

Articulation and Pronunciation

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WHAT'S COVERED

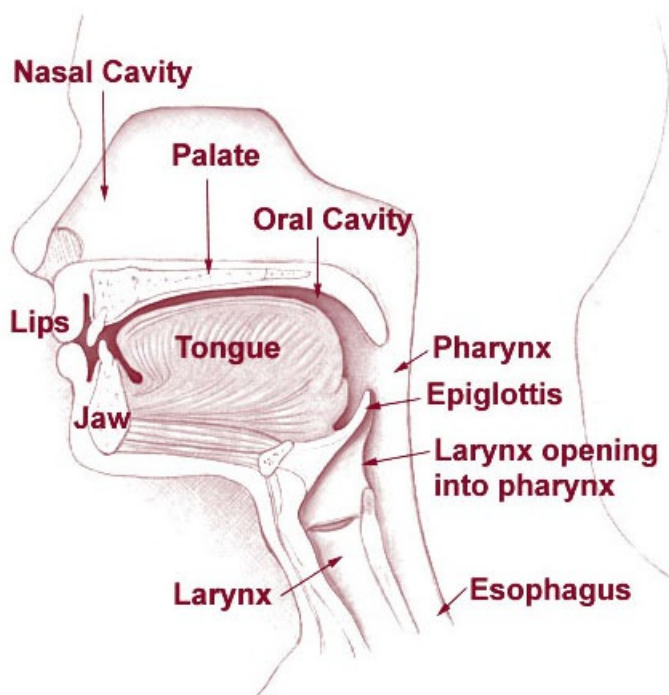
In this lesson, you will learn about the importance of articulation and pronunciation when delivering a speech. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Articulation, the Last Step in Speech Production
 - a. Tips for Speaker
2. Pronunciation in Spoken Language
 - a. Tips for Speaker

1. Articulation, the Last Step in Speech Production

We as humans are unique in our use of tongue, lips, and other movable parts of the speech mechanism. The first act of speech is breathing, in which you get air into a storage chamber; second is phonation, the process by which you force air into vibration by the action of the vocal folds; third, resonance, in which your mouth, nose and throat cavities amplify the sound so you can hear it; and finally there is **articulation**, in which you modify the sound by movement of the teeth, tongue, and lips into recognizable patterns.

There are only forty-four sounds to master, and as young child you started making them by mastering simple sounds which you later articulated into repetitive sound combinations and then words.



Here you are concerned with intelligibility. Can the audience comprehend what you are saying? If you produce the basic sounds of the language in a manner which is different from the language users in the audience, at the most basic level your speech will not be understood.

You might substitute one sound for another at the beginning of a word such as 'dis for this and "w" for "r" so you would say "wabbit" rather than "rabbit." Or you might leave a sound off the end of a word, such as in goin' for going, in casual speech. But, the real challenge is whether or not you can produce the "correct" sound when it is required. If you can not physically produce the sound, then you may want to consult with a professional speech therapist to help you with articulation.



TERM TO KNOW

Articulation

Use of tongue, lips, jaw, and other speech organs to make a sound. Often the concept is only used for the production of consonants.

1a. Tips for Speaker

1. Practice to make sure you are not substituting or omitting sounds when you say a word, or adding sounds such as *needcessity* for *necessity*.
2. Pay particular attention to common sound substitutions such as t for th so that you don't say *tin* for *thin* and *d* for *th* so that you don't say *den* for *then*.
3. Practice reading and recording passages with the problem sounds. Listen to the practice recording with a learning partner or tutor.

2. Pronunciation in Spoken Language

Pronunciation refers to the ability to use the correct stress, rhythm, and intonation of a word in a spoken

language. A word may be spoken in different ways by various individuals or groups, depending on many factors. These factors include the area in which you grew up, the area in which you now live, whether you have a speech or voice disorder, your ethnic group, your socio-economic class, or your education.

When we talk about pronunciation, we focus on the word rather than the individual sound, as with articulation. The syllable is a unit of organization for a sequence of speech sounds.

➡ **EXAMPLE** The word water is composed of two syllables: *wa* and *ter*.

A syllable is typically made up of a syllable nucleus (most often a vowel) with consonants around it at the beginning and end. Syllables are often considered the phonological "building blocks" of words. A word that consists of a single syllable (like English dog) is called a monosyllable, and is said to be monosyllabic.

Similar terms include disyllable and disyllabic, for a word of two syllables; trisyllable and trisyllabic for a word of three syllables; and polysyllable and polysyllabic, which may refer either to a word of more than three syllables or to any word of more than one syllable. Your job in pronunciation involves recognizing the different syllables that make up a word, applying the stress to the right syllable and using the right up and down pitch pattern for **intonation**.

Intonation is also used in English to add function to words such as to to differentiate between wh-questions, yes-no questions, declarative statements, commands, requests, etc. You can change the meaning by varying the intonation pattern.



TERM TO KNOW

Intonation

The rise and fall of the voice in speaking. Some texts use "inflection" instead of intonation to indicate change in pitch.

Pronunciation

The way in which the words of a language are made to sound when speaking.

2a. Tips for Speaker

1. Listen to recordings of different people you admire, to check the pronunciation.
2. You can connect to one of the online dictionaries which has an audio of the preferred pronunciations if you are unsure.
3. You can download an app for your cellphone or tablet so you have it readily available to check pronunciation and meaning of words.
4. If you are using a non-English word, you can also use Google's translate function with audio pronunciation guide with the translation.
5. If you *spell* a word differently than other language users, you may also *pronounce* the word differently. Check to determine if the word is pronounced as it is spelled. There are forty-four sounds in English, but over five hundred spellings for the different sounds.
6. You may want to practice reading a story or article aloud with a learning partner or tutor to check your pronunciation.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that **articulation** involves changing the sounds coming from your vocal folds by moving the teeth, tongue, and lips in recognizable patterns. After practice, if you can not physically produce the sound, then you may want to consult with a professional speech therapist to help you with articulation. **Pronunciation** involves changing the sounds of words by using stress, rhythm, and tone change on different syllables of the word. The syllable is the phonological "building block" of words. It is a unit of organization for a sequence of speech sounds. Important **tips for the speaker** are to practice to make sure you are not substituting or omitting sounds when you say a word, and to install an online dictionary with audio pronunciation guides on your cellphone or laptop so you can listen to words that are troublesome to you when you are practicing.

Source: Boundless. "Articulation and Pronunciation." Boundless Communications Boundless, 14 Mar. 2017. Retrieved 31 May. 2017 from <https://www.boundless.com/communications/textbooks/boundless-communications-textbook/delivering-the-speech-12/effective-vocal-delivery-64/articulation-and-pronunciation-257-7089/>



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