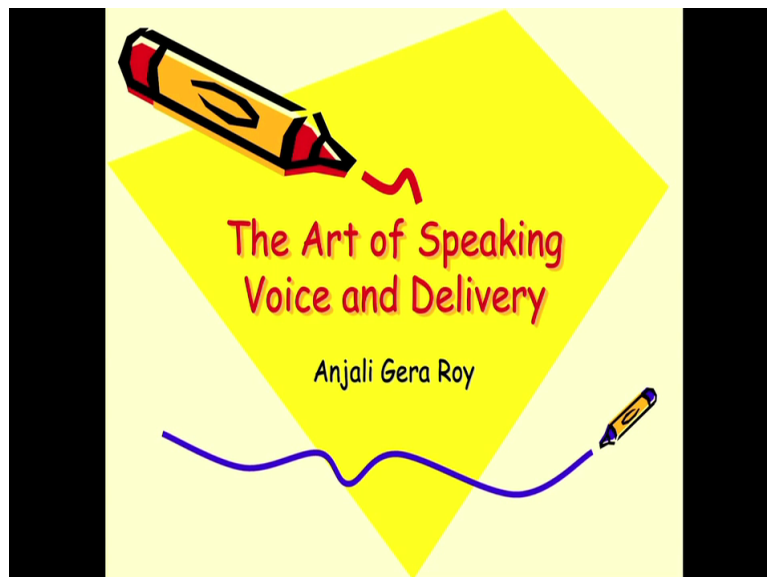


**Speaking Effectively**  
**Professor Anjali Gera Roy**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur**  
**Lecture 16**  
**Speaking: Voice**

Welcome back, we touched upon voice and delivery in the session on how to improve body language and it was one among the nine interpersonal skills I focused on. Now I would focus exclusively on voice and delivery in this unit. (Ha) In the art of speaking, voice and delivery play the most important role.

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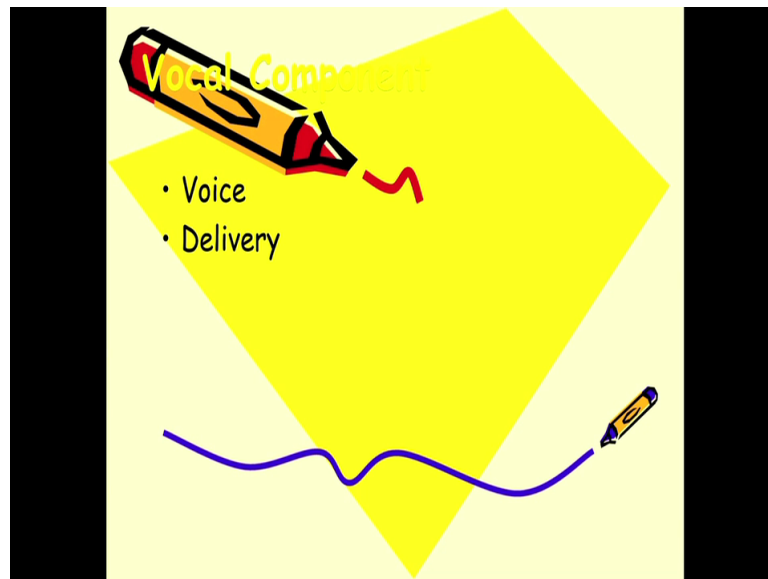


As we saw, the vocal component of speaking forms 38% of the total message and in this vocal component, half of it is the voice and the other half is delivery. Like conscious and unconscious aspects of dressing, voice and delivery form the unconscious and conscious aspects of speaking. Because, voice is something we are born with. Some of us are naturally born with good voices. Some of us do not have very good voices. Think of the nightingale of India, Lata Mangeshkar and think of the voice she is born with.

Even if Lataji was to mispronounce something, whatever she were to say, it would sound most pleasant because her voice is so mellifluous. The quality of the voice itself is so mellifluous, it sounds so pleasant. So, the voice really depends on the voice box, which some of us are born with naturally and we cannot help the quality of our voices. But we can help the quality of our delivery. We can control our delivery irrespective of the voice we have.

And even in voice, of course all of us cannot have Lata Mangeshkar's voice or Amitabh Bachchan's baritone voice but we can improve the quality of our voice through correct breathing, through correct phonation, through posture, even posture, if we improve our posture we find our voice also improves. So let us look at elements of voice and delivery.

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Now, regardless of what kind of voice we have, we must remember like appearance and dress, like the visual aspects of our appearance, the vocal aspects of our personality, the voice and delivery, voice in particular has a personality. It creates a profile of the person. Depending on the kind of voice one has, people create a profile of you. So if you listen to a person who you have not seen face to face, who you have not met and on the basis of a phone call you have made, you try to do not you often do this?

On the basis of the voice of the person you try to guess the (pus) how that person looks like. so if someone has a heavy voice, we try to think it must be a big person. Someone has a thin voice, very pleasant voice, you think it must be a very small looking person. We fork these images which are of course stereotype images on the basis of the voice of the person. And often we are surprised to see the person when we meet them, when we find that the voice does not conform to the personality of the person.

Now think of people who work in the reception of companies or of hotels. Or even people who are in the public relations, usually they hire people with good voices. And people who speak on the telephone peep you know peep in the past in particular when they had telephone

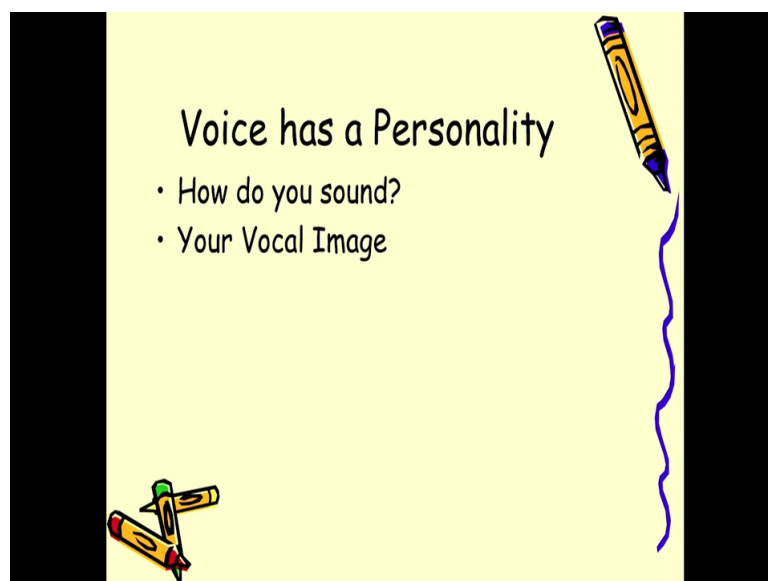
operators. People who had a naturally good voice, they had to audition for the job and if they passed, they were given the job.

So, this would often create misunderstandings because (th) these would be young women who would have very pleasant voices and when they spoke on the phone, people on the other end will form an image of that person taking the call and form an image of a very attractive person. But many a times this was not the case because there were women or there were men who had very pleasant voices but were not very (pt) particularly attractive physically to look at.

And people when they met them, they came in for a rude shock and they found that image did not conform to the voice. This also happens with celebrities. Some (cele) (cel) celebrities we associate with a certain character. But when we hear them, the voice does not carry that image that we have. Think of some cricketers for instance, Sachin Tendulkar. Sachin Tendulkar, he is one of the best cricketer we have had, you know.

Nobody is in comparable but his voice (letdown) is a letdown because particularly in his early years because he has a very thin weak voice which does not convey the authority he has displayed on the field and off the field. So, whenever there is a mismatch between the voice and then personality, that is something we need to watch out for. Because people do form an image a profile of you based on your voice. In other words, voice has a personality.

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How do you sound? Have you ever asked yourself how you sound? These days it is pretty easy. in the older days we used to ask people to call strangers and ask them to guess. Even

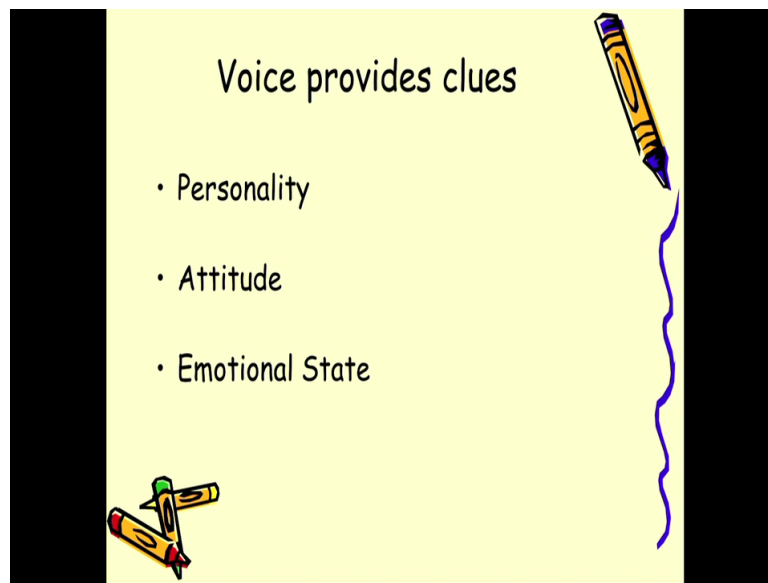
today it works. You call a stranger, speak to a stranger on the phone and try to ask the stranger to guess how old you are, how tall you are, (ha) (wa) guess your physical features and then meet face to face. You do the same with a stranger and then meet face to face and find out how right you were in guessing the profile of the person.

But today it is possible to find out how you sound just by recording. If you record your voice, have not you found that the very first time you record your voice, you are pleasantly or unpleasantly surprised because you find that the voice does not conform to the image that you have of yourself. I myself am surprised that even though I have recorded my voice several times and have spoken I have had recordings done. There are moments, there are sessions where the voice quality is very different from what I think my voice is.

Maybe I am in a rush, maybe I am in an emotion state where my voice does not have the same quality which I expect from it. But it does happen that your vocal image, you do not understand unless you record your voice. Now voice provides clues to many things. First of all it provides a clue to your personality. What kind of person you are? Two, it conveys a clue, it (con) expresses a clue, it provides a clue to your attitude. What is your attitude? And that is to do with your tone.

If you sound tired, people will say okay, this person is not interested in listening to me. So that is your attitude. And your emotional state. Suppose your voice is high pitched at a certain moment, normally you speak in a level tone, but on a certain moment you find yourself speaking with a high pitch.

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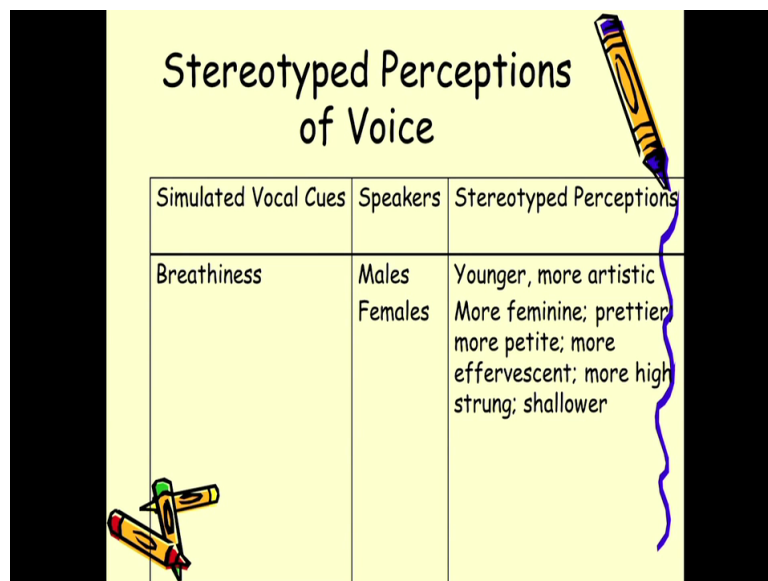
Voice provides clues

- Personality
- Attitude
- Emotional State

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Perhaps that is a day or that is an hour when you are going through some emotional turmoil and you find that your voice is different from what it normally sounds like.

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Stereotyped Perceptions of Voice

Simulated Vocal Cues	Speakers	Stereotyped Perceptions
Breathiness	Males Females	Younger, more artistic More feminine; prettier more petite; more effervescent; more high strung; shallower

The slide features a yellow background with a black border. At the top right, a yellow crayon is shown drawing a wavy blue line. At the bottom left, three crayons (red, green, and yellow) are scattered.

What I am trying to say is that irrespective of what voice you have, which in many cases you cannot help because you are born with some voices, of course you can improve them. But, what you cannot help is the stereotyped perception that people have of certain kind of voices. So let us look at some of these stereotyped perceptions and once again like everything else there is a cultural factor because certain voices which are (ca) considered attractive in some cultures are not considered particularly attractive in other cultures.

Similarly it is also historically situated in the sense that voices which were considered attractive in a particular era are not considered attractive in another era. Most famous example is that of again Lata Mangeshkar. Because prior to that if you think of the singing styles of the singers of the Lataji's predecessors, you will find that they had a, even the female singers had a rich full throated voice.

Whereas when we come to the Lata Mangeshkar era, not only Lata Mangeshkar but also all her admirers and her fans and the so called clones of Lataji start a cultivated this thin very mellifluous, very thin , which Sanjay Srivastav calls a virginal voice and this voice according to Sanjay Srivastav became the voice of the nation.

So this voice of a teenage young women, a thin voice, high pitched voice, very mellifluous voice was considered began to be considered a very pleasant voice and a very desirable voice and became the voice of the nation, when she was given the title of nightingale of India. But if you think of other singers before her like Noor Jahan or even Malika (Pu) Pukhraj or Shamshad Begum. The more hereditary trained singers, you find that they did not have the kind of trained voice that Lata Mangeshkar has which is the voice of a very young girl.

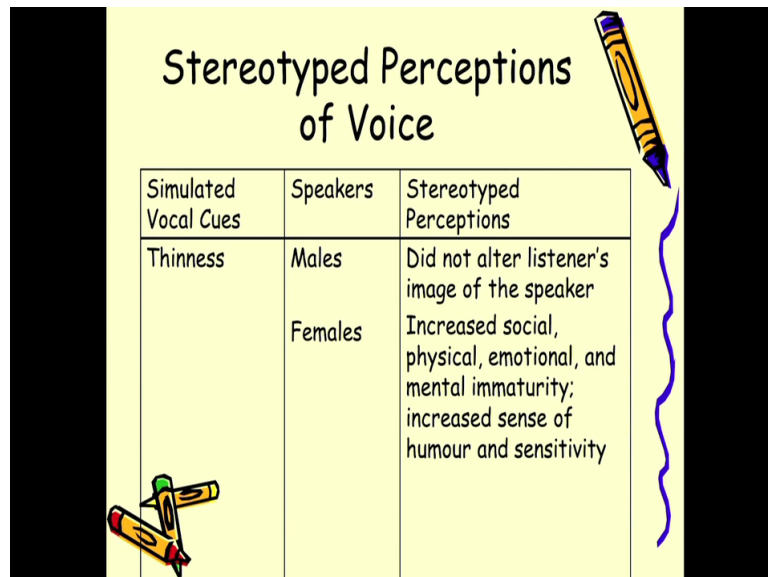
And this voice became the ideal voice ever since in playback singing in Hindi cinema and in other kinds of singing as well. But let us look at the stereotyped perceptions of voice in again in western cultures.

So let us look at the clues. Now, breathiness in the voice, now breathiness is something you might not able to control sometimes like if you (11:31), you tend to have a very breathy voice because you have to keep breathing and keep pausing for breath. But if you have a breathy voice, it is considered in males, the perception of a male who has a breathy voice is considered younger, more artistic.

In a female, again it is gendered, that what might be considered right in a male may not be considered right in a female and vice versa. So in a female, a breathy voice is considered more feminine, prettier, more petite, more effervescent, more high strung but also shallower. So it also depends on who you are, what is the profession you practice, what is your role and how you want to come across to others. So you are a film-star or an artist or you want to project yourself as a very pretty attractive person, then breathiness is a very desirable quality in a voice.

But if you have a position, if you (hav) practice a different profession, you are a say a management professional or you are a banker, you do not want to come across as high strung. It might be a very desirable quality in an artistic women, but not in a business women. So, it might also make you appear shallow.

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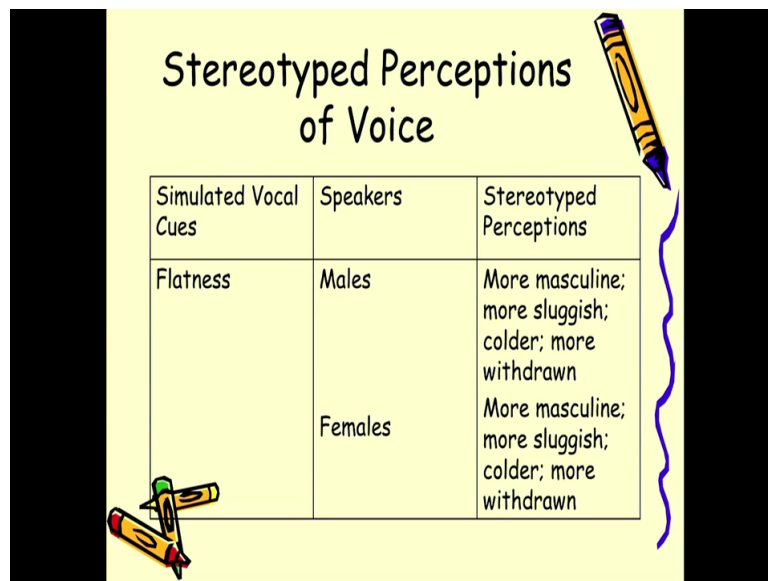
**Stereotyped Perceptions of Voice**

Simulated Vocal Cues	Speakers	Stereotyped Perceptions
Thinness	Males	Did not alter listener's image of the speaker
	Females	Increased social, physical, emotional, and mental immaturity; increased sense of humour and sensitivity

Thinness, thinness again in a male did not alter listener's image of the speaker. In females, thinness was indicated increased social, physical, emotional and mental immaturity. So a thin voice which (ma) we might consider very attractive in a singer, in the west indicates increased social, physical, emotional and mental immaturity, but also (ind) increase sense of humor and sensitivity.

So these attributes which are given to the thin voice may themselves vary. Maybe (po) considered positive as we (sa) said in the case of India, where a thin voice was considered positive, attractive. It may be considered negatively because it might be seen as indicating social, physical, emotional and mental immaturity. But these traits themselves might be considered desirable in one culture and not desirable in another culture. But it also issues increased sense of humor and sensitivity.

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### Stereotyped Perceptions of Voice

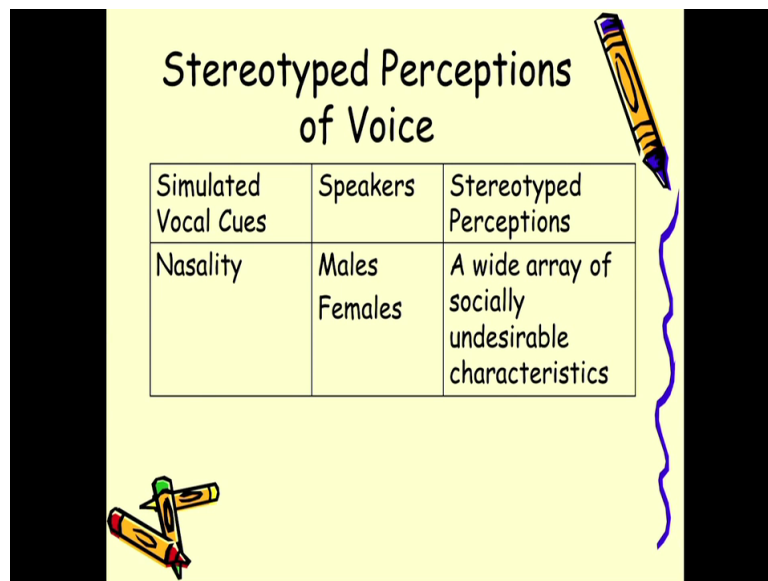
Simulated Vocal Cues	Speakers	Stereotyped Perceptions
Flatness	Males	More masculine; more sluggish; colder; more withdrawn
	Females	More masculine; more sluggish; colder; more withdrawn

Flatness is another quality of our voice. Flatness in males indicated a more masculine, more sluggish, colder, more withdrawn. So, a flat voice is used by males when they want to appear more (ma) masculine, but more withdrawn, cold. But it also makes them sound (sl) sluggish. In females, the same attributes, more masculine, more sluggish, colder, more withdrawn may not be considered a very desirable quality unless it is cultivated deliberately.

One of my friends for instance. I found her speaking on the phone in her office and I found that she, who had a very thin mellifluous voice, cultivated a very flat voice when she was speaking to her clients and I said why are you speaking like this? And that is when I understood that acquiring, cultivating a flat voice made her sound more masculine, more cold, more withdrawn and also according to her, gave her more authority because her clients were not used to dealing with women. So if she acquired this masculine voice, the clients were more willing to listen to her.



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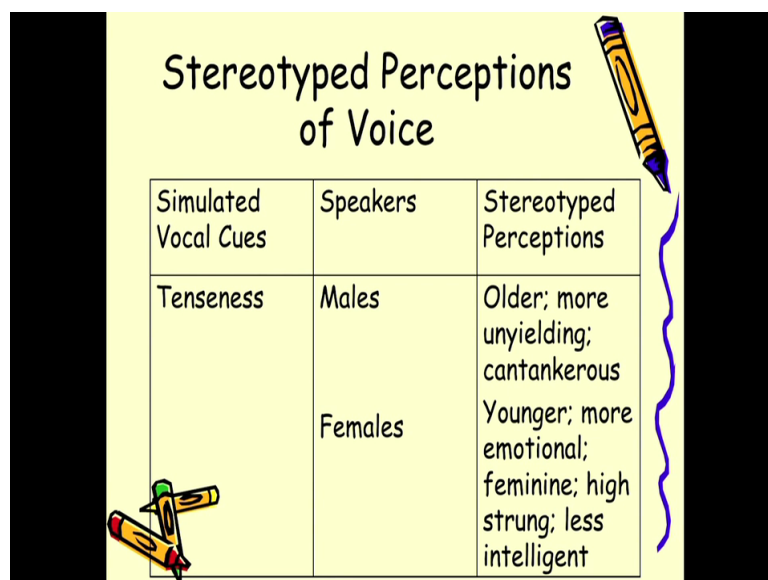


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Simulated Vocal Cues	Speakers	Stereotyped Perceptions
Nasality	Males Females	A wide array of socially undesirable characteristics

Nasality, nasality in males and females both is considered an undesirable quality and a wide array of socially undesirable characteristics. But as I said there is not (ha) hard and fast rule. Think some of our singers. Himesh Reshamiya for instance or Mika, they have a (nas) nasal voice but they have and (foll) millions of followers. So, what maybe undesirable in one culture may not be undesirable in another culture or in another profession.

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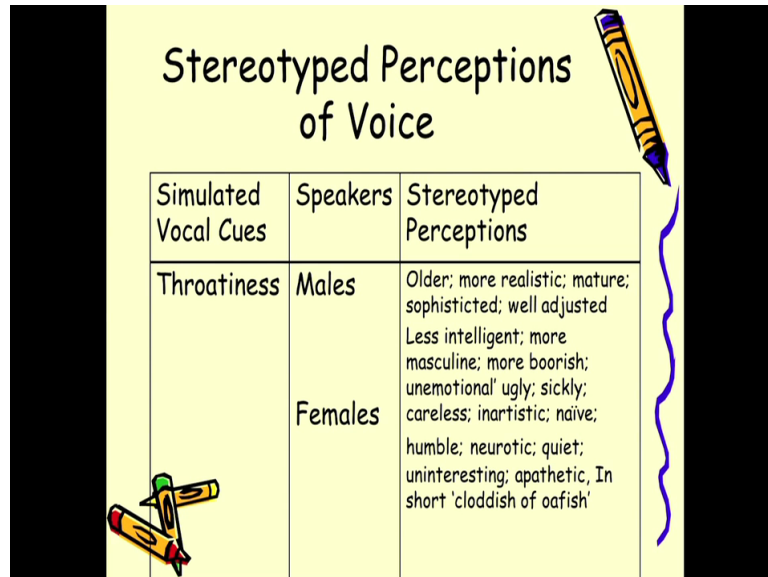
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Simulated Vocal Cues	Speakers	Stereotyped Perceptions
Tenseness	Males	Older; more unyielding; cantankerous
	Females	Younger; more emotional; feminine; high strung; less intelligent

Now we come to Tenseness, tenseness in males means older, unyielding, cantankerous. Not very desirable but suggest maturity. In females, tenseness seems more desirable I would say. it indicates youth, younger women, more emotional, feminine, high strung but also less intelligent. So it may be a very desirable trait in a young women who wants to project of an

image of herself as very feminine and very high strung and very artistic and very emotional. But may not work for a women who is trying to project herself as less as intelligent because it suggest less intelligence.

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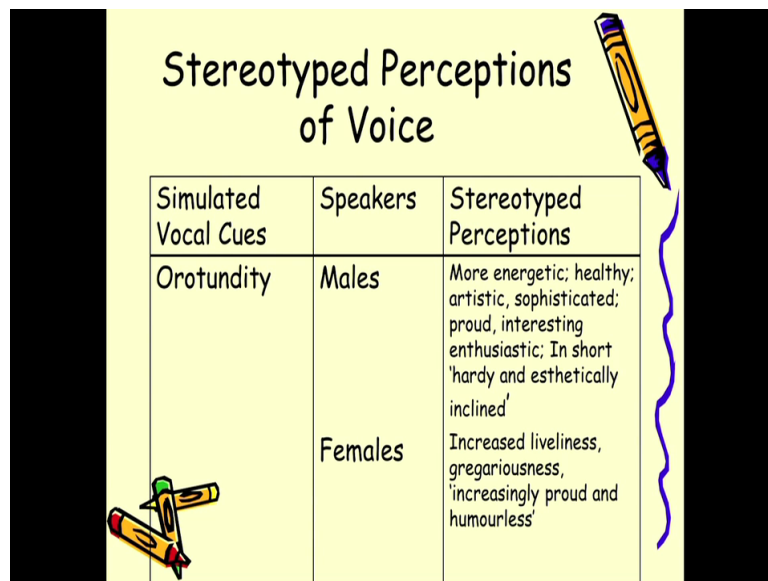


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Simulated Vocal Cues	Speakers	Stereotyped Perceptions
Throatiness	Males	Older; more realistic; mature; sophisticated; well adjusted Less intelligent; more masculine; more boorish; unemotional; ugly; sickly; careless; inartistic; naïve; humble; neurotic; quiet; uninteresting; apathetic, In short 'cloddish of oafish'
	Females	

Now we come to a desirable voice, throatiness. In the west particularly people say, 'oh! he has a deep throaty voice'. Which is considered a very attractive voice. And in men it is considered older, more realistic, mature, sophisticated and adjusted but also less intelligent, more masculine, more boorish, unemotional, ugly, sickly, careless, inartistic, naïve, humble, neurotic, quiet, uninteresting, apathetic, in short 'cloddish or oafish' in females. In males throatiness is considered a very desirable voice.

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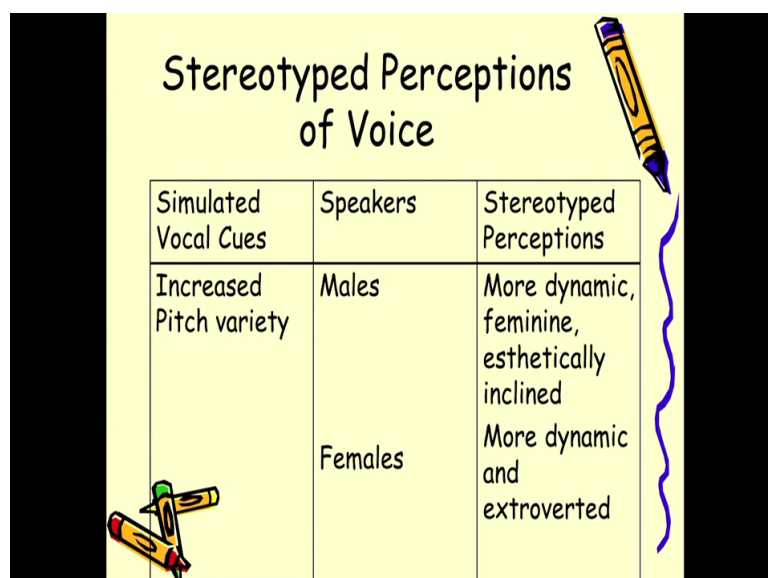
The slide features a yellow background with the title "Stereotyped Perceptions of Voice" at the top. A table is centered on the slide, and there are illustrations of crayons: one at the top right and a group of three at the bottom left. A blue wavy line extends from the top-right crayon down the right side of the table.

Simulated Vocal Cues	Speakers	Stereotyped Perceptions
Orotundity	Males	More energetic; healthy; artistic, sophisticated; proud, interesting enthusiastic; In short 'hardy and esthetically inclined'
	Females	Increased liveliness, gregariousness, 'increasingly proud and humourless'

Orotundity in males suggest more energetic, healthy, artistic, sophisticated, proud, interesting, enthusiastic, in short 'hardy and esthetically inclined'. In females it means increased liveliness, gregariousness, 'increasingly proud and humorless'. So orotundity is a very desirable quality in a male which has a whole range a string of positive qualities, artistic, energetic, sophisticated and so on but in females it (ind) indicates arrogance and lack of humor.

Other cues relate to the rate of speech. if you speak fast in both sexes, you sound more animated and extroverted whereas we speak slowly less animated and less (introver) extroverted.

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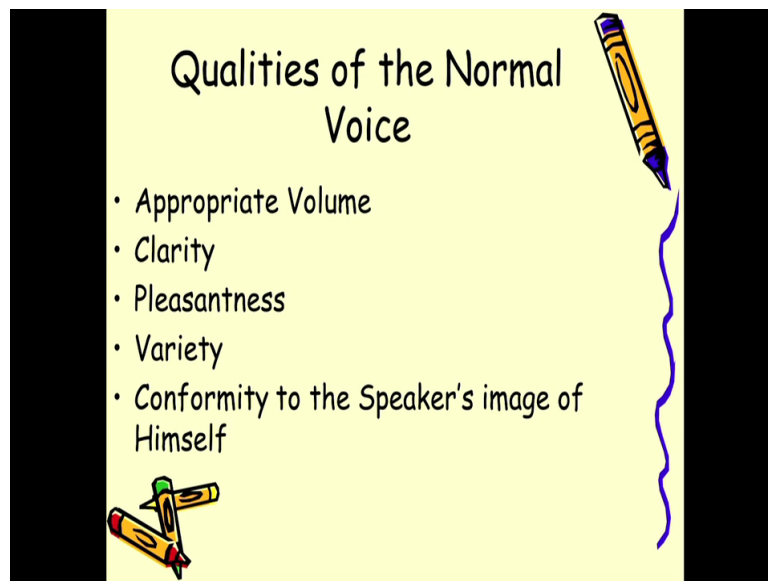


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Simulated Vocal Cues	Speakers	Stereotyped Perceptions
Increased Pitch variety	Males	More dynamic, feminine, esthetically inclined
	Females	More dynamic and extroverted

Increased pitch variety. If you show more pitch variety instead of speaking in a (ba) level voice, in males you are considered more dynamic, but also more feminine, more esthetically inclined. So you will find that artist, painters, photographers, they might get away with a voice which has increased pitch variety. But not other males who do not want to be seen as esthetically inclined or feminine. In females it is seen as more dynamic and more extroverted.

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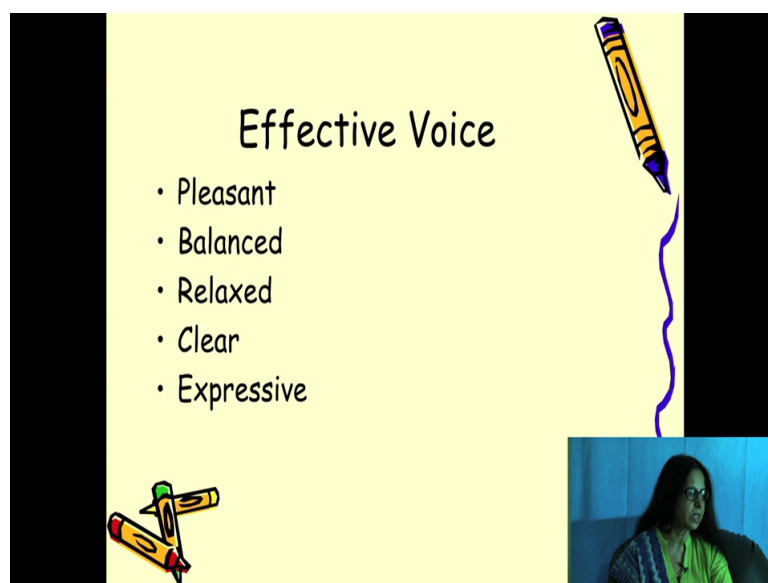
### Qualities of the Normal Voice

- Appropriate Volume
- Clarity
- Pleasantness
- Variety
- Conformity to the Speaker's image of Himself

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Now, quality of the normal voice are, you must speak at appropriate volume, it should have clarity, should have pleasantness, variety and most important it should conform to the speaker's image of himself or herself.

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### Effective Voice

- Pleasant
- Balanced
- Relaxed
- Clear
- Expressive

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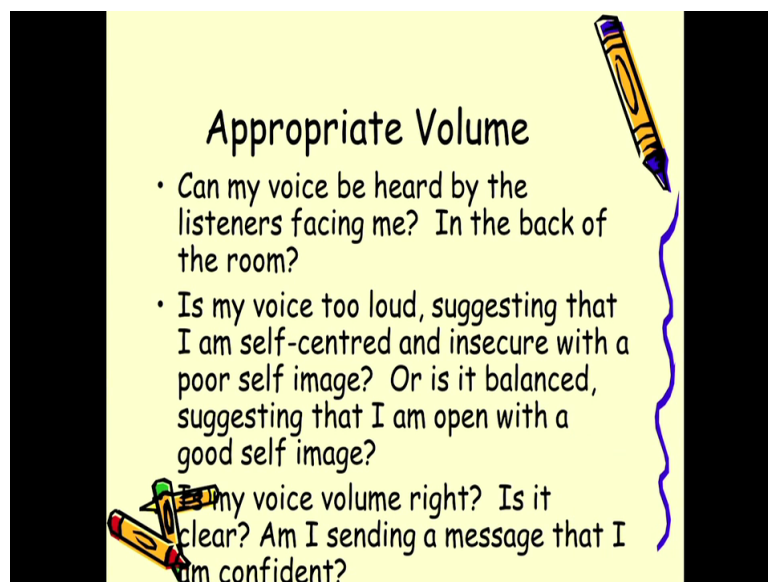
Let us conclude by saying what is the quality of an effective voice? An effective voice is pleasant, it is balanced, it is relaxed, it is clear and it is also expressive.

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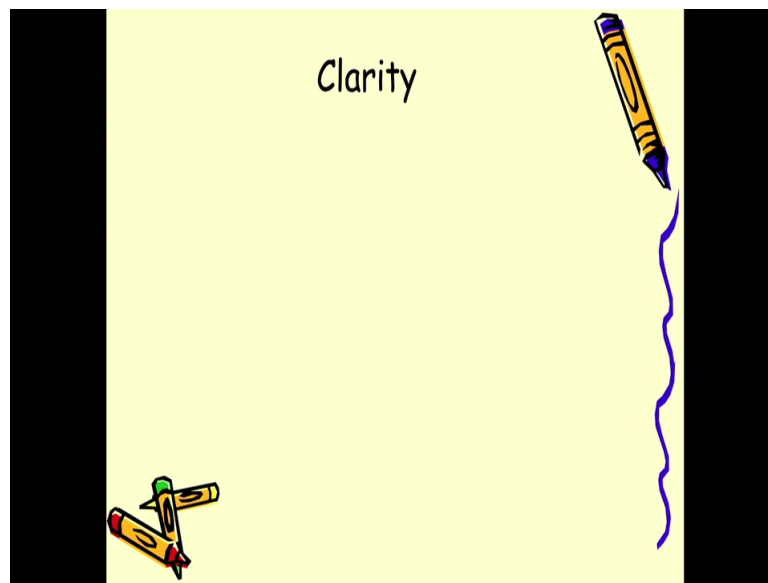
An ineffective voice is a voice which is breathy, which is hoarse, which is nasal, whiny or monotonous.

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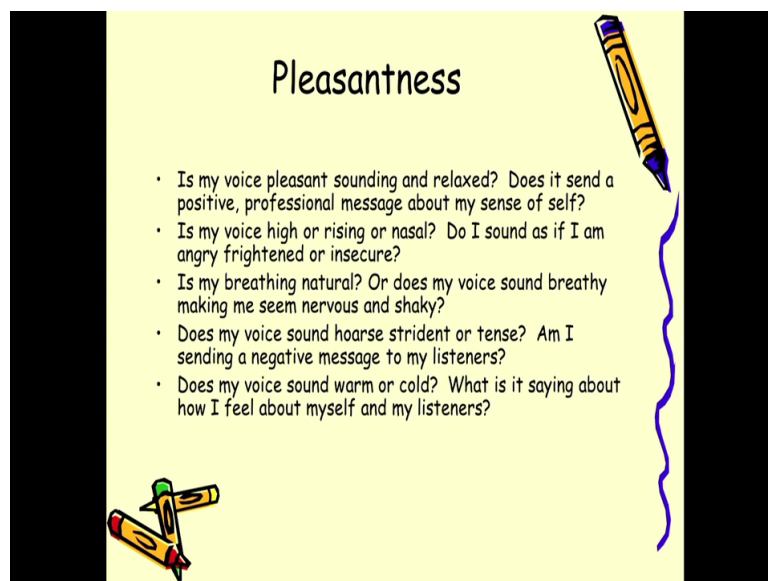
So, let us conclude with a checklist. Can my voice be heard by the listeners facing me? In the back of the room? Is my voice too loud, suggesting that I am self-centered and insecure with a poor self-image? Or is it balanced, suggesting that I am open with a good self-image? Is my voice volume right? Is it clear? Am I sending a message that I am confident?

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Clarity. Is my voice clear or is it muddled?

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Pleasantness. Is my voice pleasant sounding and relaxed? Does it send a positive, professional message about my sense of self? Is my voice high or rising or nasal? Do I sound as if I am angry, frightened or insecure? Is my breathing natural? Or does my voice sound breathy making me sound nervous and shaky? Does my (ss) voice sound hoarse, strident or tense? Am I sending a negative message to my listeners? Does my voice sound warm or cold? What is it saying about how I feel about myself and my listeners?

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Variety

- Does my voice have vocal variety? Do I sound expressive as if I am interested in my listeners reactions?
- Is my voice monotonous with no change in pitch or emphasis? Do I sound as if I am bored?

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Variety. Does my voice have vocal variety? Do I sound expressive as if I am interested in my listener's reactions? Is my voice monotonous with no change in pitch or emphasis? Do I sound as if I am bored?

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Conformity to the Speaker's image of Himself

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And does my voice conforms to my image of myself. So, as I said there is no hard and fast rule about what is a good voice or what is a bad voice. The litmus test is, does your voice conform to your image of yourself. So if you want to sound artistic, it is alright for you to have a breathy voice. But if you want to sound very authoritative, confident in command then may be it is not a desirable voice.

But people do judge you, people do form an opinion of you based on how you speak, whether your voice is pleasant or unpleasant, whether you speak too loudly or you speak too softly,

whether you speak in a level voice or you speak in a high pitched voice. Each of these provide certain clues to your listeners to what kind of person you are, what your background is, what your emotional state is and therefore as I said at the very beginning, voice has a personality. People create a personality for you on the basis of your voice. Thank you.