

Developing Public Speaking Skills

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Abstract

In this workshop participants will be introduced to the topic of public speaking as related to second language teaching and have the opportunity to experience and discuss several activities aimed at developing overall public speaking proficiency as well as specific oratory skills. The presenter will provide an outline for a ten week course on public speaking together with handout materials targeting both voice (pronunciation, intonation, rhythm and stress) and body (posture, eye contact, gestures and facial expressions) practice. Some time will also be devoted to discussing (1) content versus delivery, (2) purpose, i.e. entertainment, informative and persuasive speeches, (3) speech writing, and (4) the difference between impromptu and extemporaneous speaking.

Introduction

Speaking in front of an audience in a foreign language can be an intimidating proposition. In addition to the lexical, syntactical and semantic concerns, potential speakers need to deal with anxiety and other affective issues. Despite the inherent challenges, teaching our ESL/EFL students to speak confidently in public is a noble endeavor. Good public speaking skills can empower our learners to better communicate their ideas and opinions as well as succeed in the job market and other areas of life. So, how can we help our students toward success? In this presentation, the author outlined a ten-week course in public speaking with advice for dealing with specific issues. In this condensed paper, I will provide a simplified overview of each meeting and the handouts I use when teaching this course. A more detailed description of the weekly meetings can be found at www.brentjones.com/speech.html together with a complete packet of handouts.

Course Overview

Course materials and teaching procedures were designed for use over a ten-week term with once-a-week meetings of 90 to 120 minutes. The basic structure of each meeting includes:

- A short mini lecture on the topic(s) of the day,
- Practice with various examples of the target skills,
- Activities to expand on these skills, and
- Project work.

The mini lectures are intended as both an introduction to the target concepts and skills as well as clear examples of how to bring all of the skills together, i.e. the teacher can model verbal and non-verbal public speaking skills. The practice and activities provide learners with opportunities to practice each skill in a relatively non-threatening environment.

Week	Mini Lecture Topic	Practice/Activity/Handout	Project Work
One	Public speaking and the importance of developing related skills The Speech Chart	- Self Introductions - Course Objectives - Follow up Questions - Appendix 1 – Speech Chart	Interest Inventory (Students brainstorm for topics they are interested in.)
Two	The Voice	- Appendix 2 – Voice Paper - Appendix 3 – Polishing - Appendix 4 - Enunciation	Students use results of interest inventory to survey their classmates
Three	The Body Types of Speech Speech Writing Process	- Posture/Eye-Contact Activity - Gesture Activity - Facial Expressions Activity	Good and bad examples of both content and delivery
Four	Brainstorming strategies e.g. mind maps, focus circles, etc.	- Bringing it all together (Students read prepared news stories)	Speech writing (informative speech)
Five	Interviewing skills and strategies	- Interviewing: asking follow-up questions and offering something extra	Speech polishing (informative speech)
Six	Tools of Persuasion - Ethos, Logos, Pathos - Testimonials	- Presentations (informative speech)	Speech writing (persuasive speech)
Seven	Easy Debate Evaluating speeches	- Tennis debate - Tongue Twisters (Staley, 2003)	Speech polishing (persuasive speech)
Eight	- Entertainment speeches	- Presentations (persuasive speech)	Speech writing (entertainment speech)
Nine	- How is your delivery?	- Delivery checklist (not included)	Speech polishing (entertainment speech)
Ten	Impromptu versus extemporaneous speaking	- Presentations (entertainment speech)	Self-evaluation Future Vision

The projects (preparing and practicing various kinds of speeches) offer some continuity between meetings and make the course more goal oriented, hopefully boosting initiative and motivation.

Acknowledgements

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References

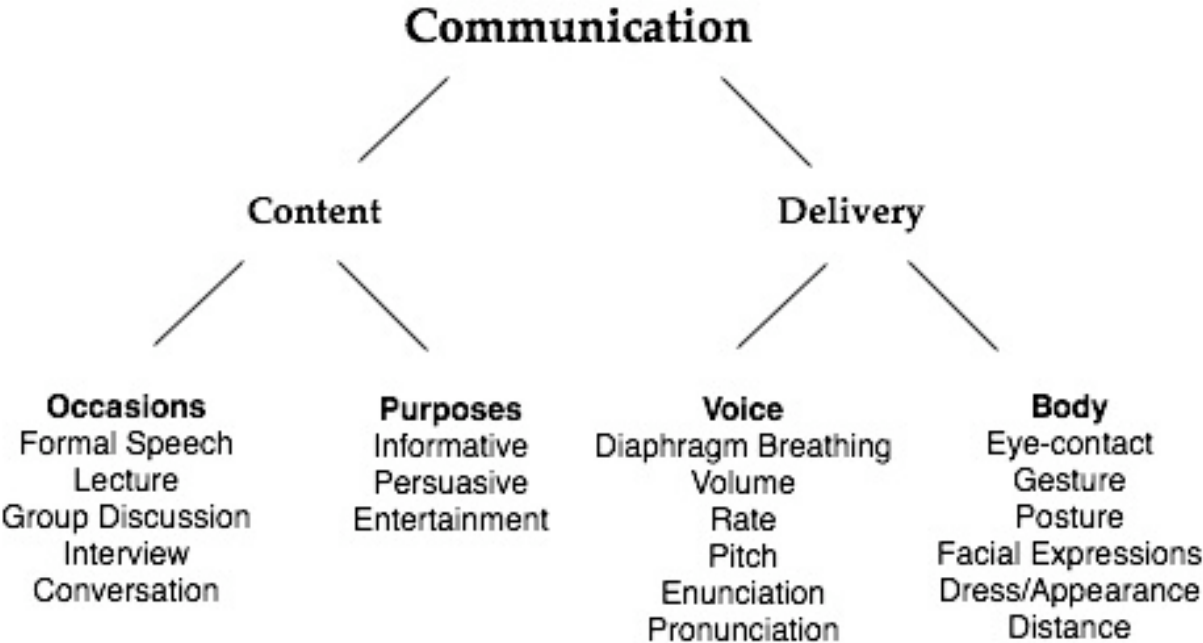
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Appendix 1 – The Speech Chart (Source: Richard Hahn)



Appendix 2 - The Voice Paper (source: Richard Hahn)

1. Read the following sentences using a single breath for each sentence. Do not lower vocal intensity at the end of long sentences.
 - a. I don't want to go.
 - b. The engineer cautioned us to drive slowly.
 - c. Deep, well-controlled breathing is required to read a long sentence on one expiration.
 - d. Scarlett O'Hara, the heroine in Gone With The Wind, was a southern beauty of great personal pride, ambition and willpower, who would make almost any sacrifice to achieve her ends.

2. Try to read the first part of the following sentences normally and the last part forcefully without raising the pitch.
 - a. You must not come in here; please move along.
 - b. If we win that victory, what a celebration we shall have.
 - c. I believe in a program for the preservation of peace, but certainly not peace at any price.

3. Read the sentences in exercise 2 again, and this time raise the pitch of the last phrase to increase intensity of the voice.

4. Read the following paragraphs in a forceful voice and at a rapid rate. Then read them slowly. Listen to the difference in general effectiveness and intensity at the two rates of speed.
 - a. No man can speak for South. No one man can – by himself alone – define the beliefs of the people of this great region. But all of us and each of us must assume and exercise some degree of responsibility for persuading this nation to heed what we have to say.
 - b. We must make clear what we believe.
 - c. We must set the record straight.
 - d. We must, finally, stand together in unity and pursue with determination a course to victory.
 - e. That is our outline of duty.
 - f. At the outset, let us establish one fact firmly.

5. Read the following sentences, giving considerable force to the phrase in bold letters.
- I know not what course others may take, but as for me, **give me liberty, or give me death.**
 - This is the last time I shall request that **those in the back row keep quiet.**
 - We shall make our preparation; **then we shall bomb, and blast and burn them into surrender.**
 - Though the mills of God grind slowly,** yet they grind exceedingly small.
6. Read the following sentences without, then with, vigorous stress on the italicized words.
- He who laughs last laughs *loudest*.
 - It's a *marvel* to me that she stays with it.
 - "**Mister,**" he said, "you dropped something."
 - The boys in North Africa *certainly* didn't agree with him.
 - Sarcasm is a *woman's* weapon.
 - If I were in *his* place, I wouldn't stand for it.
 - The only thing we have to fear is *fear* itself.
7. Read the following sentences rapidly or slowly as the meaning suggests.
- Watch out! It's hot.
 - Please let me do it.
 - They trudged wearily up the trail.
 - Come as quickly as you can.
 - The fried pheasant is delicious.
 - What a beautiful view you have from this window.
 - Bowed by the weight of centuries . . . he leans upon his hoe.

Appendix 3 – Polishing Your Speaking (Source: unknown)

Tongue Tripper Test used for Applicants for TV-Radio Jobs

I bought a batch a baking powder and baked a batch of biscuits. I brought a big basket of biscuits back to the bakery and baked a basket of big biscuits. Then I took a big basket of biscuits and the basket of big biscuits and mixed the big biscuits with the basket of biscuits that was next to the big basket and put a bunch of biscuits and a biscuit mixer and a biscuit basket and brought the basket of biscuits and the box of mixed biscuits and the biscuit mixer to the baker and opened a can of sardines.

All The Speech Sounds of the English Language

An old lighthouse keeper found an old map which he studied carefully and was able to decipher. From the peculiar lines and signs he was able to make it out only after a careful study. The directions were to dig four feet from the lighthouse and five feet underground for a rare chest of treasures. So with a new pick and shovel he was sure he could follow the instructions exactly. However, after several tries he dug through the earth and began lifting out the box of treasure. Suddenly, he fell back as the treasure disintegrated in to a thousand pieces and became nothing. That night he slept a wiser man.

Appendix 4 – Enunciation Practice List (Source: Unknown)

Consonants:

- S The bossy snake makes a hissing sound.
Z He's lazy, but on holidays he zips around to see his friends.
F Fred was rough on him, but he laughed it off.
V Leaving the old stove was a victory.
K Come on, Chuck, wake up and kick the ball!
G He begged here to go while she giggled.
TH Either thank both of them, or don't bother.
ZH One provision was to paint the garage beige.
L Phil rolled up his sleeves and pulled in the lavender line.
R The four bars played by the brasses were recorded over again.
W Now the waiter knows we will wait.
WH Why the whisper when you can whistle?
M That man was marooned in Miami during the oil boom.
N Now the lining keeps the pine needles in.
NG Sing that swinging song written by Sting!

Vowels

- I Sit up with Kitty in the living room.
E I'll bet we met before.
A That man ran off with the fan.

Diphthongs

- AI I sighed near the fire.
OU Mr. Brown is downtown.
OI The boy boiled it in oil.