singular, 'we', plural, so, we see agreement marker as singular and in the case of, 'we', we see agreement markers as a plural. So what can be derived from here, just look at this part, what can we derive. A very simple thing that we want to derive from here is that is how is it working between subject and predicate. If the subject is singular, the verb also must be singular; if the subject is plural, then the verb also must be plural.

So it is a very simple and straight forward rule. Singular subject; singularity as a marker on the verb. We do not say singular verb; we say singularity marked on a verb. Plural subject; plurality on the verb. So, this much is the agreement; no sentence violates this rule. You will always see every sentence maintaining this rule as an agreement between subject and verbs within the predicate.

They appear, they get manifested differently, which we need to understand, but, without violating this rule. So we saw the application of this rule in all these sentences when we say, 'I am a doctor', 'we are students', 'you are a teacher', 'she is a teacher', 'they are teachers.' The grammaticality is maintained because, with the singular subject, we have a singular agreement marker, with the plural subject, we have plural agreement markers.

In different types of sentences, let us observe this pattern. So, when we say, 'I like pizza' in this one, the agreement marker is not clear, the agreement marker does not appear, so we treat it as zero. The agreement marker does not appear. So, here we can say, when 'we' is plural, the plural form of agreement marker is zero. We say, 'you' as the plural agreement marker of the plural type is zero.

'They' is also plural. Therefore, the agreement type of plural marker is zero in these types of sentences. However, when it becomes singular, the agreement marker is this indicating singularity on the verb. There is no exception, no contradictions. Plurality on the verb is

indicated by zero here. So plural subject; plurality of the verb, plural subject; plurality of the verb, plural subject, plurality of the verb.

However, singular subjects; singularity of the verb. Now, you would have figured out something different here. You see that we have seen, 'T' as a singular form, but when it comes to agreement marker, we see the singular agreement 'S' is not going there. What is going is zero, which was the marker of the plurality. So, what is going on in the case of 'T', we see 'T' as a first-person singular pronoun, but, an agreement marker is slightly different.

One way to treat this is maybe 'T' as a plural. But we know, this indicates one person, and this is the first person. So, the easiest way to understand that first person singular is always slightly different in English, maybe the emphasis and focus on the first-person singularity in the first person is indicated through this kind of distinction. You will notice this thing in the other type of sentences as well. So, if you see, 'was' is singular 'were' is plural.

'Is', singular, 'are' plural, 'was' singular, 'were' plural, 'is' singular 'are' plural. But, when it comes to 'T', we have a different marker which is called 'am.' We do not say 'I is a doctor', we say, 'I am a doctor.' So, 'am' as a marker, comes only for the first person singular pronoun in English. So, the first person singular pronoun seems to be slightly different. Therefore, we observe this part here.

Otherwise, everywhere else, we follow a very simple rule, the singular subject, i.e., singularity on the subject, singularity on the verb. Plurality on the subject, plurality on the verb. That is all is important, and according to person, it becomes clearer that which form of the pronoun has which person on that, and thus we get agreement taken care of. I invite you to think about this part and look at it carefully.

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Please observe ...



- \* [John] like pizza.
- \* I likes pizza. I are a doctor.
- \* We likes pizza. We is a doctor.
- \* They likes pizza. They is teachers.



And, then when you go back and check the sentences in the beginning, that we discuss that all these sentences are ungrammatical. Now, fix each one of these sentences looking at, explaining why these sentences were ungrammatical. So, first, I want you to look at ungrammaticality. All these sentences are given as ungrammatical. So, what you need to know or write down in the pen and paper and not just think.

Please do this as writing it down, and you will see why these sentences are ungrammatical for each one of these sentences. And then, you will get the picture and then fix them and see whether it is following from the rules that we have just described or not.

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More on agreement in English ...



- 1. Rekha and her brothers (is, are) in Delhi.  
    Pl
- 2. Either my mother or my father (is, are) coming to the meeting.  
    Sg   Sg
- 3. The dog or the cats (is, are) outside.  
    Pl
- 4. Either my shoes or my coat (is, are) always on the floor.  
    Sg   Sg
- 5. Rekha and Amala (doesn't, don't) want to see that movie.  
    Pl   Pl   Pl



To continue this further, I want you to do the following exercise. I am going to do a little bit with you, but then I want you to take a note of 10 different sentences for this purpose and do this exercise by checking agreement markers in your sentences. Any set of 10 sentences and check the agreement in the way I am going to lead you through this thing. So, what are we doing here is, read this sentence carefully.

'Rekha and her brothers', we need to pick what do we put here, 'is' or 'are in Delhi.' For the purpose of my exercise, as you see, I have put the correct answer in red and bold. So, this sentence is, 'Rekha and her brothers **are** in Delhi.' So, clearly, we consider the subject, what is in the subject position, this whole thing. So, we consider this whole thing as a plural. Therefore, we are picking the plural marker.

It seems like we are talking about Rekha, which is singular, but when we say, 'and her brothers', all together is giving us plurality. Therefore, plural agreement marker and we have a different form of plural of this present tense marker. Therefore, we have these things. We have a full stop at the end of the sentence. Look at the second sentence; there are several things in these sentences that we will come back and discuss separately.

But right now, I only need your attention to the agreement part and how we determine singularity or plurality for the purpose of agreement. So, now in the second sentence, either 'my mother or my father **is** coming to Delhi', so that is the correct sentence. So we have already figured out that the agreement marker is singular. If we check our rules, the subject must be singular. So, how do we determine singularity here?

When you read these things, and this is what we have been looking at as part of when you did your exercise of identifying subjects, this is what you would have noticed. I want to revisit your exercise of identifying subjects one more time, and then you will see such a robust underlying pattern become so obviously clear to you. It is becoming so clear to you that such patterns if you practice and pay attention to, will not just make you confident about your understanding of agreement in English, rather, you will be thrilled to see this applying everywhere else in every sentence. So, how is this singular in the second sentence? Read it carefully; it is either my mother or father, so it is talking about one person. So, as long as it is just one person, it is singular. Your sentence will never be wrong according to the agreement if you have just this much in mind. Look at this, 'the dogs or the cats?'

Now, what happens here is how are we going to determine this thing? As I said, I will talk about these things by adding some more things to this, a little later. But, in a sentence like this, when we see, we have this whole thing, and we need to determine the singularity or plurality in this thing. We see the dog, which is a singular element or the cats, which is plural. So, we are talking about either dog or cats.

So, whatever is close to the verb is taking precedence in terms of the agreement. So, we are taking; we are deciding plurality here according to cats and therefore, plural. You see the same thing here, 'either my shoes or my coat is always on the floor.' So, whatever is close to the verb, 'my coat' is singular; therefore, this is singular. Now you see it again, 'Rekha and Amala do not want to see that movie.'

'Rekha and Amala do not want to see that movie', so, which one do we pick here? Clearly, as you see, the answer is, 'do not', i.e. because of Rekha and Amala. Look at this verb, the agreement is indicated by zero, and this is where it is plural and because these two are plural. Yet, one more time, why do we say 'don't' and why we don't say 'doesn't', of course, I will discuss this part, separately with you.

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• 6. Rekha (doesn't, don't) know the answer.

• 7. One of my sisters (is, are) going on a trip to France.

• 8. The man with all the birds (live, lives) on my street.

• 9. The movie, including all the previews, (take, takes) about two hours to watch.

• 10. The players, as well as the captain, (want, wants) to win.



Few more sentences; 'Rekha does not know the answer.' Keep this thing in mind. Here, if this sentence was not a negative sentence, then this sentence would be, 'Rekha knows the answer.' But, in a negative sentence, this singular is appearing here. I will discuss this one more time. This is why I said; when you observe these sentences, they are going to help you think about

more things without violating the principle of agreement between the subject and the verb in the predicate.

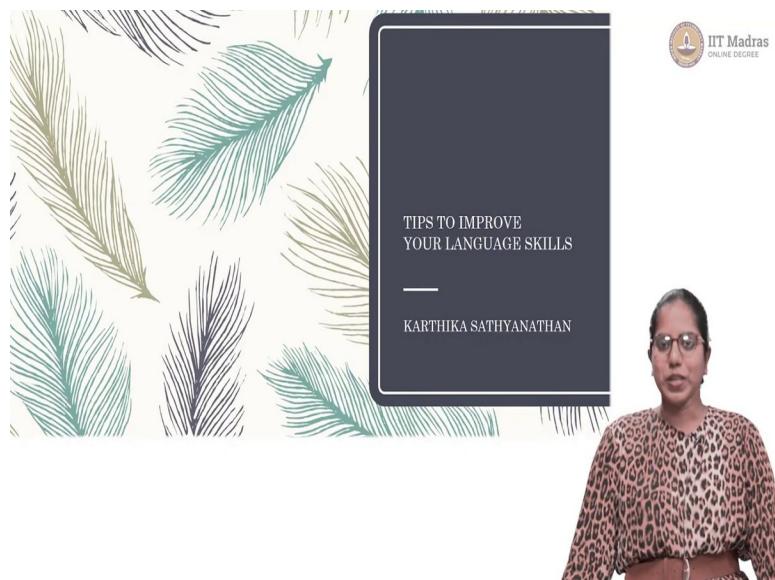
'One of my sisters is going on a trip to France', so, when we say one of my sisters is going on a trip to France what we are actually saying is that I may have more than one sisters, but as part of the subject, it is just singular, so in the agreement system it makes a singularity. 'The man with all the birds', so, there is a man who is a bird lover, and he lives on my street who has a lot of birds. So, here we are indicating singularity with this.

What he lives with, is not adding anything to the singularity or plurality, and we pick a singular marker here. 'The movie, including all previews; we take singularity from here and pick the singular verb here. 'The players' now, here 'players' is plural 'as well as the captain', even though this is singular, we take a plural marker, i.e., zero on the verb, and say, 'the players, as well as the captain, want to win.'

These ten sentences are showing you that the principles of the agreement are not violated even once. The simple principle is singularity on the subject, singularity on the verb, plurality on the subject, plurality on the verb. This is the most important part of understanding the agreement. This as an underlying rule and then we see the application of these things. We observe these things and achieve accuracy in our sentences in speaking, and thus it yields to our confidence, and it adds to fluency. Next time, I will come and discuss another aspect of a sentence with you. Meanwhile, please do the practice. Thank you so much.

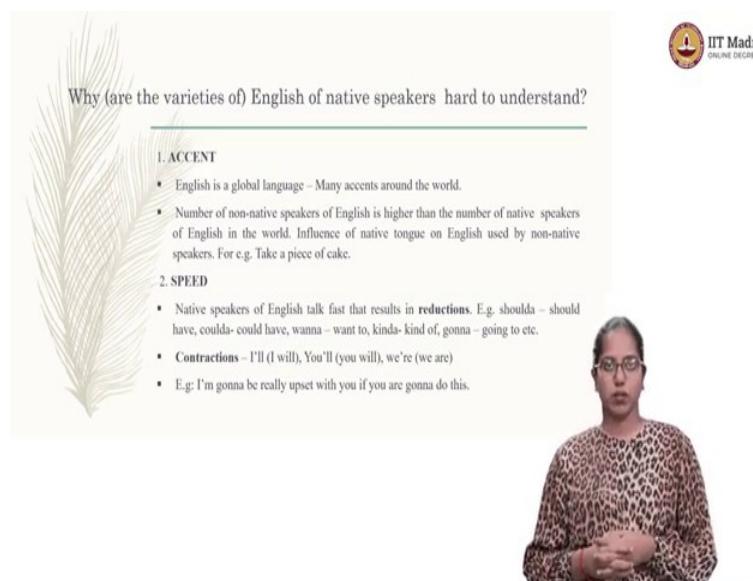
**English - I (Basic English)**  
**Karthika Sathyananthan**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Chennai**  
**Lecture 23**  
**How to Improve Your Language Skills?**

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Welcome, all. In today's class, I am going to give you a few tips to improve your language skills.

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So let us get started with the question, why are the varieties of English of the native speakers hard to understand? Well, the first and foremost reason is the accent. You know English is a global language which means English is spoken all around the world. So, what are the different varieties of English that we know? We know there is Canadian English, there is American English, there is British English.

And again, within British English, there is something called Wales English, Scottish English there are many different varieties. There is Australian English; there is Indian English, there is Chinese English, there is African English. So the list is big. So, an important point that needs to be understood or noted is that the number of non-native speakers of English is higher than the number of native speakers of English. This means when non-native speakers use the language, there is always an interference or influence of their mother tongue. So, let me substantiate that point with an example. Let us take the sentence; Take a piece of cake. How do Indians pronounce that? Take a piece of cake, which means there is no aspiration there. What is aspiration? Aspiration is that extra puff of air when you pronounce the word.

Britishers, on the other hand, pronounce the sentence with aspiration. So how do they pronounce? They pronounce it something like; Take a piece of cake. On the other hand, Africans pronounce the sentence, my appropriation may not be perfect, pardon me for that, but I will try. They might say something like; Take a piece of cake. So you see how accent makes a difference. The second reason why the varieties of English of native speakers is hard to understand is because of the speed.

The speed at which they pronounce words or sentences. So, native speakers of English speak the language really fast. So this results in something called reductions. And what are reductions? You would have heard words like shoulda, woulda, coulda; so what is shoulda? Shoulda is a reduction of should have; coulda is a reduction of could have, woulda is a reduction of would have, gonna is a reduction of going to.

Similarly, when they talk fast, another phenomenon occurs, and that is called contraction. Examples of contractions are I'll instead of I will, you'll instead of you will, we're instead of we are. So, let me use that in a sentence. Instead of saying, 'I am going to be really upset if you are going to be doing this', a native speaker might talk really fast with reductions and contractions

and say the same sentence or pronounce the same sentence like; 'I'm gonna be really upset if you are gonna do this.' How do they say? 'I'm gonna be really upset if you are gonna do this.' So, what are the reductions and contractions used in the sentence? The contraction is 'I'm' which is 'I am.' The reduction used is 'gonna' which means going to.

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The slide has a decorative background featuring a large feather on the left. At the top right is the IIT Madras logo with the text 'IIT Madras ONLINE DEGREE'. Below the logo is the title 'Why is the English of native speakers hard to understand?'. Under the title is a section header '3. VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR'. A note below it states: 'Adapted from "The Colors of Animals" by Sir John Lubbock in A Book of Natural History (1902, ed. David Starr Jordan)'. The main text of the passage is:  
*The color of animals is by no means a matter of chance; it depends on many considerations, but in the majority of cases tends to protect the animal from danger by rendering it less conspicuous. Perhaps it may be said that if coloring is mainly protective, there ought to be but few brightly colored animals. There are, however, not a few cases in which vivid colors are themselves protective. The kingfisher itself, though so brightly colored, is by no means easy to see. The blue harmonizes with the water, and the bird as it darts along the stream looks almost like a flash of sunlight.*

A woman with glasses and a patterned blouse is speaking in front of the slide.

The next is vocabulary and grammar. Well, if you do not have a good vocabulary or a basic understanding of the grammatical structure of that language, then you might find it hard to comprehend. Let me substantiate this point with an example. So, this example is actually an exercise. So, let us do this exercise together.

So, I am going to take a passage, and I am going to read it out for you. I want you to answer a question after I read this out. So, let me start; this passage is adapted from the colours of animals by Sir John Lubbock in 'A Book of Natural History.' Let me read this out for you; 'the colour of animals by no means is a matter of chance, it depends on many considerations, but in the majority of cases it tends to protect the animal from the danger by rendering it less conspicuous. Perhaps it may be said that if colouring is mainly protective, there ought to be but few brightly coloured animals. There are, however, not a few cases in which vivid colours are themselves protective. The Kingfisher itself, though so brightly coloured, is by no means easy to see. The blue harmonizes with the water, and the bird as it darts along the stream looks almost like a flash of light, a flash of sunlight.'

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Why is the English of native speakers hard to understand?

- The example of the kingfisher in the passage is intended to prove \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A) that the color of an animal is not always adapted to match the background color of its environment
  - B) that the color of an animal is always adapted to match the background color of its environment
  - C) that the color of an animal is an **extraneous** detail, evolutionarily speaking
  - D) that the color of an animal is, statistically speaking, most likely to be adapted to match the background color of its environment
  - E) None of these answers; it is an **anecdotal story** designed to inject some **levity** into the passage



Why is the English of native speakers hard to understand?

### 3. VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

- Adapted from "The Colors of Animals" by Sir John Lubbock in A Book of Natural History (1902, ed. David Starr Jordan)

*The color of animals is by no means a matter of chance; it depends on many considerations, but in the majority of cases tends to protect the animal from danger by rendering it less conspicuous. Perhaps it may be said that if coloring is mainly protective, there ought to be but few brightly colored animals. There are, however, not a few cases in which vivid colors are themselves protective. The kingfisher itself, though so brightly colored, is by no means easy to see. The blue harmonizes with the water, and the bird as it darts along the stream looks almost like a flash of sunlight.*



So, after reading this passage, I want you to answer this question and what is the question? The example of Kingfisher in the passage is intended to prove .....? So, you need to select the right option. The options are A; that the colour of an animal is not always adapted to match the background colour of its environment.

Option B; that the colour of an animal is always adapted to match the background colour of its environment. Option C; that the colour of an animal is an extraneous detail evolutionary speaking. Option D; the colour of an animal is statistically speaking most likely to be adapted to

match the background colour of its environment. And Option E; none of these answers, it is an anecdotal story designed to inject some levity into the passage.

Now, let us suppose someone does not understand the meaning of the words that are marked in green, i.e., extraneous, anecdotal story and levity. Do you think the person will be able to solve this passage or solve this question after reading the passage? No. Now, let us suppose the person understands the meaning of these words. Now, even if he understands the meaning of these words and does not understand the meaning of the words and expressions that are marked in red and green, then he would not be able to answer this question.

The first sentence is, 'the colour of animals is by no means a matter of chance.' What does it say? Does it say the colour of animals is a matter of chance or does it say the colour of animals is not a matter of chance? To understand this, you need to know the meaning of the expressions 'by no means' and 'a matter of chance.' Similarly, the next sentence is, 'the Kingfisher itself though so brightly coloured is by no means easy to see.'

What does this mean? Does it mean that the Kingfisher is easy to see or Kingfisher is not easy to see? Well, the answer is, the Kingfisher though brightly coloured, is not easy to see. So let me repeat that for you. For you to understand this passage and to mark the right answer, you need to know the meanings of certain expressions and vocabulary words that are given in this passage.

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### How to listen well in a conversation ?

- Relax and focus.
- Do not translate English into your mother tongue (in your head) while listening.
- Tend to understand the context.

A: My name is Keya. I want to book a room in this hotel.

B: May, I see your identification, please?

A: **Here you go.**

B: Thanks. Do you want a single, double, triple, quad, or a **suite room** ?

Well, let us come to the next subsection of this module. How to listen well in a conversation? Well, the first and foremost point is that you need to relax and focus. Second-language speakers of English tend to translate English to their mother tongue when a conversation happens with another person, and that is not the right thing to do. Because you are going to waste a lot of energy and effort in translating and therefore, your focus and attention go from what is spoken to the translation that is happening inside your head.

And the next important point is to try to understand the context. Now, even if you do not understand the meaning of your words, if you try to understand the context, if you get the context of what is being spoken, you will be able to derive the meaning of certain words that you did not understand. Now, let me substantiate that point with an example.

So, let us suppose someone is hearing recorded audio of a conversation between Keya and a receptionist at a hotel. So, Keya goes and meets with the receptionist and says; 'Hi, my name is Keya. I want to book a room in this hotel.' The receptionist says; 'may I see your identification, please?' And Keya says, 'here you go.' Receptionist responds thanks, do you want a single, double, triple, quad or a suite room?

Now, let us suppose the person who has been hearing this recorded audio speech does not understand the meaning of the expression, 'here you go.' Now, let us see if he can derive the meaning from the context. Similarly, if he understands the context, he will be able to derive the meaning of 'here you go' and 'suite room.' How? Let us look at the sentences that precede the expression 'here you go.' What is that? 'May I see your identification, please?'

And, what is the sentence that comes after this expression? 'Thanks', which means he can safely assume that Keya has shown her identification card, and maybe 'here you go' means something like 'here it is.' What is a quad room? If he understands the meaning of a quad room or a triple room or double room and single room, then it is very easy for him to assume that a suite room must be a room that is bigger than a quad room.

Quad room is a room that accommodates four people and triple room; 3 people, double room; 2 people and single room; 1 person. So suite room should be a room larger than a quad room. And his guess is right. A suite room is a room attached to another room. So, it is something like a

mini apartment; it can have multiple rooms. Suite room is the largest room that you can get in a hotel. So, I hope this example you understand, what deriving meaning from the context means.

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The slide has a decorative background with a large feather graphic on the left. At the top right is the IIT Madras Online Degree logo. The title 'How to improve your listening & speaking skills?' is centered above a horizontal line. Below the line is a bulleted list of tips:

- Listen to different varieties of English.
- Listen to men, women and children.
- Listen to as many different formats and sources as possible – songs, news, films, TV shows, plays, audiobooks, podcasts, textbook exercises etc.
- Listen to something every day. Listen to some different every day. Listen without getting bored. The more you listen, the better you get at it.
- Listen when you do other activities which doesn't require much attention.
- How do you choose the material? – Understand more than 50% and less than 90% of the content.

A woman with glasses and a leopard-print top is speaking on the right side of the slide.

The first step is to listen to different varieties of English and listen to men, women and children. So, if you get used to the many different varieties of English to the accents, what are the different varieties of English? We have already looked at it; there is Canadian English, Australian English, American English, British English, Indian English, and the list is long.

So, get used to those different varieties of English, and you also make sure that hear men, women and children speak. Listen to many different formats and sources as possible; do not limit your listening to just one source or format. For example, news, so after a point, what happens is if you limit your listening to just one format, you get bored, and you might end up dropping the exercise so that is counter unproductive and that is not we want. So, make sure that you rely on many different formats and sources and what are these formats and sources? It can be songs; it can be news, films, TV shows, plays, audiobooks, podcast and textbook exercises. The next point is to listen to something every day and listen to something different every day.

For example, if you are watching the news for half an hour today, make sure that you listen to songs the next day, or you work on a few grammar exercises, or you watch a couple of films in a week. So, make sure that you listen to something different every day. So, what is the purpose,

what is the intention behind that? The intent is, you should listen without getting bored. So, the more you listen, the better you get at it.

The next step is to listen when you are doing other activities. Particularly the activities that do not require much attention and what are those activities? Jogging, gymming, exercising, maybe when you chop vegetables, maybe when you cook. Make sure that you listen to a song when you chop vegetables and try to memorize the lyrics and sing it out your friends or if you are a shy person, sing it yourself in the bathroom.

So, make sure that you listen to something different, particularly when you are doing activities that do not require much attention. Now the important question is, how do you choose the material? Make sure that whatever material you chose, you understand more than 50 per cent and less than 90 per cent of the content. If you choose a material where you understand less than 50 per cent of the content, then it means that the material is very hard for you.

So after a point, you might not understand, and you might lose interest in what you are reading. Likewise, if you chose a material where you understand more than 90 per cent of the content, it simply means that the material you picked up for yourself is very easy. So, there is not going to be much learning because you are going to learn new words or expressions. So, choose your material wisely.

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A few good sources

- News – BBC, CNN, Fox News, Indian News Channels in English etc.
- Radio – BBC Radio Service, available online - free of cost.
- Podcast – Radio shows that are available only on the internet.
- Movies – 2 Hollywood movies per week (Do not watch with subtitles)
- TV shows – Better than movies because they are longer.
- Songs – Opportunity for repetition.

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Now, let me give you a few good sources. For news, you may watch BBC, CNN, Fox News, Indian News channels are also there in English, you may watch them if you are interested in current affairs or you would like to know what is happening around you. You can watch the BBC radio service which is available online and free of cost.

And what is a podcast? Podcast are radio shows that are available only on the internet. Then there are movies; you may watch two English movies every week, but make sure that you watch them without subtitles. TV shows are better than movies because they are longer. So, you will have more input.

The next option that you have is to listen to songs. Songs are good because lyrics get repeated. So, there is an opportunity for repetition, and you will be able to memorize those sentences and sing to your friends and sing to yourself, so in the process, you might be able to improve your pronunciation.

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A few good sources

- Audiobooks – YouTube, Audible, Blinkist, etc. (2X natural speed).
- TED talks – speeches and informational videos, professionally produced, highly suitable for listening.
- Use dictionaries – pronunciation.
- Grammar books and worksheets ( beginner, intermediate, and advanced) - available online free of cost.
- Talk to your friends in English.



The next is audiobooks. You will get a lot of free audiobooks on YouTube. If you want high-quality audiobooks, then you may also purchase Audible or Blinkist. In Audible, there are thousands of audiobooks and Blinkist summarizes a book in 15 minutes you get it in audio format, and you can also read this summary of that in this app. If you like the summary of the book and if you want to read the entire book, then you may go ahead and purchase that either in audible or you could go to the internet and see if you can get it free of cost, it might be available.

The next option is TED Talks. What is Ted? TED is a company that produces speeches and informational videos that are professionally produced, very suitable for listening. So, if you listen to TED Talks, your knowledge of a particular domain or a topic might also improve. So, it is basically like two birds in a single stone. So, you improve your language, and you also improve your understanding of a particular topic, your knowledge about a particular domain.

The next important source is dictionaries. Well, if you have any doubts with regard to the pronunciation of words, then I would say dictionaries are a good source to rely on. You may also use the internet; you can type and search for their pronunciation. The good thing about the internet is also that you can get the translation in different accents.

For example, if you wanted in American English, if you want to know the pronunciation of a word in an American accent, then you can type it out, and you will be able to hear that, listen to that. The next source, the next option is grammar books and worksheets. So, grammar books are of different levels. There is beginner level, there is an intermediate level, and there is an advance level. We should; you should pick a grammar book according to your level. You can work on a few worksheets or grammar exercises. So, this can actually improve your hold or grip on grammar.

The final point is to talk to your friends in English. Well, if you have been talking to your friends in your mother tongue, it might be a little awkward to talk to them in English one fine day. So, a good solution to that could be to find people who are interested in improving their language skills among your friend circle.

And, try to convince them to speak to you or communicate with you in this language. So, initially, you may use the bilingual method where you mix your mother tongue and English, and eventually, you can switch to English. So with that, we come to the end of this class, I hope you enjoyed this class. I will meet you with a different topic, on a different day. Until then, stay safe, take care. Bye.

**English – I (Basic English)**  
**Karthika Sathyananthan**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Chennai**  
**Lecture 24**  
**Tips for Reading Comprehension**

Hello all, I welcome you to this module. In today's module, I will be giving you a few tips to improve your reading skills.

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### READING SKILLS

Reading improves your vocabulary. Vocabulary is most important in learning a language.

By actively reading or observing the text (structure of sentences), you can improve your grammar.

This also leads to better writing and speaking (English for academic and business purposes).



Let's get started. Let me start with a question, why is reading skills important? The first and foremost reason is that reading improves your vocabulary and vocabulary is most important when it comes to language learning. By actively reading or observing that text, you also observe the structure of the sentence, which means, in the process, you can improve your grammar. So, enhanced vocabulary and good grammar lead to better writing and speaking, and this is going to be particularly useful if you are going to use English for academic and business purposes.

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## THE RULES FOR COMPREHENSION

Read out loud (at times) – reading and listening  
 Read a book with a pen.  
 Do a quick scanning of the book/passage for important key passages/ points.  
 Read the entire paragraph or the passage before you highlight something.  
 Pay attention to summary words – therefore, as a result, hence, in short, in conclusion etc.  
 Circle key words or difficult jargons in a passage.  
 Paraphrase what you read.  
 Interact and engage with the text (who is the main character, what issue does this article address? What is the author trying to tell you? Does she make compelling points? Does the author show any bias?) Look for answers while you read.



Let me come to the first subsection of this module, i.e., the rules for comprehension. So, the first and foremost rule is to read out loud at times, particularly the important passages. So, if not the entire book, you can read out important passages. So, reading out loud also means slow reading. So, in the process, you read with inflexions and punctuations, which means there is going to be better understanding.

Also, as you read out loud, you also get to hear what you read, which means listening is embedded in the process of reading out loud. So, simultaneously you read and listen, and therefore your grasp of concepts, keywords and the structure of the sentence is going to be better. The second rule is to read a book with a pen. Why? Because every time you come across a keyword or a summary statement or an important passage, you can mark it. So that once you are done marking, once you are done reading the book, you can always go back to the important marked sections of the book or the passage.

The third rule is to do a quick scanning of the book or the passage for key or important passages or points. While reading, do not start by reading word by word, do a quick scan and find key terms and summary statements. Read the entire paragraph or passage before you highlight something. That is the next rule. So, before you highlight, this is only when you highlight, okay. Before you highlight, you make sure that you have read the entire passage because quite often, the first sentence might come out very striking, but not necessarily that the summary statement is the first statement.

So, some passages can be tricky, so to notice that, make sure that you read the entire passage before marking the important points. The fifth rule is to pay attention to summary words; what are summary words? Therefore, as a result, hence, in short, in conclusion, etcetera are summary words. So, these words are followed by the author's note or the author's conclusion of what the article is all about.

The next important rule is to circle keywords or difficult jargons in a passage. It is always important to mark keywords or jargons. If you mark jargons, and if you do not know the meaning of that jargon, try to interpret the meaning of that from the context or the sentences situated before and after those words and try to infer meaning from the context. The next rule is to circle keywords or difficult jargons in a passage.

By doing this, you know what is important in the passage, and when you underline a jargon, you also know what you have not really understood. The only technique that you can apply to solve the problem of jargon is to read the meaning from the context. The seventh important rule is to paraphrase what you read. If you are not able to paraphrase or translate it in your own words, it means you have not understood the paragraph.

So, make sure that you paraphrase what you have read. The final important point is to interact and engage with the text. What does that mean? That means to critically read a piece of text. So, ask these questions, who is the main character? What issue does this article address? What is the author trying to tell you? Does she make compelling points? Does the author show any bias? So, look out for answers while you read a book or a passage.

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## READING COMPREHENSION FOR TESTS - TIPS

### Budget your time

How many passages? How many exercises? How much time?

Less time on short/easy passages and more time on difficult/ longer passages.

Time yourself and stick to the plan.

### Reading plan

1. Skim the text : Reading the surface of the text to understand the overall message.

- heading, subheading (subject of the text)

- read the first few sentences of each paragraph.



Now, coming to the next subsection of this module, i.e., reading comprehension for the test. I am going to give you a few tips that are going to be useful for you when you are writing a test, and it involves reading comprehension passage. So, the first thing that you need to do is budget your time. These are important questions. Look for the number of passages, how many passages are given in the test, how many exercises need to be solved, how much time do I have?

So, give less time to short or easy passages and give more time to the difficult and longer passages. And, make sure that you time yourself and stick to that plan. The next process involved is reading the passage. So, to start with, you should skim the text; what is skimming? Skimming is reading the surface of the text to understand the overall message. So, how do you skim a text?

You look out for headings and subheadings. Why? Because it helps you understand the subject of the text. Then, read the first few lines of each paragraph. It is always a first few lines or the last few lines that summarize the paragraph. So, you can look out for summary statements in the first two lines or the last two lines. Now, after skimming, you have a rough idea of what the passage is about, what do you do next? Let me substantiate this point with an example.

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## READING COMPREHENSION FOR TESTS - TIPS

Read the first line (marked in red) of the two paras and try to understand the main topic in each paragraph.

Philosophy of Education is a label applied to the study of the purpose, process, nature and ideals of education. It can be considered a branch of both philosophy and education. Education can be defined as the teaching and learning of specific skills, and the imparting of knowledge, judgment and wisdom, and is something broader than the societal institution of education we often speak of.

Many educationalists consider it a weak and woolly field, too far removed from the practical applications of the real world to be useful. But philosophers dating back to Plato and the Ancient Greeks have given the area much thought and emphasis, and there is little doubt that their work has helped shape the practice of education over the millennia.



So, we will do a small paragraph comprehension to understand this point better. So, this paragraph is about the philosophy of education. So, let me read out the first few sentences of this paragraph, it is marked in red. 'Philosophy of education is a label applied to the study of the purpose, process, nature and ideals of education.'

And, if you further read, you will notice that the first sentence of this paragraph which I readout is the summary statement of that paragraph. Similarly, in the second paragraph, 'many educationists consider it a weak and woolly field, too far removed from the practical applications of the real world to be useful.' This again is a summary statement of the entire paragraph. So, now that after skimming, you have a rough idea of what the passage is all about, what do you do next?

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## READING COMPREHENSION FOR TESTS - TIPS

2. Go ahead with the easiest exercises :

- read the questions and fully understand them.
- understand the keywords or their synonyms (help you identify the answers).

According to the passage given below, is the following statement True or False

- a) Educationists consider philosophy a 'weak and woolly' field.

Philosophy of Education is a label applied to the study of the purpose, process, nature and ideals of education. It can be considered a branch of both philosophy and education. Education can be defined as the teaching and learning of specific skills, and the imparting of knowledge, judgment and wisdom, and is something broader than the societal institution of education we often speak of. Many educationists consider it a weak and woolly field, too far removed from the practical applications of the real world to be useful. But philosophers dating back to Plato and the Ancient Greeks have given the area much thought and emphasis, and there is little doubt that their work has helped shape the practice of education over the millennia.



You then go ahead with the easiest exercises. So, make sure that you read the questions and fully understand them. So, after understanding the questions, look for keywords or synonyms of keywords, this will help you identify the answers. Let me substantiate this with an example. So, here is the same reading paragraph. Now the question is, according to the passage given below, is the following statement true or false?

Educationists consider philosophy a weak and woolly field. So, what are the keywords in this question? Educationist and weak and woolly field; I have underlined the key terms. So, now you are going to be searching for these key terms in the passage. So, where do you see that? Yes, here it is, the fourth line says, 'many educationists consider it a weak and woolly field, too far removed from the practical applications of the real world to be useful.' So, your answer is true.

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## READING COMPREHENSION FOR TESTS - TIPS

3. Read the text and find the answers.
4. Move on to the next exercise.

Challenges while reading – Lack of rich vocabulary and practise.



Now, the third important point is to read the text and find the answers. So, once you are done with skimming, once you identify keywords and you answer easy questions, then it is time for you to get to the hard and difficult questions that required you to read word by word. So, you need to read word by word, moving your fingers through the text. So, in the process, you will be able to find out the answers.

Now, let us suppose you get stuck with jargon, or for that matter question, you are not able to find the answer to that question, what do you do? Do not spend more time on one question or a single jargon. Whenever you get stuck with a jargon, try to infer the meaning of that jargon from the context. Look out for meaning from the surrounding information. For example, the word woolly here, I do not understand what the word woolly is, what do I do? I read out the entire sentence.

So, it says, 'many educationists consider it a weak and woolly field, too far removed from the practical applications of the real world to be useful.' So, I infer that, woolly in this context does not have a positive connotation and it is something similar to a weak field which means I can infer that the meaning is related to something vague or unclear. So, you do not get stuck with a single jargon or a single question.

Do not spend; it can eat up your time, so, do not spend more time on a single question. So, move on to the next exercise. And then, if you have solved all the answers and you can later come back to that difficult question and try answering that question. So, what are the challenges we face

while reading? So, all of us would have done comprehension passages at some point in our life's in exams.

So, my experience says that one of the biggest challenges is the lack of rich vocabulary, so you often get stuck with jargons. The second problem is that I might get stuck with certain questions or I do not know how to go about, so there is a mismanagement of time, so which means there is a lack of practice. So, once you address these two issues; lack of rich vocabulary and lack of practice, you will get better at reading.

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### HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR READING SKILLS?

#### **Read more and read widely**

Read and read as much as possible – newspapers, magazines, books, articles etc.

Read something you like in the beginning) – history, films, sports, editorials etc.

Read something different everyday (different themes and genres).

#### **Note down and review new vocabulary.**

Keep a notebook and pen handy while you read.

Practise makes reading perfect – read it more than once.



So, now coming to the third subsection of our module, how to improve your reading skills? First and foremost rule which is the golden rule is to read more and read widely, read more and read widely, read and read as much as possible, read newspapers, read magazines, read books, read articles anything that comes to your hand please read. Read something you like in the beginning. So, if you are not an ardent reader, make sure that the first few picks are always on those topics that interest you.

For example, if you love history, choose history books, if you love films, pick books or articles related to films. If you like sports, pick up something, read something from the sports section of the newspaper or pick up books related to sports. If you are interested in current affairs, make sure that you read editorials, newspaper editorials, etcetera. So, read something different every day.

So, as you gradually progress, make sure that you read different kinds of materials and different genres touching up on different topics. So, while reading, it is also important that every time you come across a new word or a jargon, you note it down and review that vocabulary later. So, for that, what do you do? You keep a notebook and a pen handy while you read.

And then coming to the final point, practice makes reading perfect. Yes, read as much as possible, read as many times as possible, read more than once and what happens is, you get acclimatized to the jargons. And, now when you pick up new jargons, when you pick up new words, try to use that in your daily speech with your friends or family.

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## CRITICAL READING

### 1. Separating facts from opinion.

Facts: information that can be proved true through objective evidence. Facts can be checked for accuracy and thus proved true. Here is a fact: China is the most populous country in the world.

Opinion: belief, judgement or conclusion that cannot be objectively proved true. Here is an opinion: the best treatment for thyroid is homeopathy. (There is no consensus in the scientific community that it is true)

Note: Much of what we read is a mixture of fact and opinion.



Now, coming to the final section of this module, we have critical reading as the fourth subsection. What is critical reading, and why is critical reading important? So, to read critically, you need to follow these three strategies. The first one is separate facts from opinion. What is a fact? Fact is information that can be proved true through objective evidence and facts can be checked for accuracy and thus proved true.

For example, if I say that China is the most populous country in the world. In that case, it is a fact because I can substantiate my argument with data, there is a lot of data supporting that statement, and therefore it can be called a fact. However, an opinion is a belief, judgment or

conclusion that cannot be objectively proved true. Here is an opinion, 'the best treatment for thyroid is homoeopathy.'

So, there is no consensus in the scientific community that this is true. It is my opinion, or it is my belief that the best treatment for thyroid is homoeopathy. Someone might feel that allopathy has better treatment options, or Ayurveda does better in treating thyroid. So, what needs to be understood is that critical reader should be able to separate facts with the writer's opinion. Also, note that much of what we read is a mixture of facts and opinions.

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## CRITICAL READING

### 2. Detecting propaganda.

Propaganda – information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view. (politicians and advertising agencies) Part of being a critical reader is also to recognise propaganda techniques for the emotional fluff they are.

The most common type of propaganda technique is transfer, in which products or candidates try to associate themselves with something that people admire or love. Politicians trying to use a) national symbols (flag for example to invoke patriotism) or b) famous film actors (our love and liking for the actor) to promote their political campaign – our feelings we have towards the actor and the patriotism stirred in us by the national flag will get transferred to the politicians, who gets us to vote for him.



The second strategy is to detect propaganda. What is propaganda? Propaganda is information, especially of a biased and misleading nature used to promote political cause or point of view. Who uses it the most? Politicians, advertising agencies and salesman. So, part of being a critical reader is also to recognize propaganda techniques for all the emotional fluff they are.

So, the most common type of propaganda technique is transfer in which products or candidates try to associate themselves with something that people love or admire. Politicians try to use national symbols, flag, for example, to invoke patriotism or famous film actors to transfer love and liking for the actor to the politician. So, this he uses to promote their political campaign. So, in the process, what happens is, that our feelings that we have towards the actor and the patriotism stirred in us by the national flag will get transferred to the politicians who get us vote for him.

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## CRITICAL READING

Recognizing errors in reasoning.

Valid point – supported by rocklike foundation of solid support.  
Fallacious point - based on a house of cards that offers no real support at all.

One common fallacy is circular reasoning – the supporting reasoning is really the same as the conclusion. It is illogical. For example: Mahesh is a great swimmer, because he is so wonderful at swimming. Supporting reason: he is so wonderful at swimming; Conclusion: Mahesh is a great swimmer. We still do not know why he is a great swimmer. No real reasons have been given.

False cause – a fallacy that oversimplifies the issue. That is, to assume that because event B follows event A, event B was caused by event A. For example: Every day, I eat paratha for breakfast. One time, I had a dosa instead, and there was a major earthquake in my city.



The next strategy is to recognize errors in reasoning. What is a valid point? A valid point is always supported by a rock-like foundation, so there is solid support there. Whereas, a fallacious point is something that is based on a house of cards that offers no real support at all. Let me substantiate that with a few examples.

So, one common fallacy is called circular reasoning in which the supporting reasoning is the same as the conclusion. So, it means it is illogical. For example, 'Mahesh is a great swimmer because he is wonderful at swimming.' What is the supporting reason? 'He is wonderful at swimming; and what is the conclusion, 'Mahesh is a great swimmer.' It is illogical because we still do not know why he is a great swimmer, so no real reasons have been given.

The next technique or the next common fallacy is called false cause. A fallacy that oversimplifies the issue, this is to assume that because event B follows event A, event B was caused by event A. For example, 'every day I eat paratha for breakfast, one time I had a dosa instead, and there was a major earthquake in the city.' There was an earthquake in the city not because you had dosa. So, this is an example that helps us understand the false cause.

So, make sure that while you read, you recognize these errors in reasoning, you look for valid points, and you look for fallacious points. So, to summarize, in this lesson, we have learned that critical readers evaluate an author's support for a point and determine whether the support is solid or not. Critical reading involves the following three abilities; separating fact from opinion,

detecting propaganda and recognizing errors in reasoning. So, with that we come to the end of this module, I will meet you with a different module on a different day. Until then, stay safe. Happy learning. Bye.

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