



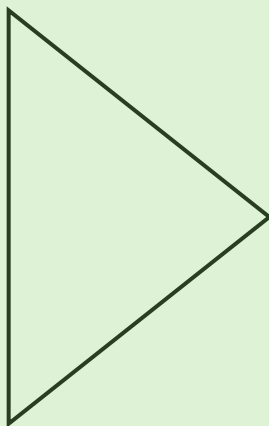
Character first, voice last. As with all creative work, the visible (audible) parts are only the tip of an iceberg.

Preparation

Theory of
[character's]
mind.

- Beliefs
- Desires
- Goals / Objectives
- Intentions / Plans
- Knowledge vs. Ignorance
- Second-order theory of mind
 - Beliefs about Others' Beliefs
 - Perspectives
 - Emotions

Determines

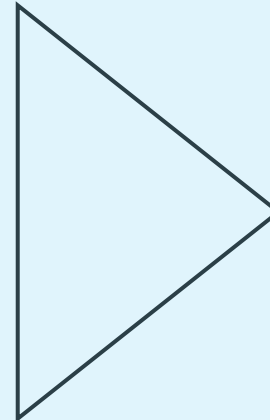


Performance

The way in
which they
speak.

- Cadence
- Pace
- Fillers
- Pauses
- Tone

Spoken with

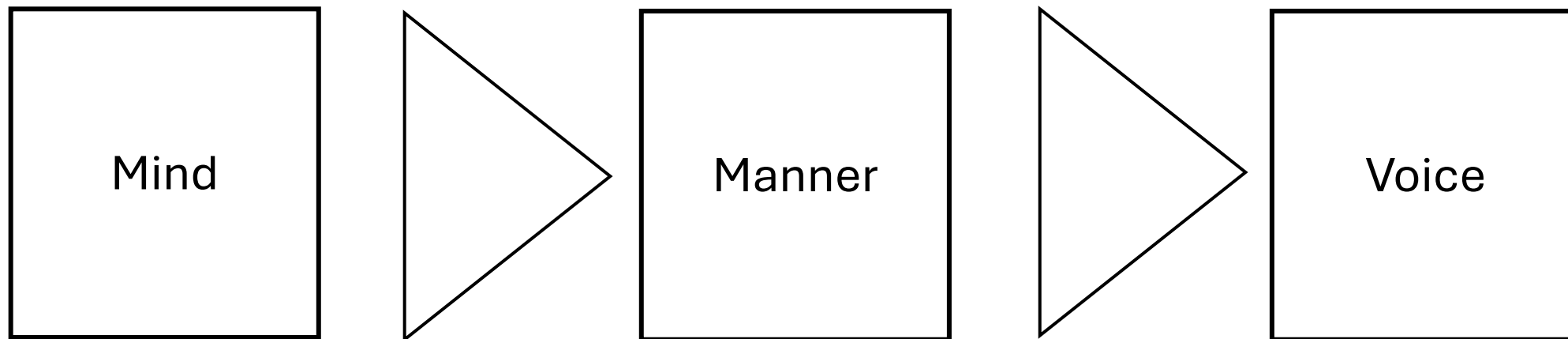


Their voice.

- Pitch
- Timbre
- Accent

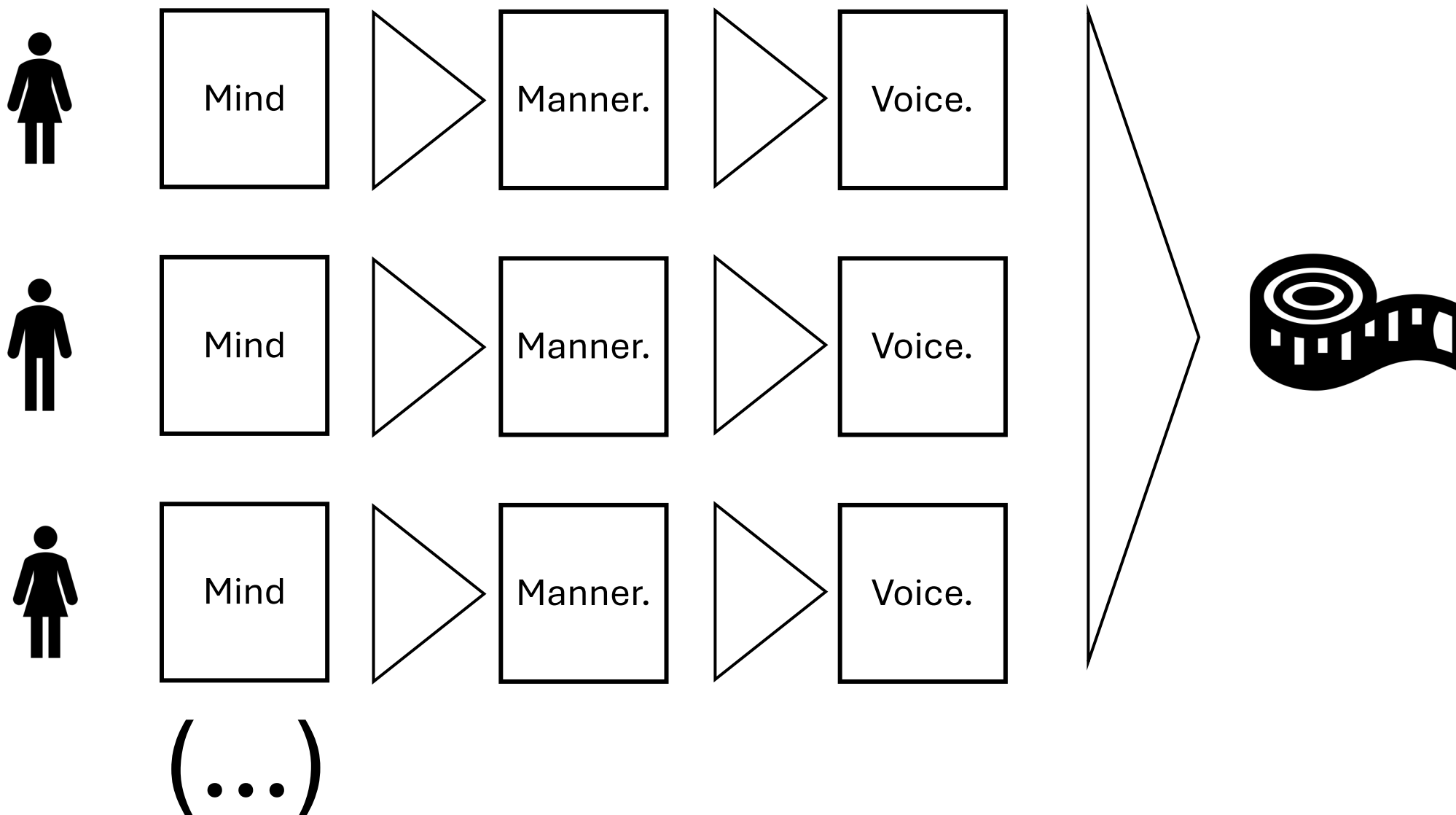


With so many characters in an audiobook, things need to be as simple as possible without loss of effectiveness.



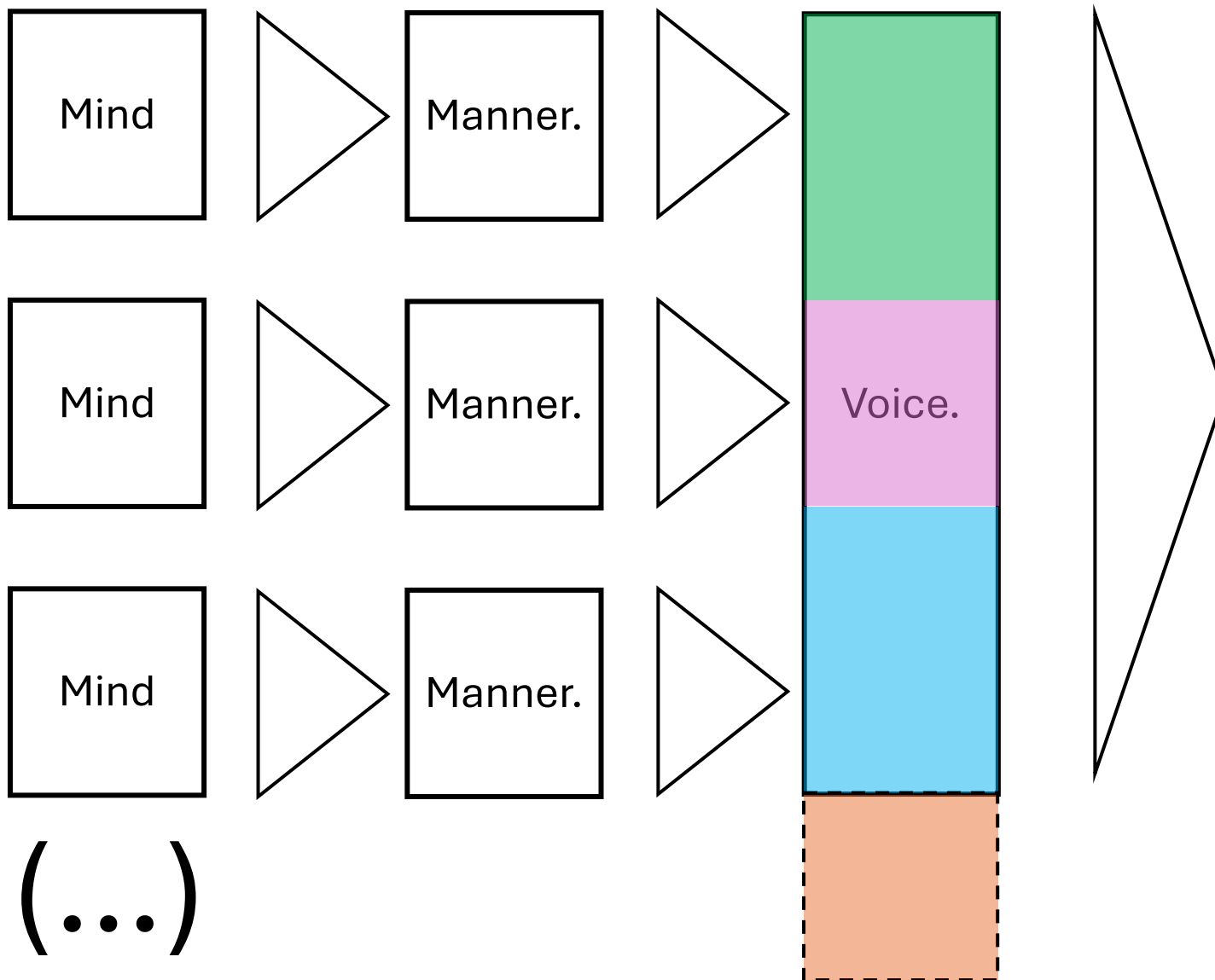
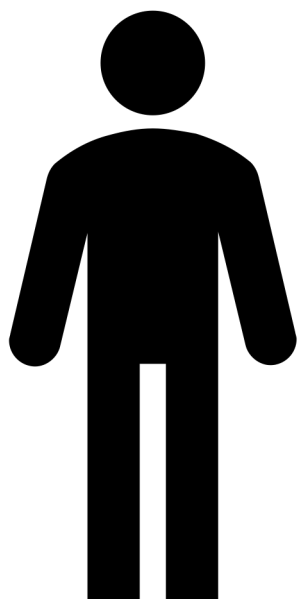


In a full cast production, every character can have every ‘amenity’; each actor can devote their full attention to the mind, manner and voice of their character.





When the same actor plays multiple characters, or all of them, separate and complete character interpretations have to find differentiated expression within one voice.



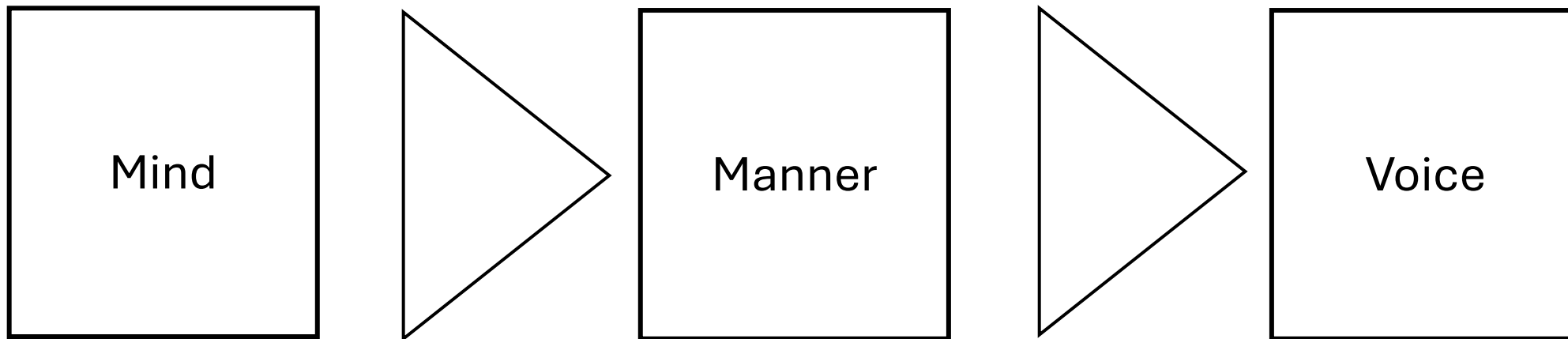


Occam's razor for voice actors: give a character the minimum necessary 'moving parts' (distinct emotional states) for their role in the story.





Simplifying ‘mind’ for the purposes of establishing ‘manner’ isn’t straightforward, but I find this is what I’m doing most of the time.



What emotions are they hiding?

What do they think of their own status [in the conversation]?

What do they want from society [the characters in the conversation]?

‘Get it over with’ fast?

‘Restless intelligence’ fast?

‘You’ll wait for me’ slow?

‘Hard of thinking’ slow?

‘Dislike being here’ stilted?

‘Worried you dislike me being here’ stilted?

‘I have a plan’ fluent?

‘I love the sound of my own voice’ fluent?

Resonance?

Base pitch?

Accent?



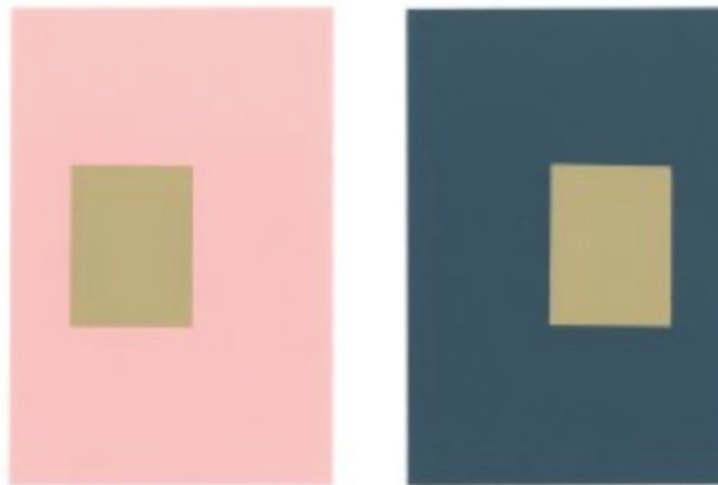
Extra seasoning – a sample of little tips for naturalism.



- Pace changes.
- Most people don't know what they're going to say before they say it, so natural pauses are before substantive words.
 - 'Filler' is always fluent.
 - It's often 'safe' to start a sentence with 'I' because it will likely yield something relevant that serves the speaker.
- In longer speeches, the beginning conveys the meaning, and the manner of delivery at the end conveys lasting impression of attitude.
- Breath is part of speech
 - (Controversial?)
 - Mic technique
- 'Talking cure' / 'catharsis': emotions expend themselves.



Like colors, voices are perceived relatively



The primary function of character voices is to make the speaker identifiable; voices must be distinct.

The secondary function is to sketch out the dynamics of the scene as written in terms of energy.

Accordingly, the intensity of characterization changes to serve the needs of the scene.

Characteristics may be changed to maximise an effective contrast, or highlight and important consonance.



**Theory
of mind**

Birth and background?

General aspirations

Fears

Manner

Thoughts on own status?

What do they want?

What emotions are
they concealing?

Voice

Base pitch

Habitual pace

Base volume

Vocal production?

Accent?

(of all these, range of modulation)