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ĐẠI HỌC BÁCH KHOA HÀ NỘI  
VIỆN CÔNG NGHỆ THÔNG TIN VÀ TRUYỀN THÔNG



**TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC BÁCH KHOA HÀ NỘI**  
HANOI UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

# Voice techniques

## Technical Writing and Presentation

SOICT - 2020

# Voice (vocal) techniques

- ***What*** you say is actually as important as than ***how*** you say
- For scientific presentations, only 17 percent of impression from words
- Deliver in a boring, monotone way → value of your presentation comes to nothing

# Voice (vocal) techniques: Aims

- Add color, expressiveness, and power to your speech.
- Make deepest impressions upon listeners rather than slides and curious facts.
- Create suspense, enthusiasm, and excitement
- Complete the drama of the plot
- Make the story much more vivid and easier for listeners to follow.

# Vocal delivery

1. Tempo and Chunking
2. Pitch and Intonation
3. Volume
4. Articulation
5. Sentence length and style
6. Language mistakes and accent

# Tempo and Chunking

- **Tempo:** speed
  - Never rush.
  - Vary the speed — don't talk at the same speed all the time.
- **Chunking:** separating information into small groups
  - Pause from time to time
  - A few seconds of silence are sometimes just as effective as words
  - A well-placed pause makes your speech more dramatic
  - Pausing in the wrong place sounds like a hesitation.

# Pitch and Intonation

**Pitch:** high pitch = soprano, low pitch = bass

**Intonation:** how the voice rises and falls in speech

- Vary the pitch
  - To prove you not only give information but interpret it
  - To show your listeners exactly what it means for you all.
- Introduce question into your presentation to force you to raise the pitch a little.
- Be very careful with high pitch
- Don't vary your pitch too often and too dramatically

# Volume

- Adjust your voice to the size of your audience, to the room you're presenting in.
- Everybody must hear you clearly.
- Vary the volume
  - Quieter part vs louder part



# Articulation

- The sounds will be clearer if you don't rush your words.
- If you anticipate difficulty in pronouncing certain key words, practice them beforehand.
- Usually the problem is the syllable stress.

# Sentence length and style

- It's hard to aurally comprehend complex sentences and difficult words.
- Avoid reading your text — this should keep the sentences fairly short.
- You should always sound natural.

# Language mistakes and accent

- Before presenting, check thoroughly all the problematic words
- If you pronounce the same word in a wrong way over and over again, that would be very bad.
- Our mother tongue being not English, we are naturally allowed to have foreign accent.
- Practicing and trying to sound as close to native speaker as possible is good,
- Do not overemphasize the impact of a minor foreign accent.

# Important Voice techniques

1. Stress
2. Pacing
3. Emphasizing

# Stress

By **stressing** particular words (or parts of words) in a sentence you can subtly **change its meaning**.

Try reading out each of the following examples with different stress.

- *We all know that this is an extremely difficult market.*  
(it's more than just difficult)
- *We all know that this is an extremely difficult market.*  
(you and I agree on this)
- *We all know that this is an extremely difficult market.*  
(but they don't)
- *We all know that this is an extremely difficult market.*  
(but we do little about it)

# Pacing

- Use pauses to **slow your pace down** and make your sentences **easier to understand** and more **effective sounding**.
- Group words into phrases according to their meaning and make pauses between the phrases.
  - *In my opinion we should go into other markets.*  
*In my opinion // we should go // into other markets.*
  - *On the other hand, the figures prove that we are on the right track.*  
*On the other hand, // the figures prove // that we are on the right track.*
- Slow down to make your most important points.
- This gives your message time to *sink in*.

# Emphasizing

- To get your message across persuasively
- To change the significance of what you say dramatically
- Various ways to emphasize some ideas in a speech.

# Stress words

Stress words which are normally unstressed or contracted. These are mainly **auxiliary verbs** (be, have, can, etc.) and **negatives**.

**Practice:** Read out the following sentences, stressing the underlined words:

## Neutral Remark

- ✓ *It's our best chance of success.*
- ✓ *We were hoping for a better deal.*
- ✓ *We are doing the best we can.*
- ✓ *We have tried to limit the damage.*
- ✓ *We can't go ahead with this.*
- ✓ *I see what you mean.*
- ✓ *They promised completion by June.*
- ✓ *It isn't cost-effective.*
- ✓ *Do we or don't we believe in service?*

## Emphatic Remark

- ✓ *It is our best chance of success.*
- ✓ *We were hoping for a better deal.*
- ✓ *We are doing the best we can.*
- ✓ *We have tried to limit the damage.*
- ✓ *We cannot go ahead with this.*
- ✓ *I do see what you mean.*
- ✓ *They did promise completion by June.*
- ✓ *It's not cost-effective.*
- ✓ *Do we or do we not believe in service?*



# Particular words and phrases.

Place emphasis on particular words and phrases.

Practice: Look at the following and notice how the effect is changed by a change of emphasis:

- ✓ *This was successful.*
- ✓ *This was very sucCESSful.*
- ✓ *This was VErY successful.*

# Intensifiers

Use so-called *intensifiers* to emphasize your points.

- ✓ *I'm afraid it just isn't good enough — the entire system needs updating.*
- ✓ *We really need to rethink our whole recruitment procedure.*
- ✓ *Paying off such a substantial loan is going to be extremely difficult.*
- ✓ *We have done much better than we expected — even better than we did last year.*
- ✓ *That's absolutely no chance at all of going into profit in the first two years.*

# Adverbs

Adverbs are especially often used as intensifiers.  
Intensifier adverbs can be total, very strong, or moderate.

## Total

*absolutely (fantastic)*  
*completely (awful)*  
*entirely (depressing)*

## Very strong

*extremely (good)*  
*very (bad)*

## Moderate

*fairly (safe)*  
*reasonably (expensive)*  
*quite (cheap)*

In more formal speech some verbs and intensifier adverbs form fixed expressions. A typical pattern is:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Intensifier</u>	<u>Main Verb</u>	<u>Complement</u>
<i>I</i>	<i>completely</i>	<i>agree</i>	<i>with everything you've said so far.</i>
<i>We</i>	<i>firmly</i>	<i>oppose</i>	<i>any suggestion that the company</i>
		<i>be sold.</i>	

# 'What... is ...' pattern

Focus key points so that everyone knows you want them to listen to what you have to say next.

Compare:

✓ *We can't expect too much.*

*What we can't do is expect too much too soon.*

✓ *I'd like to approach this question from two different angles.*

*What I'd like to do is approach this question from two different angles.*

# Verbs

Use the verbs *to stress, emphasize, etc.*

- ✓ *I'd like to stress the following point.*
- ✓ *I'd like to draw your attention to the latest figures.*
- ✓ *I'd like to emphasize that our market position is excellent.*

# Key points of voice technique

## **General advice:**

1. Articulate.
2. Keep your sentences short.
3. Check the spelling of difficult words.

## **To create rich delivery:**

1. Vary the speed, volume intonation.
2. Use various Stress, Pacing and Emphasis techniques.

**Sound natural. Be eloquent and vivid**