

Lecture 10

Speaking to persuade

Persuasive speech

- A speech designed to change or reinforce the audience's beliefs or actions.
- it will benefit you from personal relations to community activities to career aspirations.
- Persuasion is a psychological process. It will always occur in a situation where two or more points of view exist.

- Persuasion is the most complex and challenging.
- Your objective is more ambitious than speaking to inform, and audience analysis and adaptation become much more demanding.
- You will deal with controversial topics that touch on your listeners' most basic attitudes, values and beliefs.

How listeners process persuasive messages

- Research shows persuasion is something a speaker does with audience.
- They actively assess the speaker's credibility, delivery, supporting materials, language, reasoning and emotional appeals.
- To prepare, you have to put yourself in the place of your audience and imagine how they will respond.

Target audience

- A particular part of the whole audience that you want to reach with your speech.
- You must always keep in mind the ideas and feelings of your entire audience.

Three major kinds of persuasive speeches

- Speeches on questions of facts
- Speeches on questions of value
- Speeches on questions of policy.

Speeches on questions of facts

- A question about the truth or falsity of an assertion.
- The situation for informative speech: non-partisan → lecturer, teacher.
- The situation for persuasive speech: partisan → advocate
- Present one view of the facts as persuasively as possible.

- Methods of organisation for speeches on questions of fact:
 - Topical order- each main point presents a reason why someone should agree with them.
 - Spatial order – the speaker’s purpose is limited to persuading the audience to accept a particular view of the facts.

Speeches on questions of value

- A question about the worth, rightness, morality, and so forth of an idea or action.
- It demands value judgement – based on a person's beliefs about what is right or wrong, good or bad, moral or immoral, proper or improper, fair or unfair.

- You must justify your claims
- You must establish your standards.
- You must give special thought to the standards for your value judgement.

- Methods of organisation for speeches on questions of value:
 - Topical order – firstly establish standards for value judgements then applying those standards.
 - Justify your judgement against some identifiable standards.
 - It may have strong implications for our actions.
 - Do not argue directly for or against courses of action.
 - Do not urge listeners to do anything.

Speeches on questions of policy

- A question about whether a specific course of action should or should not be taken.
- They deal with specific courses of action.
- Inevitably involve questions of facts.
- But it always goes beyond to decide whether something should or should not be done.

Types of speeches on questions of policy

- Speeches to gain passive agreement – speaker's goal is to convince the audience that a given policy is desirable without encouraging the audience to take action in support of policy.
- E.g.: electoral campaign.

- Speeches to gain immediate action – the speaker's goal is to convince the audience to take action in support of a given policy.
- E.g.: donation to charity organisations.

Analysing question of policy

- Need – is there a real problem or need that requires a change from current policy?
- Plan – if there is a problem with current policy, does the speaker have a plan to solve the problem?
- Practicality – will the speaker's plan solve the problem? Will it create new and more serious problems?

- Methods of organisation for speeches on questions of policy:
 - Problem-solution order – the first main point deals with existence of a problem and the second main point presents a solution to the problem.
 - Problem-cause-solution order – the first main point identifies a problem, the second main point analyses the causes of the problem and the third main point presents a solution o the problem.

- Comparative advantages order – each point explains why a speaker's solution to a problem is preferable to other proposed solutions,
- Monroe's motivated sequence – seek immediate action. The five steps of the sequence are attention, need, satisfaction, visualisation, and action.

Summary

- Persuasion is the most complex and the most challenging.
- Your job is to sell programme, to defend an idea, to refute an opponent, or to inspire people to action.
- Persuasive speeches may centre on questions of facts, value and policy.
- How much of your speech you devote to each issue will depend on your topic and your audience.