



IIT Madras

ONLINE DEGREE

English – I (Basic English)

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Lecture No. 33

Phrasal Pause

Good afternoon and welcome to speaking module of the course in English. Today, we are going to talk at some length about how and why speakers of standard variety of English pause after a phrase within a sentence, after a clause and within the sentence.

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Phrasal Pause

- Two or more words behaving in a sentence like one word make phrase. For example, an apple, a big basket, a committee of experts, etc. all behave in a sentence just like a single noun will. You can say “fish swims”, you can also say “an apple sells”, “ a big basket has been kept at the temple.”, and “ A committee of experts has been formed.”



For want of a better word many of us call this second long pause, very very short but very clear pause, is called a phrasal pause. What is a pause? Pause is a halt, is it is a temporary stop in one's progress towards something. So, as you speak and you stop speaking for a moment, then people might say you have taken a pause. So, there is a similar pause after a phrase in the English language. This is unique to the English language.

Not many other languages that I know of pause in this manner after a phrase, after a clause, before the sentence. We do not have anything like that in Hindi. In Hindi, we do not Say '*Kisi*

Jamane Mein Ek Raja Tha'. But in English we do, we say, 'once upon a time there was a king. The king had three daughters. *Hindi mein aisa Nahin Kahate*. We do not say in Hindi, in Tamil, in many Asian languages we do not have this kind of pause; but English has it.

So, what is the phrasal pause? What is a phrase? A phrase is a group of one, two or more words which together behave like one word, one unit. Say, for example, in a sentence like, 'fish swims', 'fish' is an entire noun phrase. In place of 'fish', you can have two words. You can say 'an apple sells.' These two words still make a noun phrase.

Or you can have three words; 'a big basket has been kept at the temple'. So, 'a big basket' is a phrase. It is still a noun phrase, 'at the temple' is also a phrase but it is a prepositional phrase. It follows 'at'. It is an, you know, it qualifies the preposition 'at', where is that big basket. That big basket is at the temple. So, words, 1, 2, 3 or even more that go together and behave like a phrase are called or behave like a word are called a phrase. And, a pause after the phrase can be called a phrasal pause.

This is characteristic of; this is very distinctive of, this is a unique feature of spoken English, standard varieties of spoken English. That the pause not only at the end of the sentence, English speakers also pause within the sentence, at the end of a clause, at the end of a phrase. In the rest of this unit today, we will talk about why, where and how English speakers pause within the sentence.

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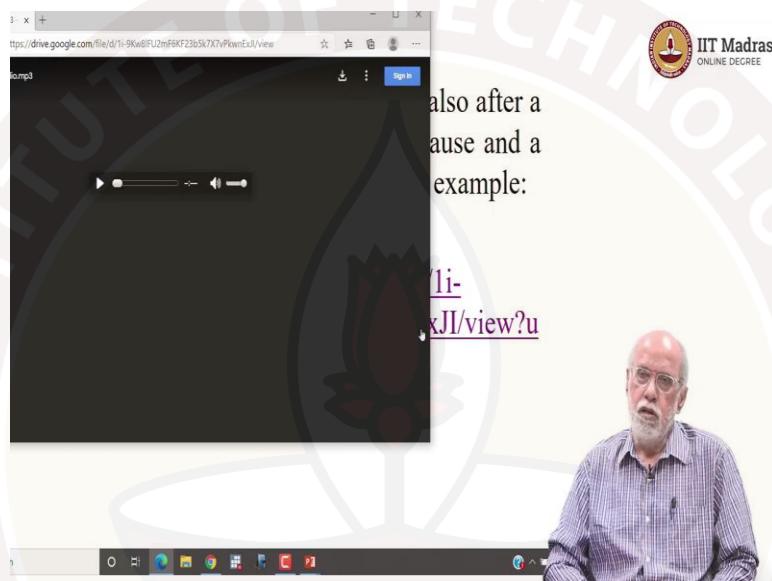
- Speakers of standard English pause also after a phrase, just as they pause after a clause and a sentence. Listen to the following for example:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1i-9Kw8lFU2mF6KF23b5k7X7vPkwnExJI/view?usp=sharing>



Alright, let us go to the next. In any standard variety, you know, next time you listen to the television news, not just the British Broadcasting Corporation news, in All India Radio, even Doordarshan, other Asian channels, you may notice that there is a similar pause after every phrase. I am going to play; my colleague is going to play an audio recording to you just now.

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First, she would not pause at all. She would go the first few seconds without a pause. I want you to see if you can notice such a pause and then I will request her at the second time to play it again and stop wherever she thinks there is a pause, shall we go? I will repeat myself. Try and listen for the pause. Do not worry about meaning. Meaning is pretty simple. The audio recording will play entirely. You should see where there is a pause and make a mental note. Next time my colleague plays it, she will also pause where she finds pause in the recording. Please.

Pre-recorded Audio: 'Good evening. This is All India Radio, and I am Anuja Kumar with the news at 9. Prime Minister Narendra Modi today stated that India is one of the safest habitats in the world with almost 3,000 Tigers. Releasing the old...'

Okay, did you notice that even before the end of a sentence there is a pause in English? I am going to request my colleague to play it once again, and this time she would pause where there is a pause. Please.

Pre-recorded Audio: 'Good evening.'

There is a pause. Every time you greet somebody, take a pause. Good evening, Good morning.

Do not begin at once. Give it a second.

Pre-recorded Audio: 'This is All India Radio'

Every time you announce an identity, I am Shreesh Chaudhari and then go on. I am an English teacher. So, take a pause every time you introduce yourself or anybody else.

Pre-recorded Audio: 'and I am Anuja Kumar with the news'.

Okay, so you, I am Anuja Kumar with the news. Please.

Pre-recorded Audio: 'at nine.'

You may not have so many. You may not have so frequent, but the idea is that every unit is followed by a pause.

Pre-recorded Audio: 'Prime Minister Narendra Modi today stated'.

So, one clause. You can; you can pause after the phrase. You can pause after a clause. So, here the speaker pauses after 'the Prime Minister Narendra Modi today stated' and then she would go on to what was stated, the next clause. Just see.

Pre-recorded Audio: 'that India is one of the safest habitats in the world with almost 3,000'.

So, another unit, another unit, you know, another clause. So, this is how English speakers pause at the end of a phrase, at the end of a clause, at the end of a sentence. And, each pause is longer than the previous. The pause at the end of the clause is a little longer, not too much, not 2 minute, not 20 seconds, maybe a couple of seconds longer, a nanosecond longer than the pause at the end of a phrase.

Similarly, pause at the end of a sentence is longer than the pause at the end of the clause. I will request my colleague to replay the recording without she is stopping it. You should notice if there is a pause where ever. Make a note. Please.

Pre-recorded Audio: 'Good evening. This is All India Radio, and I am Anuja Kumar with the news at nine. Prime Minister Narendra Modi today stated that India is one of the safest habitats in the world with almost 3,000 tigers. Releasing'

So, you know this is clear that you know, there is a perceptible pause at the end of a phrase, a clause and a sentence. Go to the next.

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Good evening# this is All India Radio# and I am Anuja Kumar # with the news at nine## Prime Minister Narendra Modi today stated# that India is one of the safest habitats in the world # with almost three thousand tigers....



For your convenience, I have marked it on the slide. You can see pauses marked by hashtag, you know. Good evening. This is All India Radio [pause], and I am Anuja Kumar with the news at 9. Prime Minister Narendra Modi today stated, [pause] you know, you can go on. Maybe I have done it, you know, 1 or 2 more. I have marked pauses at 1 or 2 more places than possibly the speaker did, but this is how it goes at the end of each unit.

You should check this site of All India Radio, and you often come across very good talks, features on wildlife, environment and other social and anthropological scientific issues. This was one on conservation of Tigers in India. Please go to the next.

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- This pause is not long, but it is noticeable. It is the punctuation of speech. Speaker pauses every few seconds.
- Pause in this manner follows a simple rule: pause after every phrase, or every group of words within a phrase, if the phrase is a big group of words.



Now, this pause as I said earlier is not too long but is noticeable. You can almost hear the silence if silence can be heard. It is the punctuation of speech. Later I will tell you how it is punctuation when you speak, but a general rule is speakers of standard varieties of English pause at the end of every unit, phrase, clause and sentence. Pause in this manner is called phrasal pause but if there are big groups of words, 'A committee of experts that specializes in botany', so you will take two pauses. But if it has only 2, 3 words, 'A committee of experts', then only one pause. The idea is each unit should be clearly audible.

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- Pause after a word of address is essential. For instance,

May I borrow this book # professor#

Do you #doctor # know why I got fever?##



Where do you generally pause in English frequently? There are some conventions. Of course, there are no hard and fast rules. If you are in a hurry, please go on without the pause, but if you speak with pause, your chances of being understood will be greater, it will be better. So, generally, speakers of standard varieties pause after words of the address. When you address somebody, say for example in this sentence, 'May I borrow this book, professor?' Or 'Do you doctor know why I got fever?' 'Will you Lizz, wait for me?' 'I want to request you to give me a lift.' 'Would you, John, like me to pick you up tomorrow in the morning?'

So, after you use words of address, doctor, professor, Ms, Mr, names; so, pause after a word of address such as by name or by a designation such as you can say, 'so kind of you Governor', you know, 'how thoughtful of you my dear'. Every time you use a word of address, you know, it should be followed by a pause. Next.

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- Pause after a pair of numbers, or three numbers, is helpful. For example, you should say



94#43#02#84#34 #or# 944#302#84#34##
The postal code of the area I live in is# 600#113##
my employee id is# 19#95##

Similarly, when you give numbers, telephone number, index number, you know there are varieties of context these days. When we share, our identity numbers with friends and family, in that case again; usually, it is good to pause after every 2 or every 3 digits. Say, for instance, I can give you my phone number, and it is 94 43 02 84 34. I can also group them as threes and twos, and I can say 944 302 8434. So, with the postal code. You have numbers and combinations of letters etcetera. Etcetera.

There again, take a pause after every 2 or 3 number so I can say my address is: Chennai-600 113. My employee ID is 19 95. So, in this manner, you really do not have to repeat yourself. Your listener understands the way you have spoken. Go on.

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- Similarly, when you tell your address, pause after every new level, e. g. door no., street, area, city, state. So, for instance,

My address is# D4/12# 2nd Link Road#
IIT Campus# Chennai 600#036



Similarly, when you tell your address, you know, each, we will start with the lowest unit, and we go to the higher level. So, door number, name then, Door number then Street, then Area, then City, then State, then maybe, postal index number or zip code in some countries. So, for example, you can say, it is not quite correct, but for a long time, my address was: D4 by 12 or D4 by 12, second link road, IIT Campus, Chennai 600 036.

I will repeat myself, for a long time, my address in Chennai was: D4 by 12, second link road, IIT Campus, Chennai, 600 036. So, this is how each unit of address is spoken by you should be followed by a short pause. Go on.

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- After words like "so", "therefore", "but", "thus", "of course", "indeed", "by all means", etc. also you should take a pause. For instance, you should say,



Without good health# there is no happiness##
so# invest in your health##

Ruth was tired# but# not bored## Many students
rise late # therefore # they come to class without
breakfast##



Some words, we call them discourse markers, that tell you that the kind of sentence that I had heard is going to change now. So, for example, words like, 'so', 'therefore', 'but', 'thus', 'of course', 'indeed', 'by all means' and many other words and phrases of this kind are necessarily followed by a pause.

Say, for instance, you know, we can say: 'Without good health, there is no happiness so invest in your health.' Even if 'so' is not a phrase, even if 'so' is not two digits or greater number, even if it is only one word, you should pause because it signals a change in discourse. It signals that something different is going to be said now or a conclusion is about to be drawn now, or some contradiction is coming, you know. There is a change in meaning.

Similarly, for example, look at this sentence: 'Ruth was tired but not bored', 'Many students rise late; therefore, they come to class without breakfast', so 'therefore' here draws the conclusion. In the earlier sentence, 'but' is a contradiction. Ruth, the young lady, may be tired.

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- After every word in a series, you should pause.
So for instance, you can say,

For breakfast# I take some corns # milk # eggs #
bread # butter # fruits # and tea ##

I am doing honours in Economics # but# I am
also interested in History # Philosophy #
Malayalam Literature # and Raja Ravi Varma's
paintings ##



Similarly, you know, when you count things in a series, after every word in a series, you should pause. So for instance, you can say: 'For breakfast, I take some corns, milk, eggs, bread, butter, fruits and tea.' This is how Standard English goes. You know, I mean, you may be still be understood, but it may not be good if you said: 'For breakfast, I take some corns, milk, eggs, bread, butter, fruits tea. 'No, that does not help your listener. Your listener will understand you best when these words are followed by a pause.

So, words in a series, some of my friends live in Chennai, but they also come from other cities such as Hyderabad, Bangalore, Trivandrum, Madurai, Coimbatore and Pune. So, I am counting names of in a series. Here is a student saying: 'I am doing Honours in Economics, but I am also interested in history, philosophy, Malayalam literature and Raja Ravi Varma's paintings.' So, counting, you know, things, commodities, goods, names in series, they should be followed by a pause, a short pause. Go on.

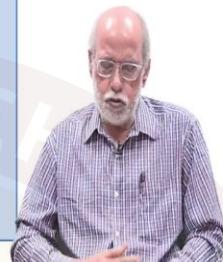
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- Ordinarily, the rule is : after every Noun Phrase, Verb Phrase, Adjectival Phrase and Adverbial Phrase.
- See, for instance, the following:

Rose # is a lovely flower##

The black rose # is the loveliest of flowers##

All the beautiful #black roses# that came from Bangalore yesterday #are# many say# extraordinarily lovely flowers##



Ordinarily, the rule is after every unit, a noun or a noun phrase, verb phrase, adjectival phrase, take a pause, long or short, you know. For instance, you know: 'Rose is a lovely flower'. 'The black rose is the loveliest of flowers.'

'All the beautiful black roses that came from Bangalore yesterday. You see, all of these are still noun phrase, in the first sentence 'rose' is a noun phrase, in the second sentence 'the black rose' is a noun phrase, in the third sentence, noun phrase has so many words, 'all the beautiful black roses that came from Bangalore yesterday', you know, it is, this phrase itself has three units of 4 units, three units actually. So, take a pause after every unit if it is a long-phrase.

So, we will say: All the beautiful black roses that came from Bangalore yesterday are many say extraordinarily lovely flowers. So, you are taking a pause after every unit. 'Many say' is parenthetic. 'Many say' - according to many people, that is another unit. So, even after, even if there is only one word before it, 'are', we take a pause. Listen to it again. All the beautiful black roses that came from Bangalore yesterday are many say extraordinarily lovely flowers. Next.

Noun phrase, adjectival phrase, verb phrase and adverb phrases or clauses are all followed by a pause in speech. I just said earlier, a pause is punctuation mark of speech, just as you use comma in writing, so here we use a pause.

We say, all the beautiful, we do not say, all the beautiful comma black roses comma that came from Bangalore yesterday comma, we do not speak that way. We signal these commas, these shorts stops, pauses through pauses. So, we say; all the beautiful black roses that came from Bangalore yesterday etcetera. We go on like that. That is the punctuation mark. Similarly, come to the next screen.

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- Noun phrase, adjectival phrase, verb phrase and adverb phrase or clauses are all followed by a pause in speech. This shows which words go together as a group. See the following, for example:

- He# that is down # needs fear no fall##
- Strike the iron# while it is hot##
- Only the wearer knows # where shoe pinches##
- Rabindranath Tagore# the Nobel laureate# was also a freedom fighter##
- All# that glitters# is not gold##



We signal the end of a phrase, noun phrase, adjectival phrase, verb phrase, adverb phrase or clauses; we indicate that now we are completing a unit by taking a pause. It may be one simple word. Say for example in the sentence: 'He', it is a noun phrase-'he', 'that is down', and that adjectival clause, 'needs fear no fall', is the verb compliment. It is a verb, you know, are followed by another noun. So, he that is down needs fear no fall.

Similarly, in the next sentence, you take a pause after the first clause. 'Strike the iron', strike the iron, pause, and then, adverb, when should you strike the iron? 'While it is hot'. So, that is an adverb, adverb of time. So, you know, this way you signal. 'Only the wearer knows', one clause, what does the wearer know? 'Where shoe pinches'. Another clause. 'Rabindranath Tagore', who was he? So, another qualification, 'the Nobel Laureate', we take a pause, 'was also a freedom fighter', another compliment.

'All', is a noun phrase, 'that glitters' in the next sentence, 'all that glitters is not gold'. So, 'all', pause, 'that glitters is not gold'; 'that glitters' is an adjectival clause. 'All is not gold' is the main clause. So, you know, we indicate pauses in this manner, and that makes it easier for the listener to understand us. Go on.

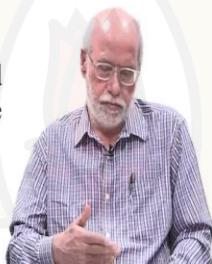
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ACTIVITY

For practice, mark and speak the following sentences:

1. May I come in sir?
2. Stars twinkle planets do not.
3. Fault dear Brutus is not in our stars.
4. Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny.
5. I have a dream that one day sons of slaves and sons of slave owners would sit together on the table of fraternity.



Please, look at the activity and do it and after you have done it, compare it with the model answers we have given at the end of this unit.

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ANSWERS



1. May I come in# sir?
2. Stars twinkle # planets do not.
3. Fault # dear Brutus # is not in our stars.
4. Long years ago# we made a tryst with destiny.
5. I have a dream # that one day # sons of slaves # and sons of slave owners# would sit together # on the table of fraternity.



After you, you know, you finished, you can now check. So, the first sentence: May I come in, Sir? Stars twinkle planets do not. Fault, dear Brutus is not in our stars. Long years ago, we made a Tryst with Destiny. I have a dream that one day sons of slaves and sons of slave owners would sit together on the table of fraternity. Next.

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6. Given a chance # everyone would like to go to school.
7. More girls than boys # drop out of school # before completing secondary education.
8. Ask not # what the nation can do for you # ask # what you can do for the nation.



Given a chance, everyone would like to go to school. More girls than boys drop out of school before completing Secondary Education. Ask not what the nation can do for you; ask what you

can do for the nation. If you have not got them right, maybe you should check and practice and do them again. It is not difficult. You will get them right soon, and once it becomes a part of your speaking habit, you will realize that you are a lot better understood and you enjoy talking even to a crowd just as you enjoy talking to a friend. Thank you, have a good afternoon.

