

PRACTISING PRESENTATIONS

1) Not all the advice listed below should be taken at face value. Tick the items which you consider appropriate for a presentation.

1a. Make sure you speak loud enough for the audience to hear you. Nothing is worse than having to strain to hear a speaker present.

1b. When you are unsure about something it is a good strategy to lower your voice to that extent that the audience cannot hear you. They will think it is their problem and not yours.

2a. Do not use your natural speech patterns with their variations in pitch. Public speaking must be formal and the more monotone the better.

2b. Avoid speaking in a monotone. The easiest way to put an audience to sleep is by speaking in the same tone of voice for a long period of time.

3a. Change your delivery pace. By speaking at different speech rates for short periods, you can add energy and animation to your speech pattern.

3b. Never change your delivery pace as changing speech rates may irritate the audience. It is best to speak either very fast or very slowly from the beginning to the end.

4a. Accelerate your speech when talking about important points. The faster you speak, the more of them you can include.

4b. Slow down for important points. Slowing your speech rate while delivering your key points conveys emphasis and importance.

5a. Use the pause. Silence is an excellent exclamation point. By slightly extending a pause, you can add emphasis to a key point in your presentation. The best presenters plan their pauses to achieve maximum impact!

5b. Never use even the shortest pauses. Silence is a dreadful experience for the audience; they suffer as they think you have forgotten your speech.

6a. Make the presentation very dry for it is a formal way of speaking. However, each presenter must tell one joke per presentation to demonstrate their sense of humor.

6b. Try to make your presentation lively and interesting, which does not necessarily mean telling jokes and anecdotes. You may use interesting or amusing examples or developing ideas to illustrate your arguments.

7a. Speak from outline notes – do not read from them (with the exception of quotes) but keep checking that you are following your plan.

7b. Never use your notes. Put them on the desk so that everybody can see you have prepared them - holding or checking them is considered embarrassing.

8a. Look at your audience while you are speaking. While doing so, try to judge what they are thinking and adjust your delivery accordingly.

8b. Never make eye contact with your audience, it is advisable to look at the ceiling, floor or a window. This makes the audience feel you are concentrating on the content.

Adapted from Williams, Erica J. *Presentations in English*. Hongkong: MacMillan, 2008

“Social appraisal: The social world as object of and influence on appraisal processes.” Manstead, Antony S. R.; Fischer, Agneta H. In Scherer, Klaus R.; Schorr, Angela and Tom Johnstone (Eds). *Appraisal processes in emotion: Theory, methods, research*. New York: Oxford UP, 221-232.

Introduction. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Vol. B: 1820-1865. Robert S. Levine, ed. New York: Norton, 2012.

9a. Try to only use your normal vocabulary, words which come naturally to you; don't experiment with new words - you'll probably mispronounce them.

9b. Use only such words which sound scientific, technical, academic or "non-English." The words you do not know are the best as it is highly probable the audience will not know them either and will be impressed by your range of vocabulary.

10a. The introduction of a presentation is the least important part of academic presentations.

10b. An effective opening arouses curiosity among the audience and will make the topic relevant.

2) Nominalizations: Look at the following excerpt from a presentation. What is wrong with it? Rewrite it so that it is more suitable for spoken language.

As you can see in the picture, the framework of our software is shown and the fact that the storage of the information can be arbitrarily distributed is illustrated; in addition, it is also clear that the registration of the resources is guaranteed by a library, and that the discovery of the information is simplified by another library.

Preparing to Present Information

- A) You will be given a short text. Read the text and take down notes. Focus on important information in each paragraph.
- B) Work in pairs or small groups and prepare a short presentation (a few minutes) on one of the two texts. Be sure you deliver the important information in each text accurately. If you are listening to a presentation, take notes.
- C) Compare the two presentations. What did you find out about the topic? Was there anything surprising?
- D) Look back to your notes. Were they useful in preparing the presentation? Why/why not?
- E) Now read the other text. Was there something that the others missed?

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Text 1) Cultural significance of social appraisals

We believe that social appraisals, i.e. evaluations or judgments of events and situations that people encounter in their life, play a role in the emotion process in all cultures. This is because people are generally concerned with how others think, feel and act, and all the more so in emotional settings. However, cultures are likely to differ in the extent to which they explicitly value social appraisals. It is by now well established that cultures differ with respect to the way in which self is perceived and this may impact on the importance and strength of social appraisals. A currently influential way of thinking about the differences between cultures, in terms of their impacts on self-image, is Markus and Kitayama's (1991) distinction between "independent" and "interdependent" understanding of self, which in turn can be related to Triandis' (e.g., 1989) distinction between individualistic and collectivistic cultures.

In individualistic cultures, the cultural task of the individual is to seek out, achieve, and maintain independence from others. The characteristic self-image in such a culture is one that focuses on internal attributes, such as ability, personality, preferences, and aspirations; attributes that set the individual apart from other persons. The self is seen as a separate entity, clearly distinct from others. In collective cultures, the cultural task of the individual is one that focuses on interdependent attributes, such as relatedness to others, and the rights, duties, obligations, and responsibilities that are involved in these relationships. The self is seen as a connected entity, not clearly separated from relationships with others. Culturally based variations in the way self is perceived are therefore likely to influence the way emotions and emotional situations are appraised.

Evidence consistent with these arguments comes from recent research by Bagozzi, Wong, and Yi (in press). Drawing on the notion of independent-based and interdependent-based cultures, they proposed that culture and gender interact to produce different patterns of association between positive and negative emotions in memory. Specifically, they expected that positive and negative emotions would be *negatively* associated in independent cultures and *positively* associated in interdependent cultures. The reasoning behind this prediction is as follows: in independent cultures there is a tendency to differentiate the self from others and to perceive attributes of persons (such as emotions) as separate categories. In interdependent cultures, by contrast, the self is seen as connected to others and to social context, and emotions and other attributes of the individual are seen neither as a way of differentiating the self from others nor as a basis for social action. This then has an impact on the answers to questions such as "How do you feel at the moment?", as the answer to this question depends not only on their emotional state, but also on the world views of their cultures. In other words, the representation of our emotional responses can vary across cultures.

Text 2) The Literary Marketplace in an Expanding Nation

By the second decade of the nineteenth century, Americans had easy access to contemporary British literature and criticism. Crossing the Atlantic on sailing ships and by the late 1830s on steamers, books or magazines first published in London could be distributed or republished almost immediately in the largest coastal cities – Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston. Volumes of poetry by the Scottish poet Robert Burns and by the English Romantics (Wordsworth,

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Byron, etc.) and other writers were reprinted in the United States within months of their initial publication. Sir Walter Scott's historical novels were immensely popular in the United States, and during the 1840s and 1850s crowds of Charles Dickens fans would gather at the docks to greet steamships arriving in New York City with the latest installment of one of his serialized novels.

Geography and modes of transportation had a direct impact on publishing practices in the United States during this period. In 1800 there were few publishing firms; writers who wanted to publish a book generally took the handwritten manuscript to a local printer. They had to pay for printing and had to make their own arrangements for distribution and sales, frequently having signed up committed purchasers beforehand in what was then called the "subscription" system. However, by around 1820 publishing centers began to develop in the major seaports, which could receive the largest British books by the fastest ships; these publishers shipped hastily reprinted copies inland by river traffic. The leading publishing towns were New York and Philadelphia; Boston remained peripheral to the publishing industry until railroad connections to the West developed during the 1840s. Nevertheless, despite the aggressive merchandizing techniques of a few firms, a national market for American literature was slow to develop.

Besides the technical problems of book distribution across the huge nation, economic interests of American publishers and booksellers were sometimes directly opposite to the interests of American writers. A national copyright law became effective in the United States in 1790, but not until 1891 did U.S. writers get international copyright protection and foreign writers receive similar protection in the United States. For most of the century, American publishers routinely pirated English writers, paying nothing to writers such as Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, and other popular writers for works sold widely in inexpensive editions throughout the United States. American readers benefited from the situation, but the large quantities of texts available to publishers virtually for free made it difficult for U.S. writers to be paid for their work in their home country. As a result, there were relatively few professional authors in the United States before the Civil War. Nathaniel Hawthorne received various political appointments over his lifetime; Ralph Waldo Emerson lived on a legacy from his first wife and on his well-compensated lectures; the financially struggling Herman Melville was forced to spend the last several decades of his life working in the New York custom house; most famously, Edgar Allan Poe received only \$9 for his famous poem "The Raven" and had to constantly plead for money only to die in utter poverty.