Considerations for accessibility of voice systems for people with cognitive disabilities (collected from <http://videsign.wikispaces.com/>)

1. **General considerations**

* Speech vs. touchtone
* Directed dialog vs. natural language
* Partial automation vs. full automation
* Barge-in strategy (user can interrupt the system)
* Personality (persona) of the system
* Importance of following conversational maxims (quantity – the right amount of information, quality – correct and consistent information, relevance – address the caller’s needs, not the business’s and manner – organize information clearly)
* Terminology usage – be clear and consistent, use familiar words, avoid jargon, avoid ambiguous prompts
* Limit the number of words and sentences
* Don't play unnecessary non-speech audio
* Use discourse markers judiciously
* Avoid excessive apologies
* Provide feedback when users must wait
* Landmark significant chunks of functionality (e.g. “main menu”)
* Help callers when they don't have the information they're prompted for (give them a chance to get their account number, for example)
* Clearly identify the system at the beginning
* Keep the information at the beginning of the call short
* Acknowledge every request for an agent (use “0” in the US, but this is not necessarily used in other countries)
* authentication

1. **Reducing cognitive load**

* Don’t overload short-term memory
* Put important things first, but last isn't bad either
* Be careful combining ideas in a single question
* Be wary of long menu options
* Chunk information for greater understanding

1. **Syntax**

* Use action verbs
* Use active voice
* Write instructions in the affirmative
* Write like people talk (e.g. use contractions)
* Put new information last

1. **Prosody**

* Format information for “easy hearing” (pauses, speech rate, etc.
* Use appropriate emphasis
* Use appropriate intonation