Oral Communication

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Outline

- Introduction
- Elements of communication
- Purpose
- Audience
- Structure
- Communication Aids
- Delivery

Exercise

- We have given you a clapper
- Each student should give a 3 min presentation on the following topic:
  - Why is my town the best town in Puerto Rico?
- When the student is presenting, clap if he or she has done something wrong in the presentation
  - Examples: stage fright, moving too much, etc.

Communication
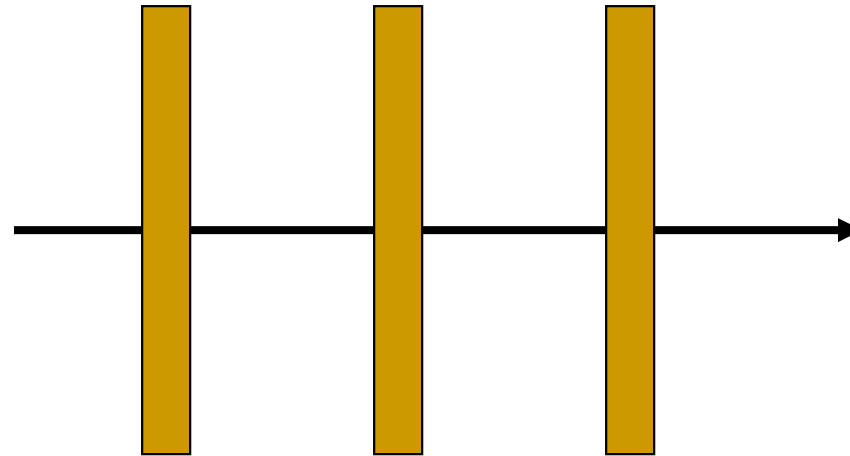
Situation   Format   Language

Audience

Situation

- **Particular situation within we are communicating.**
  - What?
    - What is my subject?
  - Who?
    - To whom do I wish to communicate it?
  - Why?
    - What is my purpose in communicating it?
  - When and where?
    - Are there features about the place and time which affect how I should speak?
  - How?
    - What type of communication? Am I aiming at narration? Description? Exposition? Argument?

Format

- Letter
- Email
- Application
- Presentation
- Report
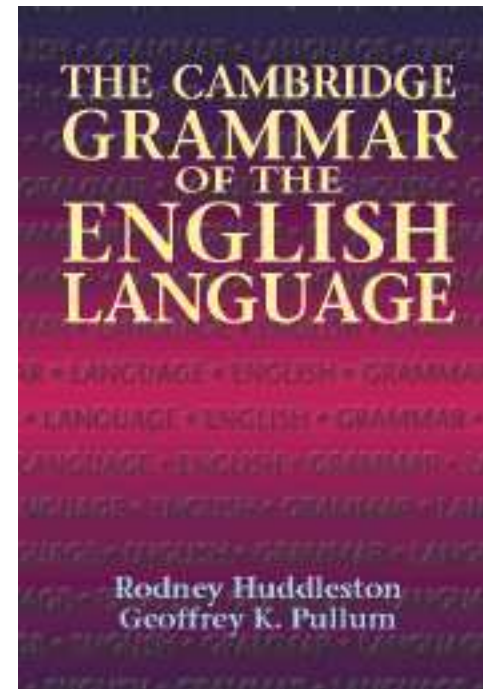- Essay
- Paper
- Dissertation
- Etc.

Format

- Letter
- Email
- Application
- **Presentation**
- Report
- Essay
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- Dissertation
- Etc.

Language

- English
- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Spelling
- Punctuation
- Speech

Spoken presentations

- **Examples**
  - Company sales
  - Training session
  - College lecture
  - Inform progress, report results
- **Features**
  - One or more speakers presenting information and ideas
  - Clearly defined purpose
  - An audience

Preparation

- Careful and intelligent preparation
- Failures
  - Over-confidence
 - Lack of time
  - Laziness
- Key
  - Organization

Purpose

- Inform
- Persuade
- Entertain
- Meet and get on with your audience

Purpose – To inform

- **Provide information**
  - Straight facts (data)
    - Difficult to digest
      - Figures, Dates, Names, Events
    - Put data in context, patterns, and pictures
  - Stories
    - Easier to remember
      - Pattern, beginning, middle, and end
  - Descriptions and explanations
    - Functioning of organization, machine, institution
    - Visualize what is being described
      - Images, analogies

EPIC CTD profile dates
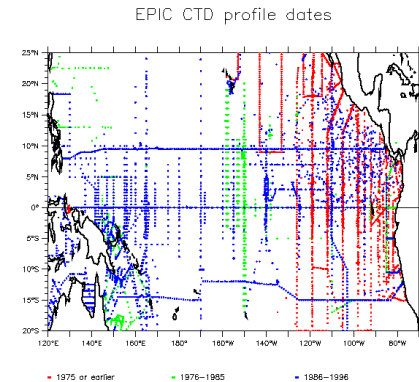
Purpose – To persuade

- **Persuade audience of something**
  - Buy my product
  - A different way of doing things
  - Agree to a course of action
- **College lecture**
  - Students
    - Take the subject seriously
    - Open their minds to a new way of thinking

"That's a great question. Come to think of it, I'm not sure what is is I'm trying to sell you."

Purpose – To entertain

- Entertain the audience
- Usually a secondary purpose such as convince or persuade

Purpose – To meet and get on with the audience

- **Keep in mind**
  - Continuing relationship with the audience
  - Will be meeting them regularly
- **Manager**
  - People he/she will be working with
- **Professor**
  - Students

Audience

- **Where are they now?**
  - Theoretical knowledge
  - Practical knowledge
  - Intelligence
  - Level of education
  - Terminology they can handle
  - How quick can they pick up ideas
  - Concentration span
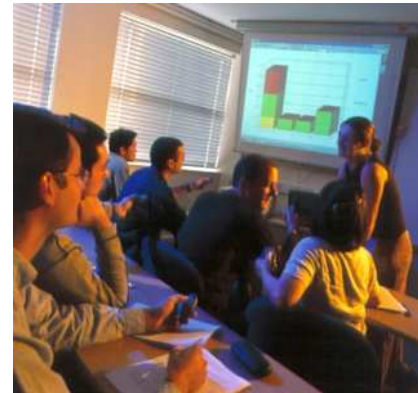
Audience

- ## Expectations
  - Audience came for a reason
  - Students
    - Pass a course - compulsory
    - 8:35am
    - Not enough sleep
    - Lack of enthusiasm
    - MAKE IT INTERESTING!!!

Audience

- **Practical needs**
  - Where is the screen, projector, board?
  - How is the seating arranged?
    - Can everybody see?
    - Can everybody hear?
    - Where will you place yourself? Move around?
    - Lighting?
    - Microphone?

Audience

- **Intellectual needs**
  - Order in which the material is presented
  - Communication aids
    - Visual aids
    - Audio
    - Verbal aids
      - Stories, anecdotes, images, analogies, mnemonics
    - Handouts
  - Rhythm and variety to keep the audience interested and alert

Audience

- **Personal needs**
  - Too long
  - Exhausting
  - Break?
    - Coffee
    - Stretch legs
    - Chat

Build a structure

- ## Content
  - What you want to include?
  - How much time you have?
  - How much your audience can tackle?
- ## Priorities
  - Presentation soon will be forgotten
  - Select small number of key points

Build a structure

- **Ordering**
  - Logic of the subject
  - Logic of learning and understanding

| Known | → | Unknown | | Easy | → | Difficult |

  - Need for variety
- **Arrangement**
  - Introduction
  - Body
  - Conclusion

Communication Aids

- ## Whiteboard
  - ❑ Pros: Brainstorming, Linking ideas, Summarizing
  - ❑ Cons: Sloppy handwriting, Erase, Fixed to the wall, Complex diagram?

- ## Flipchart
  - ❑ Pros: No erasing, material prepared in advance
  - ❑ Cons: Cannot be used in large space

- ## Overhead projector
  - ❑ Pros: Everybody sees, Well prepared material, Overlaying complex diagrams built step by step
  - ❑ Cons: Alignment, Focus, Small letters, Colors (contrast)

Delivery

- **Nervous?**
- **What about reading prepared text?**
  - Not engaging
  - Prompt cards
- **Talk to your audience**
  - Speak to them
    - Look at them – eye contact
  - Move around (evenly)
  - Interruptions and questions
  - Things have to be read (enough time for reading slides)
  - Pose
    - Hands, clothes
  - Voice

References

- Houp, Kenneth W. and Thomas E. Pearsall, Reporting Technical Information, 6th edition. Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, 1988.

- Seely, John, Oxford Guide to Effective Writing and Speaking, Oxford University Press, 2005

Questions?

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