

## VI. CHAPTER OVERVIEWS: Discussion/ Activities/Test questions



The chapter overviews will briefly delineate the goals, objectives, and content of each chapter. Since teaching is unique both to the instructor and to the class, the suggestions here are for additional activities and test questions for each chapter. Depending upon your subject coverage, you can compile these chapter “quizzes” into a mid-term or final exam if you prefer that testing method.

### Chapter One: An Introduction

#### Objectives:

- To present to the reader an overview of the process of communication.
- To introduce major aspects of voice.
- To delineate the subjects of the remaining chapters of the text.

#### Content:

- Terms: Voice, Diction, Paralinguistics
- The communication process
- Speech as a learned process and advocacy for improvement
- Internal and external influences on voice and diction
- A program for voice improvement

#### Activities:

- Tell a joke. Ask students to come prepared to tell a joke to the class as you sit in a circle. Jokes are tidy little units of information that require vocal variety to deliver well. This is one way to hear and assess students in a relaxed atmosphere.
- Personal objectives. Students need to become comfortable speaking in front of this particular class. Give them the opportunity to explain their individual objectives in taking your course. One way to begin is by asking “If you could have any one person’s voice other than your own, whose would it be and why?” After each student announces a choice, inquire after each student’s goals.
- Ask students to fill out the vocal profile and to submit it to you. Discuss some items of information you extract from those forms such as that many students will have parents or grandparents from another country or that a person will have moved around the country a great deal.
- Vocal play may not be clear to students. Simply put, students should learn the range of sounds they are capable of making, and playing with their voices is one way to do that. You can help by demonstrating. Speak out of the left side of your mouth; purse your lips and speak; use your highest pitch level; try the lowest; open your mouth widely and speak; make a face and speak; etc.

## Application Questions

Ask your students to write responses to these questions; use them for in class discussion; or simply ask students to personally apply these queries.

1. What roles have your parents, friends, teachers or others had in influencing your voice?
2. How does your voice characterize you? Among your social group? At work? At school?
3. What is your plan for vocal improvement?

## Focus Messages

You can apply these messages to various interest groups in several ways.

- You might reserve a part of class time (or schedule out of class time) to address individuals or groups of individuals with like interests. Breaking the class into these focus groups can facilitate instruction. You can then drill with those interested only in a specific aspect of information out of each chapter.
- Try using a technique similar to “poster sessions” wherein students move from one group to another. Set up three groups that focus on Broadcasting, Acting, or ESL. As the instructor, you should rotate from one “session” to another after instructing students for five minutes or so and setting them up with exercises.
- You can assign a brief written response to the concept inherent in the focus message. For example, for the ESL student ask, “How does the intonation of your primary language differ from what you perceive to be that of American English?” For the Actor ask, “What are some of the unusual voices you hear on television?” For the Broadcasting student ask, “How does your voice compare to that of the broadcasters you hear on radio and television?”
- You could ask these particular students to audio tape themselves and present either an oral or written evaluation focusing on questions similar to the foregoing.

## Discussion questions

1. What are some of the manifestations of speech anxiety? (dry mouth, quivery voice, etc.)
2. Why do you think you sound the way you do?
3. Are women more emotional than men? (or do they just sound that way?)
4. How can you tell if someone is telling the truth?
5. What were some situations wherein someone said to you, “It’s not what you said, it’s how you said it?”

## Quiz questions:

### True/False

- \_t\_1. Environmental noise is a major factor in an increase in deafness.
- \_t\_2. Your voice can characterize you as unintelligent.
- \_t\_3. We are born with the ability to speak any language on earth.
- \_f\_4. The nonnative speaker can rarely eliminate a dialect.
- \_f\_5. Verbal and vocal mean essentially the same thing.

### Multiple choice

- \_\_c\_1. Diction means the same thing as (a) dictionary, (b) linguistics, (c) enunciation, (d) paralinguistics.
- \_\_b\_2. In the cycle of communication, voice occurs in (a) encoding, (b) transferring, (c) receiving, (d) decoding.
- \_\_a\_3. Saying “Febuary” is an example of (a) omission, (b) addition, (c) transposition, (d) substitution.
- \_\_b\_4. A verbal choice has to do with (a) producing vocal sound, (b) linguistics, (c) paralinguistics, (d) voice improvement.
- \_\_a\_5. Vocal abuse such as yelling can result in (a) vocal nodules, (b) improved projection, (c) vocal control, (d) breath support.

### Short answer

1. What is paralinguistics? Cite an example. (Employing rate, pitch, volume, etc. in such a manner as to indicate meaning beyond the definition of a word. Ex. Using rising inflection on “Oh?” implies a question as opposed to surprise.)
2. Explain the cycle of communication. (Involves encoding, transferring, receiving, decoding and feeding back information between and among people. Voice takes places at the transference stage.)
3. What role do parents, teachers and friends play in speech development? (As we grow we tend to imitate those persons who are our role models and thus acquire their speech habits.)
4. Discuss the following concept: “A particular sound of voice is clearly associated with speaker’s role in life.” (The four factors of voice—rate, pitch, volume, and quality—are employed differently by certain people who engage in certain vocations. For instance, a preacher utilizes intonational patterns that are distinctly different from those of a football coach.)
5. What are the characteristics of a good voice? (Clear, strong, well-supported and projected, good rate, appropriate pitch level, resonant, varied, with clear articulation.)

## Chapter Two: The Vocal Mechanism

### Objectives:

- To inform the reader of the four anatomical parts of the vocal mechanism and the relationship of each to voice production.
- To introduce the concept of relaxation by presenting appropriate exercises.
- To present exercises for improving breath control and support.

### Content:

- Speech as an overlaid process
- The structures of breathing— inhalation, exhalation, muscles, diaphragm.
- The process of phonation—larynx, glottis, epiglottis, vocal folds, arytenoids.
- The cavities of resonation—pharynx, formant frequencies, oral cavity, velum, nasal passages, resonance focus.
- The process of articulation—tongue, lips, teeth, gums, hard palate, velum, lower jaw.
- Concepts of vocal and auditory health.
- Relaxation exercises— progressive, meditative.

- Breathing exercises—increasing and sustaining breath support.

**Activities:**

Use the exercises in the book that deal with relaxation and breathing.

**Application Questions:**

Ask your students to write responses to these questions; use them for class discussion; ask students to personally apply these questions.

1. Under what conditions or circumstances do you seem to be more breathless or does your voice seem to “tire”? Now that you understand breath control, how can you achieve better breathing during those times?
2. When does your voice seem to be tight, hoarse or harsh? How can you produce a more relaxed sound?
3. What are the occasions when you seem to lose vocal control? When angry? At a sports event? A concert? What can you do to protect your voice during those times?
4. Assess the noise in your life? Do you wear headphones? Does your aerobics class play loud music? Is your car radio turned to maximum volume? What can you do to protect your hearing?
5. Design a program for yourself for achieving vocal relaxation.

**Focus Messages:**

For this chapter, the focus messages, while directed to specialized student interests, are important for all of your students. You might spend a segment of a class session concentrating on the concepts of resonance focus, breath support, and relaxation. With each of these areas of focus, use the phonemes that might be troublesome to particular student populations.

**Discussion questions:**

1. Why would it be highly inadvisable to try to swallow and talk at the same time?
2. How can clavicular breathing inhibit your ability to sustain your voice?
3. How can nervousness affect your breath support?
4. How is hearing related to speech?

**Quiz questions:**

**True/False**

- \_f\_ 1. Males have about twice the amount of lung capacity as do females.
- \_t\_ 2. You have only indirect control over the diaphragm.
- \_f\_ 3. Your vocal folds make you sound nasal.
- \_t\_ 4. Your oral cavity is your largest resonating cavity.
- \_t\_ 5. Phonemes are created by positioning the articulators.

**Multiple choice**

- \_c\_ 1. During relaxed breathing you inhale per minute about (a) 3 times, (b) 6 times, (c) 12 times, (d) 20 times.
- \_b\_ 2. Phonation occurs in the (a) thyroid, (b) larynx, (c) pharynx, (d) nose.

- \_a\_ 3. The space between the vocal folds is called the (a) glottis, (b) hyoid, (c) arytenoidal occlusion, (d) uvula.
- \_b\_ 4. Primary resonance is (a) nasal, (b) oral, (c) diaphragmatic, (d) hyoidal.
- \_a\_ 5. The diaphragm controls (a) breathing, (b) phonation, (c) resonance, (d) articulation.

### Short answer

1. Explain why voice production is called an overlaid function. (The structures utilized in voice production are first employed in sustaining your life, for example for eating and breathing.)
2. Why does an effective speaker learn to control exhalation? (For speech, one takes shorter inhalations and needs to utilize the air inhaled for voice production. For a good voice this air must be conservatively used.)
3. Explain why resonance gives quality to voice. (Resonance amplifies and modifies sound with added frequencies, called formant frequencies. The quality of voice produced is dependent on size, shape, condition and use of the resonating cavities.)
4. What is the difference between the terms voiced and unvoiced? (Voiced sounds are produced with vocal fold vibration and unvoiced have no vocal fold vibration.)
5. Why should you work toward relaxing as you produce voice? (Physical tension will negatively alter the sound of your voice.)

## Chapter Three: Language

### Objectives:

- To establish guiding principles of language development.
- To present a brief overview of the effects of historical events upon the English language.
- To present a perspective of the language in order to help students understand its sounds and pronunciations.
- To survey the development of language in the individual.

### Content:

- Terms—Linguistics, phoneme, English, dialect
- A definition of language
- Two principles of language—change and survival
- British English history in brief
- Modern English and the United States
- Language acquisition for the individual

### Activities:

- Show excerpts from the PBS series “The Story of English.” (Your library will have had to purchase the series.) Discuss the various dialects extant throughout England and the United States today. Or you might use some other video on language.
- If your department or library has purchased the video “American Tongues,” show that film and discuss how language has changed in the United States.
- Ask students to present reports on the various linguistic and dialectal differences they have

- or can find within the United States.
- Review and discuss pronunciation lists

### Application Questions

Ask your students to write response to these questions; use them for in class discussion; or simply ask students to personally apply the questions.

1. How would you assess your grasp of the English language?
2. What sounds or words are problematic for you?
3. What words have changed pronunciation over the time you have been speaking English?
4. What dialect of English do you use? What obvious differences do you notice between your dialect and that which you hear on network television news?

### Focus Messages:

- Try having ESL students compile lists of euphemisms, clichés, or colloquialisms that they have heard but with which they are not familiar. Discuss these in class. You might also assign these students the task of specifically identifying specific phonemes with which they are not familiar. You can also present to the class at large a better perspective of broad linguistic concepts if you ask your ESL students to present a half minute message in their primary language, translate that message, and identify specific phonemes that are not used in English. Try to get the entire class to produce these phonemes.
- Actors and broadcasters can work together to develop definitions and sentences for pronunciation lists.

### Discussion questions:

1. What would happen if you suddenly lost memory of the rules of language (grammar, semantics, etc.)? What do these “rules” serve to do for language? How does it affect articulation?
2. If language changes constantly, how is it changing right now?
3. What might be some hypothetical situations wherein a language would survive?
4. What are some of your observations regarding dialects within the United States?
5. In what ways was your speech affected by your parents or other role models?

### Quiz questions:

#### True/false

- f 1. There are approximately two million languages in the world today.
- f 2. A syllabic stress shift will not occur once language is fixed in print.
- t 3. English was derived from the Germanic Branch of the Indo-European family of languages.
- t 4. There are three to four major categorizations of dialects in the United States.
- f 5. A child will learn the individual phonemes of language prior to learning intonation.

#### Multiple choice:

- c 1. Linguists are persons who (a) are medical specialists, (b) study acoustics,

- (c) study language, (d) are media consultants.
- \_b\_2. The survival of a language depends upon (a) the number of people speaking it, (b) its rooting in common speech, (c) whether or not the king or president is speaking it, (d) the number of words in the language itself.
- \_d\_3. Before the Romans conquered England around 55 B.C., it was inhabited by the (a) Anglo-Saxons, (b) Germanic tribes, (c) Normans, (d) Celts.
- \_a\_4. A child's first sounds are usually (a) [m], [b], [a]; (b) [k], [g], [t]; (c) [tʃ], [j]; (d) [tʃ] [d].
- \_b\_5. The most significant historical event to affect the English language was the invasion of the (a) Romans, (b) Germanic tribes, (c) Scandinavians, (d) Normans.

### Short Answer

1. How would you define "language?" (A series of sounds which, when produced in a particular order, evoke meaning.)
2. What manifestations of change might a language experience and why? (Foreign words may be introduced into a language that includes new sounds that eventually become a part of the native language. Syllabic stress will change over a period of time. Sounds become lost or dropped with time.)
3. How can a language survive? (Languages survive when rooted in common speech, that is the speech spoken in households.)
4. How do linguists figure out how languages are related? (Phonological reconstruction involves comparing the roots, suffixes and other parts of words in order to draw parallels among them.)
5. Discuss the concept of articulation and pronunciation in relation to culture. (By the time we are about six years old we can tell the difference among sounds and by adulthood, we are fixed in producing the sounds of our primary language.)

### Chapter Four: Pitch

#### Objectives:

- To explain the components of the pitch of the human voice.
- To identify the means by which we paralinguistically communicate with pitch change.
- To relate the role of intonation in language and communication.
- To present exercises for identifying pitch level, increasing pitch range, and for integrating pitch variety.

#### Content:

- Terms: Pitch, Habitual and optimum pitch, inflection, intonation, variety
- Inflection: the paralinguistics of pitch
- Rising inflection
- Falling inflection
- Circumflex inflection
- Step inflection
- Intonation