

# Communicative Voice and Articulation

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## *Norma*

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# TO THE INSTRUCTOR

*Communicative Voice and Articulation* is written to students encountering the subject of voice and articulation for the first time. The purpose, then, is not to involve these students in matters of complex speech pathology. And it is not necessarily designed for those students with major speech problems. Instead, the aim is to assist average students with the improvement of voice and articulation so daily speech is more communicative.

*Communicative Voice and Articulation* is designed as a complete program, with relevance to the immediate speaking process. *Voice* is integrated with speech by applying vocal study to the vowel sounds. *Articulation* centers on distinct speech with study of the consonants. Because communicative speech is the principal consideration, the approach is uncomplicated: (1) so students are not intimidated by the subject-matter; (2) so students can more easily recognize the correlation between voice-articulation and daily communication. To further this "ease-of-understanding," all sounds have a placement sketch and phoneme discussions are divided into "production" and "problem."

Because practice is essential for speech improvement, special emphasis is given to practice materials. Too often as the instructor, you have the time-consuming task of devising or collecting practice materials. *Communicative Voice and Articulation* eliminates this problem by including a variety of practice materials, thereby freeing you for the more important activity of teaching.

First, *vocal exercises* are arranged for the progressive development of each matter of voice production and voice use.

Second, *word lists* for vowel and consonant sounds are included for the study-practice of a phoneme in isolation.

Third, *phrase lists* for vowel and consonant sounds introduce “speaking” into the practice.

Fourth, there is the addition of a new approach to voice and articulation practice—the *Speaking Exercise*. Experience has indicated that all too often the student of voice and articulation is inhibited by practice materials taken from literature, drama, poetry, oratory. There is also a shortage of specific sound repetition within such materials. The Speaking Exercise aims to resolve these matters while presenting ample material for practice. All are *original, lighthearted* readings. They give the student experience in “talking” the sounds of every vowel group and of each consonant. There are also *Review Speaking Exercises*. All emphasize an individual sound through *repetition*. Most are *multi-voice* so students can “converse” while practicing a sound. Some use *group response* to promote continual class involvement. The purpose of all Speaking Exercises is the relaxed, enjoyable, cooperative practice of voice and articulation.

Included in the Appendix is “Guides to Oral Reading.” This addition is intended to provide the student with basic guidelines for the oral reading of extra practice material, if needed. Student experience with the Speaking Exercise plus the guides may be used to introduce oral interpretation into the voice and articulation program.

*Communicative Voice and Articulation* is written for students and to students. And, it is written to assist you, the instructor of a basic course in voice and articulation.

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Part One

# COMMUNICATION



## COMMUNICATION and SPEECH

Have you ever considered how fortunate it is to be an American in respect to language? You can travel over a continent larger than Europe and never once encounter a foreign language. You can talk to more than two hundred million people in a nation shrunk by the telephone, the television, and the jet plane because everybody speaks the same American-English. East-West, North-South it is still the same language, and communication can take place.

The matter for immediate consideration, therefore, is not if there can be communication. Instead, it is the *efficiency* of speech as used in everyday communication that is of concern. Just because this is a one language nation, do not assume that speech is always used with efficiency. Do you always speak clearly? Can you always be understood—easily? Do you always understand the other fellow's speech?

Speech, for instance, can vary with the area of the country. These *regionalisms* do not necessarily interfere with communication. Frequently, the differences in sound are pleasant to hear. There are times, however, when the regionalism can interfere with efficient oral exchange. Examine the following list of words and see how many you can immediately recognize:

aig	hit
chirren	ca'
ahrnge	airy
boin	cheer
moanin	sass
reddish	pa'k
tard	arning
dem	bedder

On the possibility that you might be puzzled by one or two of these pronunciations, compare the list of spoken words with the list of interpretations:

aig	egg
chirren	children
ahrnge	orange
boin	burn
moanin	morning
reddish	radish
tard	tired
dem	them
hit	it
ca'	car
airy	any
cheer	chair
sass	sauce
pa'k	park
arning	ironing
bedder	better

What would have been your reaction if you had heard these words in conversation? Immediate comprehension?

Yes, Americans are fortunate. They can travel for thousands of miles, visit geographical extremes, meet millions of people and still speak and hear the same language. But, as you can see in the listed words, there can be communication problems even within a language. There may not be a barrier, but there may be a problem of speaking the language clearly so *anyone and everyone can understand—immediately*.

True, there is rarely a serious breakdown in communication. If this does happen initially, the human ear will gradually adjust itself to the “strange” sounds until comprehension becomes possible. The author was involved in such a situation when he was a high school student.

The author was reared in New England and had the flattened vocal sound of the area, as well as the dropping of certain “r” sounds from words. He would “pa’k the ca’,” “pa’t with the ca’t,” and his “ma’ks gave him hea’t.” He was completely unaware of this speech regionalism when he entered a preparatory school in the Middle Atlantic

area. During the orientation week for new students, the author was very disappointed in his Pennsylvanian roommate. Try as he might he could not get the roommate into a conversation. In fact, the roommate seemed confused most of the time. After nearly a week of this communicative void, the roommate suddenly brightened and said: "Hurrah! I've finally figured out what you are saying!" As it turned out, the roommate had been able to understand little of the New England speech. Once his ear had become tuned to the "different manner of speaking," communication became normal. It had been simply a matter of voice and articulation hindering everyday communication.

Consider another instance of "different" speech that had consequences beyond limiting conversation. This situation involved a young doctor of educational psychology. The fellow had all the qualities to make a fine counselor. He was knowledgeable, industrious, enthusiastic, yet he had a difficult time getting and keeping a position in a school system. He had a speech weakness that had not been corrected. Reared in the Bronx of New York City, he had learned all the poor speech habits of the area. For *these* it was "deese," *heard* became "hoid," and *bottle* was "bo'le." All similar words were equally distorted. Here was an educated man who failed to improve his speech and suffered professionally. Who would want this man to counsel students? It was a case in which voice and articulation did not equal education.

Of course, not everyone has a speech regionalism that interferes with communication. There can be another problem—careless speech. Read the following conversation between two weekend fishermen aloud. How does it sound? Can you understand the dialogue immediately? Would you consider this to be the efficient use of speech?

"Hiyamac."

"Lobuddy."

"Binearlong?"

"Cuplours."

"Ketchanenny?"

"Godafew."

"Kindarthay?"

"Bassencarp."

"Ennysizetoom?"

"Cuplapowns."

"Hittinhard?"

"Sordalite."  
"Wahchoozin?"  
"Gobbaworns."  
"Fishinonaboddum?"  
"Rhydonnoboddum."  
"Igoddago."  
"Tubad."  
"Seeuaroun."  
"Yeahtakideezy."  
"Guluk."

What would be your reaction if your dentist, or doctor, or professor spoke in this way? Do you slur sounds, or omit sounds, or substitute sounds to produce careless speech?

Perhaps you have gathered by this time that weaknesses in speech can impede communication on both social and occupational scenes. If yours is such that you cannot be readily understood by everyone, then communication can be impaired. If your speaking misrepresents you as a person, your social and professional position can be affected. Even without such extreme considerations, just remember that your daily life is filled with speech. So, why not make speech work *for* you?

Your goal, then, is to improve voice and articulation so that: (1) speech complements your educational, social, and professional objectives; (2) speech assists your daily communication.

## Speech Sounds in American-English

To simplify the practice and the improvement of voice and articulation, learn to think in terms of the individual sounds that make up speech. As you know, there are twenty-six letters in the alphabet, but experience in spelling has taught you that the alphabet and the sounds of words do not always coincide with pronunciation or spelling: *how* and *tow*, *bough* and *though*, *see* and *sea*. This alphabet, then, does not satisfy the present need. The solution is an "alphabet of sounds"—the International Phonetic Alphabet. The IPA has a symbol to represent each sound in speech. Examination of this phonetic alphabet will show that there are forty-five sounds, or *phonemes*, in American-English:

## INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET

*Consonants*

[p]	pot	[f]	fun	[m]	mice
[b]	bad	[v]	void	[n]	name
[t]	took	[θ]	think	[ŋ]	gong
[d]	dash	[ð]	them	[hw]	when
[k]	cat	[s]	soak	[w]	wet
[g]	game	[z]	zebra	[r]	rain
[tʃ]	cheat	[ʃ]	shame	[j]	yellow
[dʒ]	jet	[ʒ]	confusion	[l]	late
		[h]	hope		

*Vowels*

[i]	tea	[ɔ]	saw
[ɪ]	fit	[o-ou]	toe
[e-eɪ]	date	[u]	stood
[ɛ]	red	[ʊ]	toot
[æ]	mat	[ɜ-ɝ]	bird
[ɑ]	task	[ɹ]	never
[ɑ]	cart	[ə]	about
[ɒ]	wad	[ʌ]	cup

*Diphthongs*

[aɪ]	pile
[aʊ-au]	now
[ɔɪ]	toy
[ju]	you

You have undoubtedly noticed that quite a number of the phonetic symbols are the same as letters in the alphabet. This occurred when a letter accurately represented a phoneme. When this was not so, a symbol was borrowed from another language or a symbol was invented. The phonetic symbols in this text are enclosed in brackets. After an initial examination of sound production and use, you will study each of these phonetic sounds.

**Production of Voice and Speech**

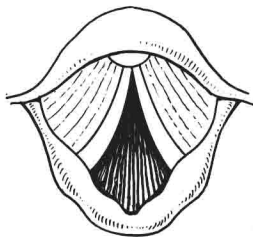
If asked what produces speech, you might identify the voice. In a sense this is true. No voice—no speech. Voice is the oral “noise” you hear as a listener. Once produced, voice can be converted into the individual sounds of speech. Before moving on to specific matters of voice and articulation, you should be familiar with this process.

## VOICE

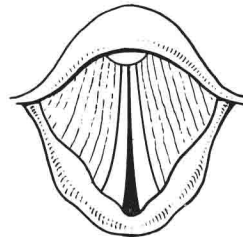
Voice production involves three cooperating parts: motor, vibrator, resonator.

(1) The *motor* consists of the lungs. When the diaphragm, a muscular partition separating chest and abdomen, contracts an air pressure imbalance is created in the chest cavity. Air enters the lungs for equalization and thereby supplies the life process. As the diaphragm relaxes, air is forced from the lungs, through the bronchi and up the trachea. This exhalation and its corresponding force, or pressure, supplies the energy to activate the next phase of voice production—the vibrator.

(2) The *vibrator* consists of two bands of elastic tissue extending from the sides of the larynx, sometimes called the “Adam’s Apple” or “voice box.” During normal respiration or swallowing these bands are open. For vocalization, certain intrinsic muscles cause their opening-closing, relaxing-tensing. As air passes from the trachea through the larynx the breath pressure forces the nearly closed vocal bands to vibrate. This vibration produces sound waves.



Open for Breathing

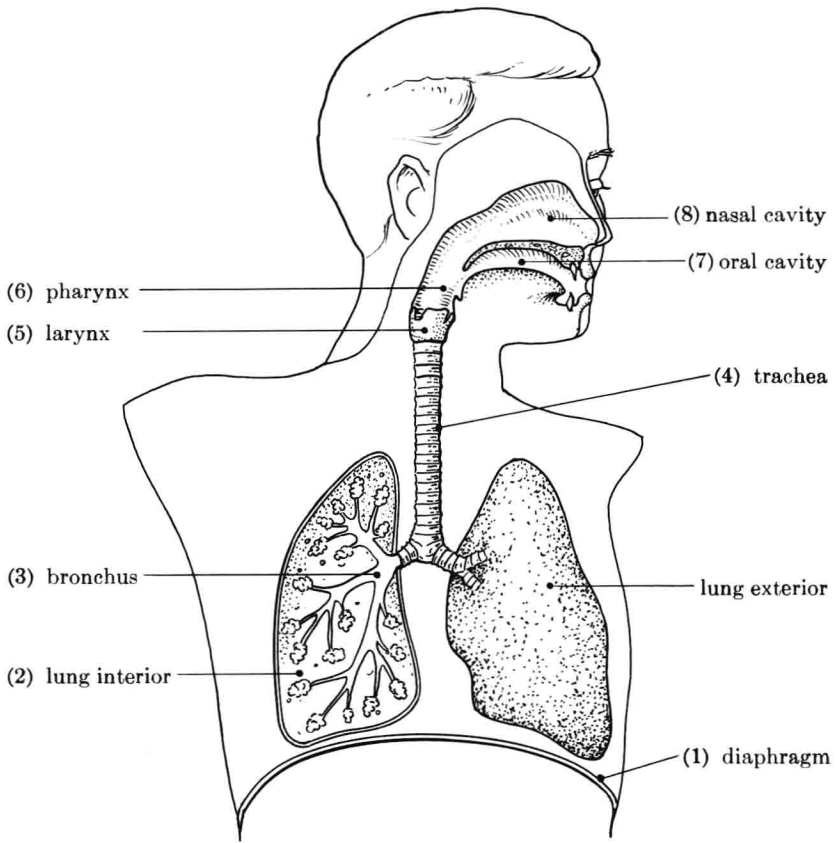


Positioned for Vocalization

#### VOCAL BANDS—TOP VIEW

(3) The final phase of vocalization is the amplification of the laryngeal sound. Now the *resonators* take over. The sound waves produced by the vocal bands reflect and reverberate within the pharynx (throat), then within the oral cavity (mouth). Certain sounds even resonate within the nasal cavity. The end product is what you recognize as voice.

The following cutaway drawing locates the principal components involved in voice production. They are numerically identified to indicate the order in the exhalation-vocalization process.

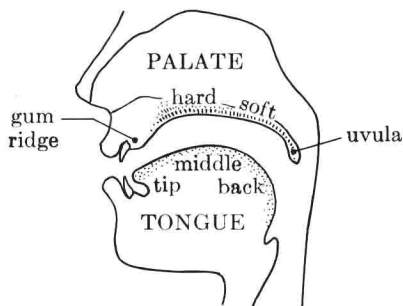


COMPONENTS OF VOICE PRODUCTION

## SPEECH

If you were to vocalize while freezing all parts of the mouth, there would be voice but no speech. For there to be speech, voice must be converted into the individual sounds, or *phonemes*, that make up the words of language. This conversion is accomplished by the action of the tongue, jaw, teeth, lips, and hard and soft palates. These are called the *articulators*.

As can be imagined, the tongue is the most active of the articulators. It changes shape with nearly every phoneme. Its position in relation to the roof of the mouth (hard and soft palates) and the teeth varies. To make articulatory directions easier, both the tongue and the palate have area labels. Review the diagram to become familiar with these labels, then examine the mouth for location:



TONGUE-PALATE AREA LABELS

As you study each speech sound, make reference to its placement diagram which shows the relation of tongue to the palate and the shape of the tongue.

## Improving Voice and Articulation

For communication, there should be satisfactory vocal production use and accurate articulation. Few can claim both as natural gifts. Just as with other human traits, these must be learned.

Your first project is the *voice*. After all, the voice is basic to oral communication. Voice has three matters for study-practice: (1) the production of voice—breathing, resonance-quality; (2) the use of voice—rate, loudness, pitch; (3) the application of voice production and voice use to the vowel sounds—quality and carrying power are the by-products of developed vowel sounds.

The second half of the program centers on *articulation*. With articulation, the voice becomes more distinctive as speech. This study involves those phonemes that give speech clarity—the consonants.

As you work for improved voice and articulation, remember the two goals: (1) that speech complements your educational, social, and professional objectives; (2) that speech assists your daily communication.