



IIT Madras

BSc Degree

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SPEAK SLOWLY

SHREESH CHAUDHARY

Speak Slowly

- English is a slow tempo language.
- English speakers pause after groups of words, after each clause, after each sentence. Click on the link given below and listen to the audio sample.

VIDEO CLIP

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dKimoybmEo>

Please watch the section 00:00 – 3.55

Source: English Speeches (YouTube)

Video description: Speech delivered by Martin Luther King Jr.

We are using 3.55 minutes of this video for academic purposes.

VIDEO CLIP

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9aO5R6ezqio>

Please watch the section 4.03-4.57

Source: Oscars (YouTube)

Video description: Speech delivered by Colin Firth after winning Best Actor at the 83rd Academy Awards.

We are using 54 seconds of this video for academic purposes.

- Pause is like the punctuation mark of spoken language.
- “A woman without her man is nothing.” This sentence can have different meanings depending upon how you pause. Find other examples.

A woman, without her man, is nothing.

A woman, without her, man is nothing.

- Rapid speech causes distortions in sounds; they merge into one another, some sounds are dropped, some sounds change form and shape, and become difficult to understand.

I can never forget my first parajump

I can never forget my first para jump.

I can never forget # my first para jump #
There were seven of us # each more
scared # than the others #

- Slow speech is easy for the listener to understand.
- It is a mark of politeness.
- Slow speech gives the speaker time to think and use correct words in a correct manner.

- It may not be easy to learn to speak slowly; changing habit of a life time can be difficult. But it is not impossible.
- If we learn one thing about Spoken English, we must learn to speak slowly, comfortably. All else will follow.

Activity

1. Record a minute long speech on your favourite topic.
2. Count the number of words.
3. Now take another minute, and record your speech again. On the same topic. But this time speak slowly. Count the number of words. You may have fewer words. Check with a listener What is understood better?
4. Listen to some “good” speakers on television. Are they slow or fast?

Thank you