



TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC BÁCH KHOA HÀ NỘI
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Voice techniques

SOICT - 2020

Voice (vocal) techniques

- ***What*** you say is actually as important as than ***how*** you say
- For scientific presentations, only 17 per cent 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

- Tempo and Chunking
- Pitch and Intonation
- Volume
- Articulation
- Sentence length and style
- 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.

Practice

Listening is difficult. Your audience is likely to start with considerable goodwill towards you

(not least because they're grateful it's you speaking and not them), and they listen at first in the hope of finding that you're chosen an interesting subject about which they may learn something.

If they can easily hear what you say,

they will tend to go on listening,

and if you are obviously interested in what you're saying,

they will catch your interest and so be willing to go on listening

(which is why, later, we'll stress the importance of your enthusiasm).

If you speak slowly, they will have time not only to hear what you say, but also to understand and assimilate it,

make it part of their own knowledge base and, perhaps, think of a useful question to ask.

If you speak quickly, there simply isn't time for this process to take place; even if they manage the first part, hearing, or even the second part, understanding, they just don't have time to assimilate the information and make it theirs.

As a result, they will remember very little and feel that they have gained no long-term benefit from being present

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 the 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:

Subject

I
far.

We
company

Intensifier

completely

firmly

Main Verb

agree

oppose

Complement

with everything you've said so

any suggestion that the

be sold.

'*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