

PARALANGUAGE & SIGN LANGUAGE

Not Just *What*, But *How*



PARALANGUAGE

- Study of human voice and features that accompany speech and contribute to communication
- Also called vocal cues or non-verbal voice qualities, modifiers, and sounds which we use consciously or unconsciously
- Support or contradict linguistic, kinesic, or proxemic messages, either simultaneously or alternating with them
- Not considered part of the language system
- **Overlaps with Vocalics**
- Europeans interpret loudness of Americans as aggressive behavior
- Americans might think British are secretive because they talk quietly
- Japanese are comfortable having several pauses in their conversations
- Americans and many Arabic people are uncomfortable with any silence

PARALANGUAGE

Different meanings depending on what parts we emphasize

e.g. She's giving this money to me

INTONATION

1. *She* is giving this money to me
2. She is *giving* this money to me
3. She is giving this *money* to me
4. She is giving this money to *me*

MEANING

- SHE is giving the money, **nobody else**
- She is GIVING, **not lending**
- It is MONEY, **not anything else**
- I AM getting the money, **no one else**

PARALANGUAGE_QUALIFIERS









1. QUALITY:

- Distinguishing feature of each voice
- Quality depends on resonating mechanism
- Cannot be changed
- Can be trained for maximum effect
- Described as resonant, soft, thin, sweet, heavy etc.

PARALANGUAGE_QUALIFIERS

Voice Volume Scale

| | |
|---|--------------|
|  | 5 Scream |
|  | 4 Loud |
|  | 3 Medium |
|  | 2 Quiet |
|  | 1 Whisper |
|  | 0 Silent |

2. VOLUME

- Loudness or softness of voice
- Depends upon speaking area and company of people
- Expressing same sentence with loud/ soft voice, alters meaning and reaction
- Emotion and aggression associated with volume
- Volume impacts rationality
e.g. solving mathematical problems may be easier in quiet room

PARALANGUAGE_QUALIFIERS



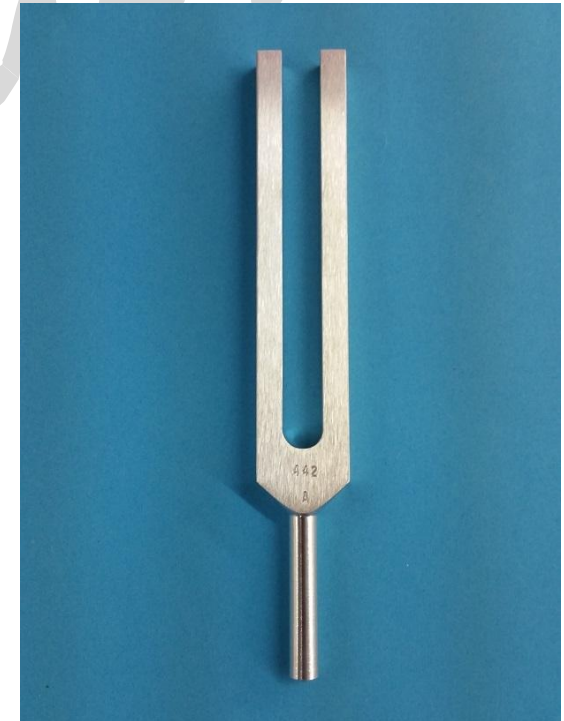
3. PACE/ RATE/ TEMPO

- Number of words spoken per minute: 80 to 250
- Average rate is 120-150 words/ minute
- Slow = uncertain/ monotonous/ dull = audience stops listening
- Fast = sense of urgency/ high emotional state = discomfort in audience

PARALANGUAGE_QUALIFIERS

4. PITCH

- Number of vibrations of human voice per second
- Low pitch = sadness, shock, dullness, guilt, monotony
- High pitch = excitement, joy, anger, triumph
- Well-balanced pitch = most clear and impactful
- Tilting head up/ down distorts pitch of voice
- Should not be raised at end of sentence
- Called 'pitching up' = sentence sounds unfinished



PARALANGUAGE_QUALIFIERS



5. PRONUNCIATION & ARTICULATION

- Pronunciation = standard accepted speaking
- Never guess, always check
- Articulation = clarity and crispness of pronunciation
- Lazy articulation = slurred pronunciation, chopped or truncated words, omitted sounds, whole words left out
- Difference between 'I do not know' and 'I dunno'

PARALANGUAGE_QUALIFIERS

6. MODULATION

- How we regulate, adjust, or vary tone, pitch, volume etc. for effective speaking
- Brings flexibility and vitality to voice
- Syllable, word and sentence stress, when applied carefully, can make modulation better



PARALANGUAGE_IDENTIFIERS

actually
you know
and
basically
okay like

er um ah

- Small sounds, not necessarily words, but which create meaning e.g. ah-hah, uh-huh, and huh-uh
- Called **FILLERS** as they 'fill silence with sound' but do not have dictionary meaning
- Strongly affects interpretation e.g. salesperson saying to customer: 'Well, uh-hh, the price is, uh-hh, Rs. 10,000'
- Encourages other people, especially over telephone, confirming to speaker that listener is attentive and engaged

PARALANGUAGE DIFFERENTIATORS



- Voice undergoes a change and sounds different
- Caused by extreme emotions like crying or laughing too hard, great anger, or extreme prejudice
- Results in voice 'Breaking', where breaking refers both to speaking in a broken or halting manner and change in sound of voice
- e.g. phrase uttered by a crying person will mean something different than one said by a laughing person

PARALANGUAGE_SILENCE/ PAUSE



- Silence/ pause between words and sentences have important meanings
- Meaning of silence can only be deduced after careful analysis of communicator, subject, time, place, and culture of speaker
- Imagine saying to a beloved person: 'I love you', and he/she responds with silence

Perhaps your statement is not believed at all?

SIGN LANGUAGE: VISUAL+AUDIO

- Transmission of information and ideas using symbols, imagery, and sound
- Includes signs, typography, drawing, graphic design, illustration, advertising, colour, wordless sound etc.

e.g. crossed bones under skull, cross over cigarette, green or red lights at traffic points, red light outside operation theatre, red and blue light on top of police car, drum beats in jungles, alarms, buzzers and bells, police sirens etc.



PROS & CONS

ADVANTAGES

- Economize on verbal communication
- Interesting and motivational for viewers
- Effective way of advertising
- Quick and easy in conveying message to large audience
- Useful in time management
- Streamlines working of organization (e.g. buzzers)

DISADVANTAGES

- Can communicate only elementary and simple ideas
- Needs great skill to communicate. (e.g. to draw effective pictures, posters, cartoons)
- Cannot be substitute for verbal communication
- Likely to be misunderstood
- Spot correction not possible

OTHER SIGN LANGUAGES

- Visual-spatial languages using distinct movements called 'signs' in place of spoken or written words
- Movements include hand shapes, eye gaze, facial expressions and arm, head and body postures
- Distinct from gestures and have specific meanings
- Fingerspelling is one of oldest forms of manual communication
- Mime = acting out something using only gestures
- Mime often used as way of enhancing communication, rather than being complete way of communicating

AND THAT'S THE WAY IT IS...



and here