



NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND
LITERATURE

TO BECOME AN EFFICIENT READER
AND

AN EFFICIENT SPEAKER

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

PREPARED BY: SERAP OZDEMIR

SUPERVISED BY: ASSOC. PROF. DR. GUL CELKAN

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PREFACE

I have been educating in English Language and Literature for three and half years , and I'm very glad that I spent those wonderful and successful years in Near East University , with the excellent lecturers of the Department of English Language and Literature .

This is my last semester at the department and I would like to thank English Language and Literature lecturers especially the Department of English Language and Literature and our Chairperson Assoc. Prof . Dr. Gul Celkan of being so helpful and friendly with her excellent personality . She has been a tower of strength and I would like to thank her again for treating me as a mother .

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SERAP OZDEMİR

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INTRODUCTION

Language learners are expected to acquire adequate receptive and productive English language skills which they will apply throughout their academic studies in the various departments and schools.

The EPS has designed special curricula on all language skills, and has developed supplementary reading and speaking materials for various targets language proficiency levels. Yet, the learners are experiencing specific problems with developing their English literary skills. The majority of EPS learners read and speak only on in class assignments, and are not willing to work for the development of literate skills.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY -

The purpose of the study is to examine the EFL learners' progress in their English reading and speaking skills.

In the view of many ELT researches, reading and speaking are the language skills crucial for language learners' academic studies and prospective careers. Therefore, learners enrolled at an educational institution should ideally be geared to develop adequate literacy and literate skills.

Heath, (1983) argues that one cannot become literate by just learning how to read and speak. She also argues that teachers and learners can solve the problems by working together, not each independently moving toward a similar goal (Heath, 1983, quoted in Larson et al., 1985, p. 15).

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR IMPROVING YOUR READING

i. Previewing Reading Materials

When you go on a trip , you could just follow road signs , perhaps asking someone for directions now and then , and probably reach your destination eventually . But spending a few minutes with a road map , looking at the cities and states you will pass through and the highways you will take , would very likely save you valuable time. Making a preview of a reading assignment has a similar purpose - to give you an overview of what lies ahead .

ii. How to Preview a Book

When they are assigned an entire book , many students simply begin reading it at first page. This is a mistake : previewing the book first is a much better strategy .

Following are useful steps for previewing nonfiction books , including textbooks:

1- Turn to the title page :

Note the complete title , including the subtitle , if any . Often , a book will have a subtitle that tells you more about the book's content than the title does. You will also see the author's name and the book's publisher on the title page.

2-Read the author's preface or introduction :

You will usually learn why the author wrote the book , how the book is organised , and what important topics are covered.

3- Examine the table of contents :

This will list parts , chapters , and often the main topics within chapters . Thus it will show the structure of the book.

4- Look through the index :

Note that terms the author uses and which ones are unfamiliar to you . Some books also have a seperate index of authors whose works are cited in the book.

5- Check the bibliography (if the book has one) :

Here you can see the references the author has used. You may recognize some of them , if you have read previously in this field. And if you are planning to do more work in this subject area , the bibliography can point you toward additional materials.

6- Read " about the author " :

This can appear on the back cover, with the material at the front of the book , or at the end. Here you can learn about the author's background and experiences that relate to the topic of the book.

7- Select one or two chapters that seem control to the main topic:

Read the first paragraph or two of each these chapters , and then read the last paragraphs. Note the subheads that appear within each of these chapters , to see what topics are covered and how the chapters are organised.

A preview of a book, following these steps, should take no more than 15 or 20 minutes.

Once you have done the preview, reflect on the book in terms of your purpose for reading it. If the book is assigned reading, you have no choice but to read it. But if you are writing a paper and searching for appropriate reference material, you may decide, after the preview, to spend no more time with the book.

You may want to make notes about books you have previewed, since this information can be useful for future projects.

Four Basic Questions to Ask as You Read :

No matter what type of material you are reading it is possible to read actively. To become an active reader, you should ask questions while you read, and try to answer them as you go along. Here are four basic questions to ask while reading:

Question 1 : What is the material about ?

In a sentence or two, state the main theme of the work you are reading.

Question 2 : What does the material say?

That is, what are the main ideas, and how are they developed?

Question 3 : Is the material true?

Is the content of this article, chapter, or book actually true? Of course, you cannot make up your mind about this until you have answered questions 1 and 2 - and even then you may have difficulty if the material is an area new to you. Nevertheless, you should attempt to answer this question.

Question 4 : Of what value is the material ?

This question boils down to "So what?" What is the significance of the writing? Why does the author think the material is important? Do you think the material is important? Why or why not?

CHAPTER 2

THE ART OF EFFICIENT READING

In the first chapter, it is pointed out that the first consideration in reading is to outline in learners' mind just what their purpose is. Once, they have thoughtfully detailed for themselves what they need to find out and have noted the difficulty of the material and considered their familiarity with it. Sometimes the learners' purpose is to learn only the general trend of ideas in the selection, or to quickly brush up or review. In such instances, skimming is useful. At other times, when a particular fact is all they need, scanning is recommended.

HOW TO READ RAPIDLY

Frequently your purpose is simply to read for entertainment. Novels, newspapers, magazines or any reading that is easy for you come under this heading. Often, you may read such materials by skipping the less important words; you will still not miss the meaning of the material. There are times when the same approach is suitable for reading literature, the social sciences, parallel selections for courses, and familiar selections.

Instead of reading for words, you may read "idea groups", which give the meaning not only more rapidly but also in a form that is more in keeping with the rapid pace at which the plot or sequence of detail moves. The selections illustrate and give practice in reading for ideas rather than words. Only the more important words are printed; blank spaces appear where the less important words have been deleted. Because the word-by-word flow of the material is broken up, and only "idea words" and "idea groups" are left, you must gain the author's train of thought through these word groupings. With practice, you can soon learn to grasp such "idea groups" as wholes, eliminating the words unnecessary for meaning and significantly speeding up your reading. This process leads not only to more rapid reading but also to better comprehension.

Becoming a rapid reader, you have to learn to look for idea groupings, skipping any words that to you are not necessary to convey the full meaning of the writer. In this kind of reading, you don't intentionally select certain words to "skip". Obviously such a procedure would take you much longer than reading the entire text word for word. On the contrary, you don't see certain words because you don't need them to complete the writer's thought. Thus you read along from idea group to idea group, not really conscious of the words that you literary are not seeing.

You will soon realize that it is not necessary to read every word in a sentence before you say it. Reading is a flowing ideas, a meeting of minds of the author and reader, just like conversation. Some slow readers are a bit disturbed by the fragmentary arrangement, a word here, a phrase there. But this is the way we think, not word by word reading, the reader loses his or her place, or must reread for ideas, or achieves little real comprehension.

Some of you may be upset by a feeling that you are not achieving any comprehension in this kind of reading. You will discover that this is not true, for you will show reasonable retention in the questions appended to subsequent articles. This feeling of insecurity, of being unsure of understanding, is a common experience in the change over to rapid reading. It soon disappears. There are several probable reasons for this feeling. If you have been a slow reader, you are now reading faster than you are accustomed to. You are forcing yourself to assimilate ideas faster than previously, and this is a disturbing experience. Part of this feeling of insecurity is also due to the fact that you may have read slowly because of cautiousness. Reading faster is dangerous to comprehension, you feel subconsciously. You can learn to read for ideas and consequently read faster because you can think faster than you are now reading. In other words, reading for ideas merely helps you to read at a speed closer to your actual capacity, your speed of thinking.

In fairly simple, continuous material faster reading is accompanied by better comprehension. Because you read and assimilate ideas rather than words, you understand and retain more. You will comprehend, better at a reading speed that is in keeping with your ability to absorb ideas than you would at a word-by-

word rate. There are limits, of course, to this fact. Rapid reading of highly detailed or technical materials is not conducive to a high degree of comprehension. Unless such material is quite familiar, the ideas are too numerous or too complex to be assimilated rapidly. Therefore, your rate must be adjusted to the difficulty you experience in reading each piece or type of reading matter. But in reading simple, general materials you will secure better comprehension if you read fairly rapidly in an effort to absorb ideas.

In the practice exercises, the words that in our opinion seem less important have been left out. Attempt to read through these selections, grasping the thoughts presented by the words remaining and weaving all together into meaningful information. Do not try to guess what words are missing: try to gain meaning from the words and word groups that are present. Don't puzzle over a sentence that seems to mean nothing to you. Keep moving forward, constantly putting together the information you have gathered into a pattern of meaning.

CONCLUSION

Continued practice in previewing is necessary if you expect to add this technique to your methods. Use previewing each time you pick up a book, magazine, or a newspaper. At first, previewing followed by reading will probably take you longer than the methods of study you now use. When you have become skilled in the previewing method, however, you will find that it is both fast and effective.

Here are some suggestions that may help you with your practice:

1- First of all, be willing to give the technique an honest trial. You may at first find it difficult to accept the fact that "skimming off" the surface of a chapter or article will make a significant difference in your comprehension of the material when you later read it completely.

2- Overcome the need to read every word or sentence in a paragraph by reading the first sentence , then looking aside and trying to guess what the rest of the paragraph will say . What does the writer imply in these first few words that reveals the idea to be developed in the rest of the paragraph ? Now read the second sentence , again look away , and attempt to further develop your first idea about the meaning within the paragraph. Go through the entire paragraph , anticipating after each sentence what the rest will be about . As you practice , you will learn to infer more and more meaning from smaller and smaller units of a given selection.

3-Practice in perceptual alertness will also help in previewing . Cover the first line of a paragraph with a small card . Fix your attention toward the beginning of the covered line , quickly pull the card down and push it back again. How many words did you see ? Were you able to infer the meaning of the sentence ? Try again , this time looking at the second line. How did you do this time ? Can you infer the meaning of the first and second lines and from it guess at the main idea of paragraph ?

4- In each of you own textbooks study the Table of Contents . Skim half way down the first page of each and then see how well you can guess at the titles of the next consecutive chapters . This practice will help you to think in terms of the writer's purpose and the fact that text books are developed logically toward same goal .

CHAPTER 3

SKIMMING : A WAY OF RAPID READING

In the preceding chapter you were introduced to previewing. The skill that is used for previewing is skimming - the technique of allowing your eyes to travel over a page very quickly, stopping only here and there to gain an idea. You learned that the purpose of previewing - skimming is to help you get the ideas about a selection before actually reading it. You learned that you can make reading more vivid by looking for the answers to questions you have raised during previewing, and that you can mentally outline or organize the author's main points to ensure better comprehension when you later read the selection completely.

In this chapter, skimming is presented as a systematic, rapid - reading skill, more thorough than previewing, and useful when you do not intend to read the selection completely at a later time. This skill has many uses: skimming the newspaper, keeping up with news magazines and other periodicals, and gaining a broad back - ground of general information about a particular topic from many sources. Often, in this type of skimming, a particular paragraph that you wish to read completely may attract your attention. After you have read such a paragraph thoroughly, however, don't forget to continue the skimming activity.

HOW TO SKIM

Skimming as a rapid reading technique makes use of the previously learned skills of previewing, but it requires more careful attention to the structure and content of the individual paragraphs than you would ordinarily use during preview skimming. Read a few words in each paragraph: read the first sentence; scan the first paragraph for clue words that may tell you who, what, where, how many, or how much; and then, perhaps, read the last sentence. Let your eyes "float"

down over the content of each page , looking for other clues , such as names , places , unusual words , numbered sequences , and so on . Look also for the writer's direction words . Such words as more , furthermore , and also suggest that the preceding thought is still being discussed . Words such as however , yet and on the contrary suggest that the thought is apt to reverse itself or take another direction .

What do you think was the author's purpose in writing a particular paragraph ? Does the paragraph offer an opinion or make a statement and then offer proof or support ? Perhaps its purpose is to describe a process , a behaviour , or an appearance , or to offer the chronological steps in a sequence of events . The purpose may be to present a free flow or association of ideas , as is often found in fiction . Sometimes a paragraph simply repeats or summarizes ideas that have been presented earlier .

The skill of sensing , during high - speed skimming , the purpose for which a writer selected particular words in constructing a paragraph takes much practise . As you begin skimming , try at once to " connect " with the author's general purpose : then try to sense the way she or he developed each paragraph . Note how the author has used a series of sentences to develop an idea and has developed a transition to another thought .

Some paragraphs are built like an equilateral triangle . They start at the top with a small point and then broaden out , by adding more details , until they reach a firm base , the main idea . Other paragraphs resemble an inverted triangle . They begin with a broad statement , the main idea , and then add a series of details that support that idea . Some paragraphs can be compared with a strong statement (the topic sentence) , then offers a series of details to support the main idea . These details then build up again into a strong idea , the summary sentence , or the conclusions .

Sometimes this arrangement of details and main ideas implies a cause - and - effect relationship : a series of causes adds up to a certain effect or result . In some paragraphs , the presentation is simply chronological : this happens first , then this , then this , and so on . In other paragraphs , the details are gradually built up

into a conclusion or a judgement or an inference . In some paragraphs , there may be only details , and no main idea .

These are only a few of the ways in which a writer develops ideas in one paragraph or a series of paragraphs . As you skim these and other types of paragraphs , your understanding will be improved if you try to recognize the author's plan - in other words , to sense his or her purpose and organization . Obviously , the more quickly you recognize how a paragraph is built , the more quickly you will know what portion to read and what to skip .

SCANNING : FINDING FACTS QUICKLY

This chapter introduces scanning, another skill of efficient reading. Scanning means looking very quickly over a piece of reading matter to find the answer to a specific question. You already use this skill when looking for a name in a telephone directory, but it can be useful to you in many other situations as well. For example, from a particular selection you may wish to find a name, a date, a statistic, or some other fact. Or you may wish to find a phrase or a general idea that will support a theory or clarify a thought. Scanning is invaluable when you are reviewing, doing research, writing a paper, or seeking specific information for another purposes. It is the usual way you work with directories, dictionaries, tables, indexes, and maps.

HOW TO SCAN

Scanning is not reading in the ordinary sense. Instead, let your eyes run rapidly over several lines of print at a time, looking for a specific fact or idea. Above all, you must keep in mind exactly what it is, you are searching for. If you hold the image of the word or idea clearly in mind, the item you are looking for, will appear to show itself more clearly than the surrounding words as you approach it.

If the material is familiar or relatively brief, you may be able to scan the entire body of the selection in a single search. If the material is lengthy or difficult, a preliminary skimming to find the part of the selection in which to scan for particular information will be more profitable.

If you learn to scan effectively, there is hardly a limit to the amount of print you can cover in a minute. You will not understand all the words, nor will you even fully perceive them. Your purpose doesn't require that all the words be understood. But what you want - to find a word, a number, or an idea on a page - will be accomplished. You may find, after you have practiced scanning for a while, that you can locate a fact or a figure among fifteen to twenty thousands words in a minute or two.

CHAPTER 4

READING CRITICALLY

WHAT IS READING CRITICALLY?

What does it mean to read critically? First, reading critically doesn't mean trying only to find fault with what you are reading. When you read critically, you are also interested in discovering good points. Second, as you read critically you are examining the writing as its most fundamental level. You search for flaws in the arguments, and evaluate the evidence used to support positions the author is taking. Your examination will give you information and insight for making judgements about the author's writing.

WHAT TO DO BEFORE READING CRITICALLY

Before you can read something critically, you must understand it. You must know what the author is talking about, and it must make sense to you. Thus a requisite for reading critically is reading for understanding, coming to grips with the author so that you can say, "Yes, I know what he or she is talking about."

Many students don't hesitate to criticize material before they have understood it, and sometimes even before they have read it. Too often, students are willing to criticize writing on the basis of what someone else has said about it. Some students will comment on a book after seeing only a review of it - they themselves have never even opened the cover.

Many students say that they have read something and disagree with it; but when asked why, they reply, "I didn't understand it." This is a subtler problem. If you have read something carefully and made every effort to understand it, then you may reasonably comment that it is difficult to understand. But that is hardly a reason for disagreeing with it. A more appropriate reaction would be to withhold judgement because you could not understand the material.

It is sometimes suggested that all disagreement is, at bottom, due to lack of understanding : get two people to understand something, and they will no longer disagree about it. Certainly, some apparent disagreements occur because people do not understand something in the same way ; it would be better, though, to refer to these as misunderstandings or lack of understanding rather than disagreements.

For a true disagreement to occur, both parties must first understand each other. Each must know as fully as possible what the author is saying. Until this level of understanding is achieved, it is not possible for a true disagreement to take place. But once understanding is attained, there is certainly room for disagreement. A variety of thoughtful perspectives on a topic, sometimes opposed to each other, can enrich your understanding.

An important related point is that it is also impossible to agree with an author until you understand as fully as possible what he or she has written. Agreement is unfounded if, when asked why you agree with a writer, you say only, "It sounds right to me." That's not a good enough reason. Why does it sound right? What specifically do you agree with, and why? Feelings are a valid part of your response : that is, you may say that you "feel good" about the material. But you must go beyond the level of feelings. What, specifically, about the writing causes you to feel good about it?

Often, material you read will be new or relatively new to you. This may present a problem if you want to read critically : you must, through careful reading and deliberation, bring yourself up to a level of understanding that allows you to make in - depth comments.

WHEN TO READ CRITICALLY

When do you read critically? A quick answer is that you should read critically the materials that are most important to a course you are taking, to a writing assignment you are working on, or to a research project you may be doing.

Reading critically is an extremely active process. To do an adequate job of reading material critically, you may need to read it several times. By attempting to make a judgment about it, you will find that your understanding deepens. Although understanding is a prerequisite for critical reading, critical reading also contributes to understanding.

If your assignment is to write a book review or comment on a research report, you must of course read critically. Too often, students write a book report, not a review; they describe what is in the book but don't make judgements about it, or about the author's approach. And many students will simply describe a research project rather than preparing a critical review.

A PROCESS FOR READING CRITICALLY

Here is a four - step process for critical reading.

Step 1 : Read for Understanding : *Read the piece as you would to understand it, becoming fully acquainted with the topic.*

Step 2 : Determine What Evidence Is Advanced : *What evidence does the author use to support the positions taken? An author may support a position through logical argument. Or an author who has actually experienced a situation may be sharing that experience. An author may also rely on other researchers and writers to support his or her arguments. Many authors use a combination of evidence and argument.*

Step 3 : Determine the Author's Assumptions : *What assumptions is the author making? Often, the preface or introduction - and sometimes the publisher's comments about the author - will contain information about what the author assumes. Often, as a critical reader, you will need to derive an author's*

assumptions from the material because the author doesn't state them explicitly. Figuring out an author's assumptions is crucial to critical reading: without a good concept of the assumptions, you will have difficulty making judgments about the writing.

Step 4 : Determine Your Own Opinion : Do you agree or disagree with the writing, or must you withhold judgment?

If you disagree with part or much of the writing, carefully consider your reasons. Four basic reasons for disagreement are:

- i. The writer is uninformed,
- ii. the writer is misinformed,
- iii. the writer has not argued logically, and
- iv. the writer's analysis is incomplete.

If you decide that you agree with an author, you must consider your reasons just as carefully as if you were disagreeing. The basic reason for agreeing are counterparts of the reasons for disagreeing, but they are of course positive rather than negative. You are likely to agree with an author if you conclude that she or he is well-informed, has argued logically, and has been sufficiently complete. This conclusion, must be supported by specific evidence.

SPEAKING

HOW TO BECOME

AN

EFFICIENT SPEAKER

CHAPTER 1

THE SPEECH CHAIN

We usually take for granted our ability to produce and understand speech and give little thought to its nature and function, just as we are not particularly aware of the action of our hearts, brains, or other essential organs. It is not surprising, therefore, that many people overlook the great influence of speech on the development and functioning of human society

Wherever human beings live together, they develop a system of talking each other; even people in the most isolated societies use speech. Speech, in fact, is one of the few basic abilities - tool making is another - that set us apart from other animals and are closely connected with our ability to think abstractly.

Why is speech so important? One reason is that the development of human culture is made possible - to a great extent - by our ability to share experiences, to exchange ideas and to transmit knowledge from one generation to another; in other words, our ability to communicate with others. We can communicate with each other in many ways. The smoke signals of the Apache Indian, the starter's pistol in a 100-yard dash, the sign language used by deaf people, the Morse Code and various systems of writing are just a few examples of the many different systems of communication that have evolved to meet special needs. Unquestionably, however, speech is the system that human societies have found, under most circumstances, to be far more efficient and convenient than any other

You may think that writing is a more important means of communication than speech. After all, the written word and the output of printing presses appear to be more efficient and more durable means of transmitting information. Yet, no matter how many books and newspapers are printed, the amount of information exchanged by speech is still greater. The use of books and printed matter has expanded greatly in our society, but so has the use of telephones, radio, and television.

In short, human society relies heavily on the free and easy interchange of ideas among its members and, for many reasons, we have found speech to be our most convenient form of communication.

CHAPTER 2

Through its constant use as a tool essential to daily living, speech has developed into a highly efficient system for the exchange of even our most complex ideas. It is a system particularly suitable because it remains functionally unaffected by the many different voices, speaking habits, dialects and accents of the millions who use a common language. And it is suitable for widespread use because speech - to a surprising extent - is invulnerable to severe noise, distortion and interference.

Speech is well worth careful study. It is worthwhile for the communications engineer because a better understanding of the speech mechanism helps in developing better and more efficient communication systems. It is worthwhile for all of us because we depend on speech so heavily for communicating with others.

A convenient way of examining what happens during speech is to take the simple situation of two people talking to each other. For example, you as the speaker, want to transmit information to another person, the listener. The first thing you have to do is arrange your thoughts, decide what you want to say and then put what you want to say into linguistic form by selecting the right words and phrases to express its meaning, and by placing these words in the order required by the grammatical rules of the language.

CHAPTER 2

SPEECH, LANGUAGE, AND THOUGHT

This chapter is about speech. It is about spoken English in particular. Speech is the manifestation of only one of many kinds of languages. A study of speech with no mention of language would be a little like a study of one particular grape with no acknowledgment of the many others used for winemaking.

First of all, speech is only one method of communication. A female ape assumes a sexually submissive and presumably inviting posture to communicate the fact that she will accept intercourse with a male. A dog with hackles raised growls at an intruder to communicate his determination to prevent further intrusion. The animal kingdom offers countless examples of signs which communicate various conditions within and across species. We human beings alone use many methods of communication. We signal to others by waving flags, by Morse code, by television and radio transmission, by raising an eyebrow, by writing a newspaper column, by singing, by putting hands on hips, by swearing by painting a picture, by sticking out tongues, by playing a musical instrument, by kissing, and finally, we speak. We speak in our homes, at work, at school, and at play. We speak to our babies, to our pets, and to ourselves. What is speech? How does it relate to language and thought? If you have ever known an adult who has suffered brain damage sufficient to impair speech, you have probably observed that the speech impairment is accompanied by some effects upon language and upon some aspects of thought. Speech, language, and thought are closely related, but they can be considered separately, because they are qualitatively different.

SPEECH

If you have ever been to a foreign country and heard all those around you speaking a language unrelated to your own, you are apt to have had two impressions. The first impression is that the spoken language seems like long spurts of a complex and constantly changing stream of sound without separations. You have no way of knowing the end of one word and the beginning of the next. The second general impression is that this strange tongue is extremely difficult.

The speakers seem to talk much faster than speakers of your own language. Even small children do it with ease !

These impressions of a foreign tongue are more accurately a description of speech than are the impressions we have of our own speech. We take our own speech for granted. It seems simple, but the sounds change quickly, requiring complex articulatory gymnastics on the part of the speaker. It is no simple matter, yet children are quite good at it by 3 or 4 years of age. Although some children may have difficulties later in learning to read, all normal children learn to speak. They are natural language learners, and they develop language by hearing the speech of others. Speech is audible. It is meaningful sound strung out in time. Speech is only one way in which we use language. We also write, read, and listen to others speak.

LANGUAGE

The reason that we fail to understand the strange speech of an unknown language is that, although we can hear speech, we do not know the words, the sounds, the rules of the language. A particular language is a rule governed communication system composed of meaningful elements, which can be combined in many ways to produce sentences, some of which are novel. Our knowledge of English permits us to say and understand something as prosaic as :

It is hot as Hades this afternoon.

This sentence has undoubtedly been said many times because of laziness of mind, but our language also permits us to say and understand something completely new, something we have never heard said before. Users of language can be creative. They can create sentences never heard before.

Language, unlike speech, is intangible. It is knowledge of a creative communication system, and that knowledge is in the mind. How is language related to speech? Noam Chomsky of Massachusetts Institute of Technology writes about this knowledge of language as linguistic competence to distinguish it from the use of language, linguistic performance. Speech is the conversation of language into sound. However, there are other languages beside vocal ones.

There are gestural languages , of which American Sign Language (Ameslan) , used by the deaf , is an example.

The syntactic rules of Ameslan differ from English. For example , in Ameslan one would sign " Sun this morning . I saw. Beautiful. " rather than " It was a beautiful sun I saw this morning . " If the word to be stressed in " I like the movies " is ' movies ' , an Ameslan user would sign " Movies I like . " The semantic rules are entirely different because the Ameslan user associates meanings with signs made by the hands , face , and arms. The shape of the sign , its movement or how it changes , and its position relative to the rest of the body are all meaningful . Again , the knowledge or competence one has in the system can be called language , in contrast to the use of it , which is called performance. As with speech , performance usually falls short of the user's competence . Signs are sometimes indicated quickly and incompletely . Mistakes are made , but the user's competence remains. In speaking , we often use fragments of sentences rather than sentences. We think of something else in mid - sentence , and start a new sentence before we have completed the first . Yet , when a teacher says , " Put your answer in a complete sentence , " the student knows how to do it. He or she knows the language , even though it is rarely reflected fully in speech . How does this linguistic knowledge relate to thought ?

THOUGHT

Thought may be defined as an internal representation of experiences. Jerome Bruner of Harvard suggests that the representation can be in the form of images, of action, or of language. We presumably use all available representations of our experiences, but some people report the use of some forms more than others. We may think via internal images, vaguely visual, when we are solving a problem, such as how many suitcases we think we can fit into the trunk of a car. Architects and artists often think in visual images. Thought also can be represented by internal action or muscle imagery. In solving the problem of the direction and force needed to place a tennis shot out of reach of an opponent, we think in terms of action. Choreographers, athletes, and some physicists think this way. Albert Einstein, in describing his understanding of how he thought, wrote :

"The words of the language, as they are written or spoken, do not seem to play any role in my mechanism of thought. The psychical entities which seem to serve as elements in thought are certain signs and more or less clear images which can be "voluntarily" reproduced and combined ... But taken from a psychological viewpoint, this combinatory play seems to be the essential feature in productive thought - before there is any connection with logical construction in words or other kinds of signs which can be communicated to others. The above mentioned elements are, in my case, of visual and some of muscular type."

Ghiselin,

B., *The Creative Process*, New

York : Mentor Books, 1955, p. 43.

Representation of thought in some language, whether it be verbal or mathematical, seems important in the mental activities of language users. Although it is apparent that we can think without knowledge of any formal language, as evidenced by deaf children and by some people with aphasia, it is equally apparent that those who do know a language use it to aid thinking.

CHAPTER 3

BUILDING THE SPEECH

Speeches are sometimes classified in simplest terms as informative or persuasive. It is often difficult, however, to classify any given speech. Most speeches lie on a continuum with information on one end of the continuum and persuasion on the other. Supposedly, the goal of informative speakers is to give their listeners clearly understood ideas, and the goal of persuasive speakers go one step further and aim to modify behaviour by getting listeners to carry out suggested solutions to problems.

This distinction does not take into account the fact that members audiences differ greatly. A few items of information may persuade some individuals to take action, while others need the word of numerous authorities, plus time to think. Several recent writers have refused to make any distinctions between the two types. All speeches are potentially persuasive. Suppose that you wish to increase your audience's understanding of some topic such as scuba diving or the constitution of your student government. How should you proceed? Keep in mind that a speech has four parts - introduction, central idea, body, and a conclusion.

First, you must decide precisely what you wish to accomplish. Although your speech may cover several aspects of a topic, it must have a unifying central idea. If you are on the right track, you will be able to state that idea in a single sentence. This sentence, sometimes called the thesis, overviews what the speech will cover. You will develop the central idea in the body of your speech. Any topic covered must be directly related to your central idea.

Your thesis might be "I want the audience to change their attitude about our oil agreements with the Arab countries," or "I want the audience to believe that UFOs originate in outer space." The thesis statement should clearly indicate a desired response from the audience. Notice how these examples set the limits of your talk.

Many of these techniques will be familiar to you from English classes, but remember that your audiences will be hearing your thoughts rather than reading them. You must concentrate on substance and sound. Use the techniques of exposition, description, definition, narration, and psychological appeals to help you write your speech for its greatest impact on listeners.

WAYS TO DEVELOP CONTENT IN SPEECHES

EXPOSITION

Exposition, as you may know, is the process of reporting, defining, explaining. It will be your most important tool in clarifying ideas. The words "reporting," "defining", and "explaining" may seem like dull terms when you consider that you must present exciting, relevant, and clear information for your listeners.

How can you use reporting? The most obvious way is to include personal observation, such as "I live in the ghetto; I know the housing code is being violated". When you use personal observation, be certain that your observation is accurate and that it has relevance to the central idea.

A second type of reporting is information from other people. Perhaps you want to give your audience some information about the dangers of pesticide spraying. By using the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature find two or three magazine articles that contain pertinent data. Quote the authorities: "Dr. John Phillips, a chemist with the department of Agriculture, noted in Time magazine last month that 200 tons of pesticides are used in this country every day." Note that in about eight seconds you have given the expert's name, you have qualified him as an expert, you have given the source, and you have given the data. In addition, note that this is much more informative than "A lot of pesticides are used in this country".

You may want to talk about topics that can be made clearer by using statistics, the third kind of "reporting". Statistics can be impressive and can help an audience understand many ideas. They can also be misleading and confusing. The audience knows the old saying as well as you do, "Figures don't lie, but liars figure."

When you use numbers of any kind in your speech, particularly when you are comparing two sets of numbers, remember that your audience is listening, not reading. If necessary, round the numbers off. The audience will understand "

Senator Jones spent over 10,000 dollars more on television advertising than did Bill Smith " more easily than " Senator Jones spent 19 , 957. 32 dollars on television ads while Bill Smith spent only 9 , 148 . 13 . "

DESCRIPTION

In addition to factual reports , you can use description to develop your ideas . Correctly used , description is a powerful tool . When it is effective , it evokes a sensory response from the listener . The key thing to remember about using description is to be concrete , be specific . Give details that add interest . Avoid abstract words .

If you are describing the lift - off of an Apollo rocket , for example , your audience won't get much from a statement like this : " It 's real loud and there is a lot of fire . It starts off pretty slow , but it gets going pretty fast " . A description like this would be much better :

When the main engines ignite , belches from the bottom , and the earth shudders from the thrust . At first , like an agonized animal in slow motion , the rocket begins to rise . The roar is deep , throaty . As the thrust increases , the engines consume thousands of gallons of fuel each second , the rocket gathers speed , the fire is now a streaming comet and the roar rolls across the flat sandy beach . The sense of slow motion ceases . The rocket punches through the clouds . It is now travelling at 600 miles per hour . Within a minute it will travel at 18, 000 miles an hour .

Your object is to make the audience feel or see or smell , not just think .

DEFINITION

Definitions can be helpful in explaining many topics provided they are clear and apt. Definitions set limits by showing what a thing is and what it is not. definitions can come from dictionaries, of course, but explanations can also add definitions.

Instead of just giving a dictionary definition of poverty, for example, you might describe a few examples of people living in poverty. Or you may want to compare and contrast ideas, like democracy and totalitarianism, rather than just define one of the terms. Occasionally, you might wish to describe a process, like how to make a pizza, rather than just to define pizza. In any case, you should select the method of defining that best serves your purpose and will be most interesting to your audience.

NARRATION

Another technique that you might use in developing your central idea is narration. Just as the function of description is to call up sensory response, the function of narration is to call up an experience for the listener. The key thing to remember is that experience is concrete, that it has a rich texture. If you use the narrative technique, take time to build in the audience.

Narrative can carry the purpose of a speech: to illustrate a point, to introduce a point, or to emphasize a principle idea. You might describe a walk along a river, pointing out the feel of the bank under your feet, the play of the sunlight through the trees, and the unfortunate litter of cans, paper, and garbage. The idea of the clash of nature and industrial waste could be dealt with solely by narration. Or you could use a short narration of this walk to introduce a discussion of pollution in which you would quote authorities and statistics. Perhaps you could end a speech on pollution with your narration. In any case, concrete words and images.

CHAPTER 4

COMMUNICATION

IN

ACTION

BUILDING SPEECH

COMPETENCIES

Consider the following situation. You are a member of a parent - teacher organization that has arranged to have a well - known expert give a talk on the pros and cons of sex education programs in elementary schools. The audience will number about 300, including members of your organization, their families, and other guests. It is the night of the event and the president of your organization is unable to attend because of a personal emergency. Taken totally by surprise, you are asked to introduce the guest speaker to the audience. The thought of standing on a stage in front of 300 people sinks in - you panic. You are not quite sure what you will say. You also begin to imagine that people will see right through all your inadequacies. But basically you are worried that you will not say and do the right things. If you can identify with this situation you are not alone. Many people experience such feelings. But many also learn to conquer these feelings and learn to play the role of speaker adequately if not effectively.

To understand the difficulties of a person in the situation described, let's list the factors that helped cause the problem. One obvious factor is inexperience. The more a person speaks to groups of people the easier it should become. A second factor, of course, is preparation. It is usually more difficult to speak when you have not planned out what things you want to say (even in a brief introductory speech). This planning includes gathering helpful materials and then organizing these materials in some logical way. A third factor concerns how the person approaches the act of speaking to a group. Speaking to groups is really a very commonplace act. You can learn to do it just as you can learn to build a table, teach someone to drive, or cook a meal. When you speak you have a job to do. In fact, with enough "job experience," preparation, and development of positive attitudes, you may discover that you actually like speaking to groups. You may come to enjoy the attention and positive responses you get for your efforts.

There is quite a number of situations in which people will need to express themselves to a group in some systematic way. Some of these situations occur during formal occasions and some during informal occasions. The following are some examples of each:

Formal occasions
political speech

Informal occasions
participating in a seminar

college classroom speech	speaking out at a union meeting
lecture or sermon	speaking out at a tenants' meeting
business presentation	speaking out at a religious study group
organized sales pitch	speaking out on an office steering committee
acceptance speech	

When you deliver a speech there are four general ways of going about it. There is the extemporaneous speech, the impromptu speech, the memorized speech, and the read speech:

1- The extemporaneous speech : Extemporaneous speeches are planned speeches. The exact wording the speaker will use, however, is not planned out to any great extent. Rather, the speaker just has an outline of the things he or she wants to say.

2- The impromptu speech : The impromptu speech is an unplanned speech. It usually occurs when someone gets a request to "get up and say a few words." Speaking out at some large meeting can also be a type of brief impromptu speech.

3- The memorized speech : With memorized speeches, the speaker plans out what will be said word for word. There may be a written copy of the speech that has been committed to memor. This type of speech can sometimes seem "canned" to the audience. Its principal danger, however, is that you may forget parts of it and then grope about for what you had planned to say. Worse still, you may have to stand there in silence, or leave.

4- The reading speech : Reading speeches is best done by people who for legal or political reasons want to be sure that they say something in exactly the right way. However, unless you are very skilled at reading speeches (most people are not) you will bore the audience or put it to sleep.

PURPOSES OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

The first step in learning to perform the role of public speaker is to understand the various purposes speaking to groups can serve. For example, even introducing someone to a group can serve a variety of purposes. In the situation described earlier, the club member's brief introduction should have accomplished several things. It should have made the speaker feel welcome and important and the audience feel welcome and important. It should have gotten everyone in a receptive mood by reminding them of the importance of what the invited speaker would talk about. So even a brief introduction has purposes we can identify. The purposes that speeches can serve are usually divided into two categories - general speech purposes and specific speech purposes.

GENERAL SPEECH PURPOSES

There are four general purposes that speeches can perform. Frequently, given speeches will be used for more than one of these broad purposes. Usually, however, one of the purposes will dominate the nature of a particular speech. The four general purposes are:

1- To inform : *Sometimes the overriding of a talk is to convey information or ideas to a group. For example, you might explain how to find a part-time job or give people the latest information on buying a condominium. Basically you take the trouble here to research something your audience might like to know more about. You then report to them what you found out. You may have just researched these materials or slowly acquired them through your experience over a long period of time.*

2- To persuade : *At other times your overall purpose is to change people's minds about something or to reinforce already held beliefs. You may want to influence their attitudes, values, or feelings on a topic. For example, you may try to convince others that American family life was better before television was invented or that your community really needs a blood bank*

3- To activate : At still other times your basic aim is to influence people's actions. Sometimes you will also need to change their minds (persuasion), but they may already feel as you do about something. Here your job is just to motivate them to take action. For instance, you may want them to go out and vote, or to buy a product, or to run out in a mob, and "hang the prisoner." In any of these cases your job is to say what you can to stimulate the group to action.

4- To divert : Occasionally, speaking to a group is not done to accomplish something tangible. Your purpose here will be more social. You may try to entertain a group or you may lead a group through some social ritual, bestowing and honor on someone, commemorating an event, giving a eulogy for someone. The main purpose of this last group of speech types is for the audience to experience the speech in its own right.



SPECIFIC SPEECH PURPOSES

All speeches by definition involve one or more of the four general purposes. In addition, all speeches should have some identifiable specific purpose or purposes. A specific purpose narrows the general purpose down by identifying such things as the particular topic of a speech and what the outcome of the speech should be on the listeners. The following examples show the distinction between general purposes and specific purposes of particular speeches :

General purpose

Possible specific purposes

To inform

*To explain to a group of
beginners how to shift gears
on a ten-speed bicycle*

To inform

*To define the concept of a "black
hole " in outer space .*

To persuade

*To convince my parents that they
are overprotective toward me .*

To persuade

*To convince a group of fanatics
that their outlook on the world is
in error .*

To activate

*To get members of a football team
to feel a strong desire to defeat
opposing team .*

To activate

*To get sales staff to fill as many
orders as they can , selling door
to door .*

To divert

*To remind the family of how near
and dear Grandma was to all of
us.*

To divert

To express warm feelings toward
the couple who were married
today.

In summary, whenever you are to give a speech remind yourself of your general purpose. It will also be helpful if you write down your specific purpose in the form of a well-developed sentence. As you can see in the examples given, such a sentence will often include:

- 1- a hint of the general purpose,
- 2- a reference to your overall topic,
- 3- the aspect of the overall topic that you will address,
- 4- a brief reference to your audience, and
- 5- a possible reference to the occasion.

As you can see, a speech topic is only one part of a specific speech purpose. Speech topics usually come in the form of a word or phrase.

CHAPTER 5

GENERAL TECHNIQUES OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Clearly defined speech purposes are the first necessary ingredient of an effective speech. But an effective speaker must also know how to achieve his or her purposes. By learning about these fundamental speech strategies, you will be better able to prepare for actual speeches.

SPEAKING TO INFORM

When you speak to inform your job is to bring people up-to-date on things that are not known to them. Sometimes your job will be to give them new ways of looking at familiar things. For example, you might talk about how to make ice cream at home or about the latest uses of laser surgery. Bruce Gronbeck (1979) suggests that the process of informing people can be done in at least four different ways. You can define, demonstrate, explain, or report information on things. Each of these specific informative strategies can be used as the main thrust of a speech or as a particular part of a speech.

1- Defining : *When you define something you give the listeners a vocabulary for understanding that something. Defining helps to familiarize people with a topic and may also help them to look at something in a new way.*

Gronbeck points out that there are several ways to define something :

- i. give a dictionary definition ;*
- ii. define something in your own words ;*
- iii. point out what you do not mean by the idea ;*
- iv. give history of the concept, idea, or work ;*
- v. give examples to clarify your definition ; and*
- vi. describe the idea in a familiar context .*

DEMONSTRATING

When you inform by demonstration you give the necessary steps needed for carrying out a procedure or for using something. Demonstrating something is often a show - and - tell affair where the listeners get an opportunity to see how something works. They can later imitate the process themselves. For example, you might demonstrate how to bake a pecan pie by developing the following steps:

- 1. list the ingredients needed*
- 2. show the equipment needed*
- 3. demonstrate how to prepare the crust*
- 4. demonstrate how to prepare the filling*
- 5. recite the correct temperatures and times for baking*
- 6. show finished product.*

When you demonstrate something step by step, several considerations are important. The first is how fast or slow to speak. Another is how much detail to give. Still another is how involved the listeners will become during the presentation. Will they just listen? Will they perform any activities? Will they get to ask questions? Sometimes your demonstration will involve only your speech and other times will also involve visual things. Of course, the nature of your topic, as well as your audience's current knowledge, will determine how you proceed on these issues.

REPORTING

When your speech involves reporting, you gather information and then assemble, arrange, and interpret it. You may also give recommendations based on your findings. Reporting information usually requires that you identify categories to summarize your information. For instance, you might report on the success of a community job - training program. Here, you would first identify several useful data categories - e. g., "jobs gotten in factories," "jobs gotten in offices," etc. You would then give the figures or percentages of job - getting success in each of the four categories. To put this talk together you might develop the following points:

1. give brief history of job - training program
2. give categories used to appraise success of program
3. give facts and figures of job - getting success of program
4. give summary of program's success and failures
5. make recommendations for future administration of program.

EXPLAINING

When you explain something you try to make that something clear to your listeners. You may try to account for why it is the way it is. You may try to clarify what it is or how it came about. For example, you might try to explain the "underground economy" in the United States. Here you would explain how millions of americans work in "cash businesses" where records are not kept. You might also speculate on how the underground economy affects the "above-ground economy" the government's financial operations, and the taxpayer.

SPEAKING TO PERSUADE

When you speak to persuade your job is to change people's minds about something or help them make up their minds if undecided. Persuasion relies on appealing to people's use of reasoning, although it may also at times appeal to emotions. Persuasion is a highly valued form of activity in our society because it is an alternative to use of brutal force, intimidation, or propaganda. In fact, scholars have been interested in the study of persuasion since ancient times. It was the famous Greek philosopher Aristotle who proposed what is probably the first theory of how to persuade people. He believed that effective persuasion required the speaker to have five attributes:

- a. **invention**, the ability to discover good reasons that listeners should agree with your position;
- b. **disposition**, the ability to organize your ideas effectively;
- c. **style**, the ability to choose your words and language effectively;
- d. **memory**, the ability to remember ideas and information that you can use during persuasive speeches; and

e. *delivery*, the ability to use voice and body motions effectively during public speaking. Possibly the most important of the five attributes is "invention," which enables you to find good reasons that listeners should agree with your position. This is the heart of persuasion. For instance, let us say you wanted to persuade your neighbors to build bomb shelters. In preparation for your persuasion, you would try to uncover the reasons that would convince people that building bomb shelters was a good idea. To uncover these reasons you would use your own memory and ability to think and create. But you could also get ideas by reading about the topic and by listening to people as they talk about their worries. Finally, persuasion sometimes relies as much on appealing to people's emotions as to their use of reason. For instance, you might argue that auto manufacturers should be required by law to install air-bag accident restrainers in all models. If you showed gory pictures of people killed in accidents who might have been saved by the restrainers, you would be appealing to fear. Or, you might try to convince people that guns were good by stressing their power to protect your family from intruders. Speakers frequently support their claims with both logical and emotional appeals.

SPEAKING TO ACTIVATE

This type of speech must also be persuasive in a general sense. But while purely persuasive speeches try to change our beliefs and attitudes, speeches to activate try to get people to take action. Such speeches place greater emphasis on motivating listeners. They obviously work better when listeners already have favorable attitudes toward the proposal. Ehninger, et al. (1980) propose a very practical set of steps for a speaker to follow to get people to act. There are five steps in all.

Step 1. Get attention : You must first arouse interest in listeners toward you and your talk. If you fail to get listeners' full attention you will not be very successful. Fortunately there are a number of ways to catch people's attention. You can open your talk with one or more of the following techniques :

- activity or movement (of the speaker or of an object)
- vivid references to real people, events, or places
- direct references to people or things in the room

novelties ; such as objects larger or smaller than usual , or things
out of their usual settings or contexts
familiar or unfamiliar objects
description of some conflict audience can relate to humor
reference to things vitally important to audience's welfare

The techniques must be chosen in a way appropriate to the topic , speaker , audience , and occasion . Attention - getting techniques should not be over - used .

Step 2 . Show a need : Your next task is getting people to act is to identify a problem that listeners will see as important and relevant to them . You may do this by presenting some facts and figures or quotations dramatizing the problem . For example , you might point out in a speech on children's advertising that the audience's children are in danger . You might do this by mentioning several facts - e. g. , Our children view , on average , 10,000 commercials a year ; advertisers spend billions on constructing advertisements for children ; or commercials' techniques are scientifically designed to influence children's appetites for consumer items .

Step 3 . Satisfy need : Your job here is to present some solution to the problem you have identified . You must also demonstrate how your proposal bears directly on the concerns of the listeners themselves .

Step 4 . Visualize outcome : At this point you describe what the outcome would be if your proposal became reality . Here you would project the audience into the future by suggesting what the benefits would be to them . You might , in this example , describe in words what children's programming would be like with your policy . If you had sufficient resources you might produce a videotape of what programming would look like if your policy were followed by broadcasters .

Step 5 . Instigate action : Your basic job here is to emphasize exactly what you want the listeners to do . If you had been urging them to vote for a political candidate you would remind them of when and where they should vote . Or if you had been urging them to help start a community blood bank , you would direct them to carry out certain actions - sign up on a list to give blood ,

volunteer money, services, etc. Your job here is to be clear and specific about how listeners should follow your lead.

SPEAKING TO DIVERT

In most cases your job here is to lead listeners through an emotional experience or social process. You may be giving a eulogy for someone who has died, giving an after-dinner talk, introducing someone, or speaking for a bride and groom at a wedding. This type of talk most often will have a simple structure built around a single theme. Nonetheless, you should plan what materials to use in a divertive speech. You should put your ideas down in a list or simple outline.

CONCLUSION

Your ability to express your ideas to larger groups of people greatly enhances your effectiveness as a worker, a professional, a citizen, or a political leader. Although it is possible to read, memorize, or make up speeches as you go along, the best method is to plan out what you will say in a speech but not plan out the exact words you will use. Generally, speeches are given to inform, persuade, get people to act, or mark some social occasion. Regardless of the kind of speech you give, you will need to start with a well-defined purpose to guide your efforts in preparing for and giving a speech.

When you speak to inform you will often give definitions, explanations, demonstrations, and reports. When you speak to persuade, you use appeals to reason and to emotion to get people to change their minds about something. When you speak to get people to act you use a five-step procedure that reminds them why it would be good to take the action. When you speak on some social occasion you use a simple structure and a simple theme to create a speech that listeners appreciate as an end itself.

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