



## TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION (KAS – 301)



### UNIT – 5 DIMENSIONS OF ORAL COMMUNICATION & VOICE DYNAMICS

#### TOPIC : **Phonetics in Communication Skills**

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# Phonetics in Communication Skills

- ▶ Phonetics is the study of speech.
- ▶ It is the study of how the sounds of a speech are produced and how they are used while speaking.
- ▶ It also tells us how we can record sounds with written symbols, and how we hear and recognize different sounds.

# Vowel Sound

- ▶ A vowel is a particular kind of speech sound made by changing the shape of the upper vocal tract, or the area in the mouth above the tongue. In English it is important to know that there is a difference between a vowel sound and a [letter] in the [alphabet]. In English there are five vowel letters in the alphabet.
- ▶ The sounds of English are written with letters in the English alphabet, as either vowels or consonants. All English words are written with vowel letters in them.
- ▶ These letters are vowels in English:
- ▶ A, E, I, O, U, and sometimes Y
- ▶ It is said that Y is "sometimes" a vowel, because the letter Y represents both vowel and consonant sounds. In the words cry, sky, fly, my and why, letter Y represents the vowel sound /aɪ/. In words like myth and synchronize, Y represents the vowel sound /ɪ/. In words like only, quickly, and folly, Y represents the vowel sound /i/. It can also be a consonant sound called a glide as in the beginning of these words: yellow, yam, yesterday. Y is a consonant about 2.75% of the time, and a vowel about 97.5% of the time

# Monophthongs

- ▶ Simple vowels are called monophthongs. The letters, like /ɪ/, are the IPA letters for each vowel sound in English. (The IPA is the International Phonetic Alphabet). In the IPA, each symbol represents a different sound, so using the IPA is helpful in pronouncing words.
- ▶ Common monophthongs in English include:
  - ▶ /i/ as in police, feet, eat, and silly
  - ▶ /ɪ/ as in it, sit, kick, myth and bitter
  - ▶ /ɛ/ as in end, bet, less, and letter
  - ▶ /æ/ as in at, apple, fat, and matter
  - ▶ /u/ as in cool, tune, soup, and kung fu,
  - ▶ /ʊ/ as in cook, should, pudding, and foot
  - ▶ /ʌ/ as in bus, blood, come, and up

# - Diphthongs

- ▶ Diphthongs are a combination of two different vowel sounds, one vowel sound turns into another sound as you say them. If you pronounce the words below slowly, you can hear the two vowel sounds of the diphthongs.
- ▶ Common diphthongs in English include:
  - ▶ /eɪ/ as in ate, reign, vain, flavor, slay, and convey
  - ▶ /oʊ/ as in toe, row, go, boat, mode
  - ▶ /aɪ/ as in eye, I, pie, cry, cypher, climb, lime, light, kayak, Thai, and height
  - ▶ /aʊ/ as in loud, house, cow, about, Daoism, and Macau
  - ▶ /oɪ/ as in boy, moist,

# Consonant sound

- ▶ A consonant is a speech sound in which the air is at least partly blocked, and any letter which represents this. Consonants may come singly (by themselves) or in clusters (two or more together), but must be connected to a vowel to form a syllable.
- ▶ Notice that the consonant (C) and vowel (V) notation does NOT match the letters of English spelling in a one-to-one relationship (e.g. 'th' is one sound), but rather individual sounds.

# Words with single consonants include:

- Go (CV), which has one consonant and one vowel in that order
- On (VC), which has one vowel and one consonant in that order
- Ton (CVC), which has a consonant, a vowel, and another consonant in that order

Words with consonant clusters include:

- Pro (CCV), which has two consonants in-a-row and one vowel afterwards
- Old (VCC), which has one vowel and two consonants in-a-row afterwards
- Spree (CCCV), which has three consonants in-a-row and one vowel afterwards
- Arcs (VCCC), which has one vowel and three consonants in-a-row afterwards
- Strengths (CCCVCCCC), which has three consonants in-a-row, one vowel afterwards, and finally four consonants in a row

# Consonants have friction

- ▶ **Voiced:** a voiced sound is a sound where the vocal cords vibrate, thus producing some sort of pitch. This is the kind of sound most people associate with regular talking or singing.
- ▶ **Voiceless / unvoiced:** a voiceless or unvoiced sound is one where the vocal cords do not vibrate, thus making the sound very whispery and without a pitch. It can tend to make a letter sound harsher when pronounced.
- ▶ **Stop:** a consonant sound where the airflow is stopped completely by the mouth and then sharply released. Think of sounds like “p,” “k,” and “t.” All languages contain stops.
- ▶ **Fricative:** a consonant sound where the airflow becomes noisy and turbulent because it only has a very small space to travel through in the mouth. Think of sounds like “f,” “s,” and “sh.” Most languages have fricatives, but not all.
- ▶ **Nasal:** a consonant sound where the airflow passes exclusively through the nose instead of the mouth. Think of sounds like “m,” “n,” or “ng.” Almost all languages have nasals.



- ▶ **Affricate:** a consonant sound that begins like a stop but then releases like a fricative, thus making it a sort of combination sound. Think of sounds like “ch” and “j.” Affricates are common, especially in English.
- ▶ **Alveolar ridge:** a ridge found on the roof of the mouth between the upper teeth and the hard palate, which is used in conjunction with the tip of the tongue to make many sounds
- ▶ **Soft palate:** the soft tissue in the back of the roof of your mouth, which is used in conjunction with the back of the tongue to make many sounds
- ▶ **Glottis:** the part of the larynx (air passage) that contains the vocal cords and the opening between them.

Letters	Sounds	Examples
b	[b]	baby, best, buy, bring, blind, absent, about, number, labor, robber, tub
c	[s] [k]	center, cellar, cigarette, cinema, agency, notice; cake, come, cucumber, clean, cry, scratch, act, panic
d	[d]	day, dear, die, door, duty, admire, hidden, lady, kind, ride, ended
f	[f]	fast, female, five, forest, fund, fry, flight, often, deaf, cuff
g	[g] [j] [zh]	game, gap, get, go, gun, great, global, giggle, ago, begin, dog, egg; general, gin, giant, agent, suggest, Egypt, energy, huge, manage; mirage, garage, beige, rouge

h	[h] [-]	hair, help, history, home, hotel, hunt, behind, inherit; hour, honor, honest, heir, vehicle, Sarah
j	[j]	jam, Jane, jet, jelly, Jim, jingle, joke, John, June, just
k	[k]	Kate, kind, kill, kilogram, sky, blanket, break, take, look
l	[l]	late, let, live, alone, close, slim, please, old, nicely, table, file, all
m	[m]	make, men, mind, mother, must, my, common, summer, name, form, team
n	[n]	napkin, never, night, no, nuclear, funny, student, kindness, ton, sun
p	[p]	paper, person, pick, pour, public, repair, apple, keep, top, crisp
q (qu)	[kw] [k]	quality, question, quite, quote, equal, require; unique, technique, antique, grotesque
r	[r]	rain, red, rise, brief, grow, scream, truck, arrive, hurry, turn, more, car
s	[s] [z]	send, simple, song, system, street, lost, kiss, release; cause, present, reason, realism, advise, always, is, was
t	[t]	task, tell, time, tone, tune, hotel, attentive, student, boat, rest
v	[v]	vast, vein, vivid, voice, even, review, invest, give, move, active
w	[w]	wall, war, way, west, wind, word, would, swear, swim, twenty, twist
x	[ks] [gz] [z]	exercise, exchange, expect, ex-wife, axis, fix, relax; exam, exact, executive, exert, exist, exit, exult; Xenon, Xerox, xenophobia, xylophone
z	[z] [ts]	zero, zoo, horizon, puzzle, crazy, organize, quiz, jazz; pizza, Mozart, Nazi, waltz

## Paralinguistic Features of voice dynamics

The messages that you send with your voice are known as paralanguage.

What is **PARALANGUAGE**?

- It is a component of Non-verbal Communication.
- It is not related to content or verbal message or other attribute of speaking like Pitch, Tempo, etc ...
- Paralanguage is study of non-verbal clues of the voice.
- It includes intentional and unintentional nonverbal messages.

Paralinguistic is the study of these vocal (and sometimes non-vocal) signals beyond the basic verbal message or speech, also known as *vocalic*.

What is **PARALINGUISTICS**?

- The study of role of non-verbal clues is called “Paralinguistic”.
- This includes Volume, Speed of voice, Intonation, Tone, etc ...

# Elements of Paralanguage:

## ►(1) Pitch/Tone:

- Pitch is the highness or lowness of the voice; it is similar to pitch on a musical scale. We associate higher pitches with female voices and lower pitches with male voices. We associate low-pitched voices with strength, sexiness, and maturity, and high-pitched voices with helplessness, tension, and nervousness.
- We also vary our pitch to reflect our mood and interest in conversing. Your pitch expresses your emotional state; or making a statement or asking a question. The Tone tells about the attitude of the speaker.

## (2) Volume

- ▶ The power of your voice, its loudness or volume, also affects perceptions of intended meaning.
- ▶ Some whisper or blast through their volume. An aggressive person is often very louder. In contrast, if you are soft spoken, others may take your behaviour nervousness.
- ▶ Effective Interpersonal Communicators Regulate Volume in an Effort to Promote Meaningful Interaction. Your volume should reflect the nature of your message.
- ▶ It is not just, what you say; it is how you say it.

### (3) Pace/Rate

- ▶ Speaking rate is the third vocal signal affecting the communication of meaning. Most of us speak at an average rate of 150 words per minute.
- ▶ When we speed up our speech, exceeding 275 to 300 words per minute, it is difficult for others to comprehend what we are saying, and our message thus becomes virtually unintelligible.
- ▶ In contrast, if we speak too slowly, others may perceive us as tentative or lacking in confidence or intelligence. It quickens to relay agitation, excitement, and happiness, and it falls to convey seriousness, serenity, or sadness.
- ▶ The speed of voice should be such that the listener can follow everything that you are speaking. Moreover, in live talk they can't even rewind. Similarly, if the speed is very slow then also it is likely that listener loses connection

## (4) Articulation and Pronunciation

- ▶ The sound attributes of articulation and pronunciation affect message intelligibility as well as perceptions of credibility. Articulation is the way you pronounce individual sounds.
- ▶ Articulation is the clarity in your voice. The way in which a word is pronounced. Pronunciation is the first thing that people notice during conversation. Ideally, even during person-to-person contact, the sounds of your speech are sharp and distinct.
- ▶ When you fail to utter a final sound (a final t or d, for example), fail to produce the sounds of words properly. When you mispronounce a word, you may suffer a loss of credibility, and those listening to you may find it more difficult to make sense of what you are saying.
- ▶ Clearly articulated message indicates competence and confidence. You should speak in such a way that all the words are understood by the listener. If you speak sloppily or mispronounce the words, the listener easily gets distracted and sometimes meaning too changes..
- ▶ For correct pronunciation, knowledge of phonetics is essential. A person should know the difference in the pronunciation of various sounds like /e/ and /æ/ , /ə/ and /u:/ , etc.



## (5) Voice Modulation

- ▶ Intonation refers to the tonal variation, modulation pertains to the way we regulate, vary, or adjust the tone, pitch, and volume of the sound or speaking voice.
- ▶ Modulation of voice brings flexibility and vitality to your voice, and you can express emotions, sentiments, impatience, careful planning, despondency and suspicions etc.
- ▶ If you do not pay special attention to the modulation of your voice, then your voice becomes flat. Word stress and sentence stress also play an important role in voice modulation.
- ▶ Intonation means variation of voice or speech. It tells the listener if the message is in form of a question, statement or exclamation.
- ▶ The emphasis laid on a particular word in a particular manner would decide the meaning.
- ▶ □ Stress and Intonation blend together to lend charm to English speech

## (6) Hesitations and Silence

- ▶ Hesitations and silence are the final paralinguistic variables we will consider here. The break a person takes while speaking and its duration is known as “Pause” in paralinguistic. Different meanings are conveyed by Pauses. A Pause can have two different functions:
- ▶ i) A temporary vocal inaction: This indicates the speaker’s uncertainty, hesitation, tension or uneasiness. When nervous or tense, we may exhibit a tendency to fill all pauses.
- ▶ ii) A Pause: This shows favor or disfavour, Agreement or Disagreement. Knowing when to pause is a critical skill. Some time we insert meaningless sounds or phrases such as uh, you know, or okay in the effort to fill voids.
- ▶ These non fluencies, or hesitation phenomena, disrupt the natural flow of speech and adversely affect how others perceive your competence and confidence.

# Summary

- ▶ Pitch/Tone of voice: - Feelings added while speaking.
- ▶ Volume: - Loudness or softness of the voice.
- ▶ Speed of voice: The pace with which something is spoken.
- ▶ Intonation: - Rise and Fall in voice.
- ▶ Pronunciation: - The manner in which a word is uttered.
- ▶ Articulation: - Clarity in the voice.
- ▶ Pause: - A break taken while speaking.