

This is designed as a structure for searching with the voice, searching out the possibilities of the voice. The body will be instinctively involved, organically—that is unavoidable, and the voice can originate nowhere else but in the body, propelled by it and propelling. The rapidity with which it should eventually be done and the rhythmic play of it should eliminate interferences that come from wondering which comes first, voice or body—the emphasis is on the voice as body language.

Take a verse passage or any other speech, and use the voice as the instrument of investigation; not as the outcome of another process as if it were not part of the body. Do the following in a series, repeating any part at will and, after slow motion, in any order, though you will eventually want to score it in very personal ways. Remember: the structure allows for "recovering the losses" whenever you feel the voice has overstretched itself; it can always be brought in, introjecting or silently, but also remember that the point is to stretch the voice, in amplitude and articulation. There is a kind of dramatic structure involved, with climactic sequences of diminishment and expansion, speed, and the expansion and contraction of space. The climaxes should be attempted, gradually building by some means of returning to a center or altering impulse, but the superobjective is to discover and exercise the range of the voice. Other elements may be added and more stringent particulars (e.g., you may only sweep the floor with fricatives; set your own challenges).

When the elements are understood, then the sequence should be performed as an Impulse Exercise, rapidly, without mental interferences, rhythmically, voice and body. It should be ideographic finally without your thinking of it, the passage you used to motivate it virtually dissolving into the composition of an impulse. In this sequence it may seem that the verbal passage is not important, though any single exercise may be a valuable exercise for studying, parsing, assimilating a text. You are acting/performing all the time.

1. **Speak silently**, gradually moving up to the level of audibility; a precise sense of when the words pass over your lips. Start without lip movement.
2. **Speak normally**: point of focus necessary, moving from relatively close to some distance ("stage" distance) you can reach without shouting.
3. **Slow motion**: exploring personal values of each word; exploring images behind the words; exploring the phonemic structure of the words, vowels and consonants; different varieties of slow motion, biting words or caressing with air, exploring words as if they floated in space, etc.
4. **Introjecting**: the opposite of projecting, but also—as in psychological terminology—incorporating the words; speak as if relating outward, but address

speech to the inner ear, as in a subjectively played soliloquy. In this and slow motion, the act of reflection is inevitable.

5. **Project atmosphere:** assertion of distinct presence by means of voice; as when a person walks into a room, s/he brings an atmosphere (what Michael Chekov means when he speaks of the radiation of character); but the voice does it; change atmosphere.
6. **Speak from imaginary center:** moving at will; movement will naturally be incited by previous exercises and vocal gestures.
7. **Diminish and expand:** also reverse (like Emmett Kelly's spotlight, or any other image that serves—images will be invoked in every phase of the sequence, or will propel exercises that follow).
8. **Line by line ideographs:** speak line, make gesture, let gesture condition next line; also word by word.
9. **Faster and faster:** keep increasing the speed to the limit of intelligibility; slow down, then see if you can take it further, faster. Intelligibility is always the limiting condition at any point in the sequence; you may stretch beyond but should be able to make it clear by exploring the problem of articulation at any limit.
10. **Densities:** harden the air, pack it, soften the air; gravity or weightlessness; the vocal equivalent of the Space Substance exercise in movement.
11. **Expand space, contract space:** this combines imagination with power and concentration; think of the entire space as a resonator; fill it, draw it in by power of will—capacious sound, tight sound, psyche affecting pitch.
12. **Duration:** a critical section in the sequence; an *idée fixe*, obsessively extended; either a prolonged massing of sound, an almost unnavigable pitch, speed or volume—but a difficult assertion of sound, sustained beyond imagining.
13. **Varying pitch:** low to high and reverse; actually pitch will vary in several of these exercises, although you may want to set as a technical requirement in practicing individual sequences the fixation of pitch. (Relate to resonators: head, chest; laryngeal, nasal, occipital, maxillary, and combinations.)
14. **Perform actions with voice:** cover the wall, drive in a nail, put out a match, sweep the floor, tie shoelaces, embrace someone, kiss, assault, kill, etc.
15. **Change character of voice:** voice as axe, scissors, honey (as in Walking Exercise).
16. **Experiment with vowels and consonants, syllable weighting:** this too will occur naturally in previous sections, as in slow motion.

17. **Unusual or grotesque or mimetic sounds:** natural sounds, such as bird, wind, storm, animals; roars, hisses, etc., never-heard sounds.
18. **Mouth sounds:** using lips, hollows, teeth, cheeks, tonguings, spittle; blowing, wheezing, gurgling, razzing, etc.
19. **Laughing/crying:** this is actually a diaphragmatic exercise as well; keep changing from one to the other, giggles, sobs, hoarse laughter, gasps, hiccups, spasms, etc.
20. **Wailing/keening** the wildest lamentations.

from *Deep Throat: The Grail of the Voice*
by Herbert Blau

We will use the following poem by Blake to learn the sequence. Please memorize it.

The Sick Rose

O Rose, thou art sick!
The invisible worm
That flies in the night,
In the howling storm,

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

—William Blake, *Songs of Innocence and Experience*