

Technical English for Engineers
Prof. Aysha Iqbal
Department of Humanities and Social Science
Indian Institute of Technology, Madras

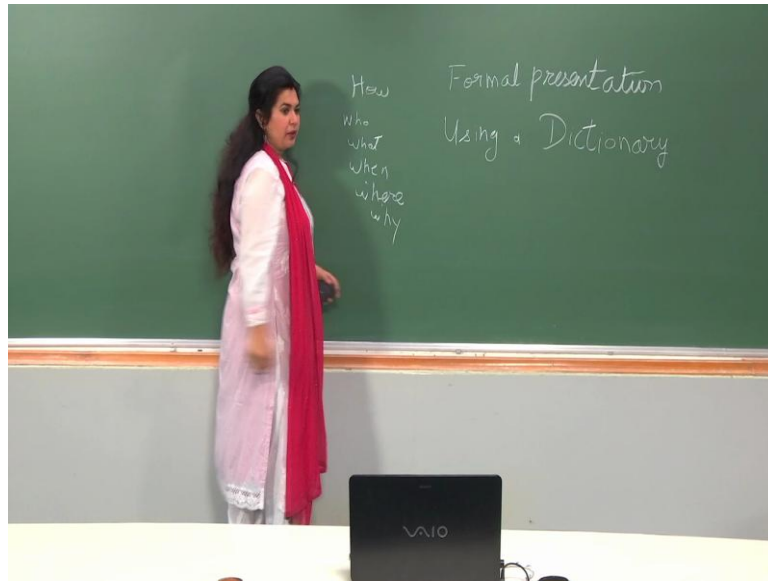
Lecture – 17
Formal Presentation & Dictionary Skills

We have been talking about speaking in public and especially in formal situations, especially in academic situations. In your case, it is more important because you have to make constant presentations to your fellow students and also to your professors. So, let us talk about how to prepare, I mean I know in the last class also we have talked about these things but I am just emphasizing on certain key points that you need to remember while making formal presentations.

Remember, we prepare differently for different audience not all audiences are alike, if this group A expect something else, group B may of people may expect something else from you. You may make presentations at undergraduate or graduate, even higher levels, you may make presentations for your professors, college professors, university professors, administrators and when you apply for certain kinds of fellowships, you need to have to make presentations. Sometimes also to people in the industry, when you seek jobs and you are supposed to make presentations.

Have an idea of the knowledge level of the expected audience and prepare your talk accordingly. What do your audiences know? Pitch your talk to that level. Remember the tone of the presentation should be and also the matter should be adjusted along according to the audience. Always prepare a presentation that is closest to the expectation of your audience. Now, you should remember the W's. Who, what, when, where and why.

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Your presentation should cover these questions who, what, when, where, why and also how. Your presentation should answer or explain these and most of these answers should be given in the introduction also. Your title card should never be vague. The title slide or card or whatever you want to write on an, if you are using any other kind of visual aid, it should never be vague, it should be always be very clear about who, what and where, what are you trying to do? What are you trying to say? That should not be between any there should not be any ambiguity between what you are saying and what you actually want to convey.

So, the audience should not be in confusion that is what is going on and what is this person talking about. Communicate it very well in the opening statement itself that what are you going to do, so set the tone. I am especially talking out those of you, who are in technical side of academic, so if your talk or if your research on which you have based your talk, if it has been is sponsored then always mention any source of funding in the introduction itself, it is important to do that. The middle and the conclusion they should contain how of your argument, how it was done? How this research was done?

And a formal presentation should ideally focus on a single key argument. There has to be an argument, there has to be a question which has to be responded too. Use all other

arguments to supplement and support the argument and remember you have to provide only the necessary details when you present a statistics and other kinds of data, make sure that it is very well organized and it is comprehensible and readable. Sometimes, especially those in the area of technical, they pack or the cram their slides with too much of data, organize it well. Always include the most persuasive visual data to support your arguments rather than cramming it up with too many things. The key data the one which determines, determines of finding highlight that.

Conclusion of course, there has to be a conclusion, do not ever abruptly and your presentation, it should be short and should quickly reiterate your key arguments. So what you started with. At the end you should always try to align your conclusion with your introduction and your key argument. Talking about the argument introduction should explain why your work is important? Why am I doing this at all? What is the relevance significance of this? Include the context of your work. It is always good to have some knowledge of the background of your study and in what context, in what circumstances did you undertake that work.

Presentations remember should be brief and attire to the time limit, if you have been told to make a presentation for 20 minutes practice and design it for 20 minutes, always leave some room for question and answers. While designing the slides there are certain key elements to remember, slide should support your message. Remember that, they are there to support they are not managing you; they are not substituting for you. Slides are just there so that you can use them do not get overwhelmed by this slides. In the slide many a time people cut and paste material from the report, they have done a huge study and they start cutting and pasting in order to save time. Sometimes we are lazy we do not want to work on a slides.

Remember, we have to enhance the effectiveness of your presentation not stuff it with too much of information. Therefore, cutting and pasting word from the report would give a very poor impression, try to use bullet points and make it clean and neat. Always remember that you have your slides should be as simple as possible, you have to do the talking and not your slide should not be cluttered with material. Always remember that the audience is there to listen to you, therefore your credibility is important. We establish

our credibility by demonstrating our expertise. Now, if you have some kind of a control over the matter or material it shows that you have done work and that is what is going to be evaluated.

You should sound knowledgeable and talk fluently without stammering and groping around for words, you should emphasize your interest also it is very important, remember that in show some interest in the audience. We have been talking the other day about making eye contact; here I am going a little beyond that. Make eye contact, as I have told you already, you should look 5 seconds at one person and for another 5 seconds at some, I mean do not over stare a person, do not out stare a person, do not gaze at a person and it is also very important to appear enthusiastic in your presentation.

The certain kinds of non-verbal elements that also creep in your presentations, many a time we find, as discussed earlier talking with your mouth covered that is a big no. Talking to the audience with a back towards them, absolutely not done and then many a time we find people crossing their arms across the body. Now, this is a very negative sort of a gesture especially when it comes to let us say face to face interviews, formal presentations and also talking to your people who are in authority. Unless and until you are very close to them, very comfortable with people, pays attention to your body language, do not appear overtly stiff, at the same time do not appear brash and over confident. Crossing your arms give the impression that you are ready for a combat. You know what is a combat? A confrontation, you are facing an enemies it is always better let you smile to have a pleasant face and a pleasant tone and try to manage your arms.

It is always good to practice your presentation a once or twice at home and preferably before people who know the subject. Always create note cards, effective slides, if possible visit the venue of presentation before hand and make sure that your slides will be visible to all members of the audience. Be prepared with the backup when things go wrong. You remember Murphy's Law, 'anything can go wrong, it will go wrong'. So remember that it is technology we are talking about. Perhaps, it is a good idea to take some xerox copies of what you want to show, it will take effort, it will take some time but it is always good to be prepared for any kind of eventuality. Let us assume something goes wrong with the OHP, with the projection system at the nth hour then what are you

doing to do? So always be prepared for that kind of situation.

Remember you are making a presentation is for enhancing knowledge. Anticipate questions and challenges, be prepared to elaborate and repeat your arguments you have to do that. You will be questioned and you have to be prepared to cover all tracks, cover all angles. Apart from the knowledge that you are going to impart and exhibiting your expertise in chosen area, it is also important to speak appropriately. Now, what is appropriate language? Of course good grammar, good choice of words, impressive body language all those things matter, but speaking appropriately also means choosing language that is adapted to the needs, interest and knowledge of the listeners.

Through appropriate language we communicate our respect and acceptance of those who are listening to us. Remember language should be appropriately formal for the situation. Appropriate language should be chosen so that the jargon that is a technical terminology, you know what is a jargon? Every field of expertise has its own jargon, a specific kind of a language. In linguistics, for instance you have a set of words; in computer sciences you have another set of jargon is specific to that domain. In literature you have terms such as imagery, metaphor, metonym, alliteration these are jargons is specific to literature, a figures of speech. That is technical jargon.

Your language should be so that it has the appropriate technical terminology, but at the same time it should not interfere with understanding, so therefore, it is a very important that you pitch your presentation to the level of the audience. Do not cram it with such jargon that people who are not experts but, anyway educated people but not expert in your specific area, they fail to understand what you are trying to say. And also slang, now remember many a time the way we write it and the way we speak they creep into each other and vice versa, right. So, the way we speak shows reflects in our writing and vice versa.

Now, slang is something that is a very informal way of talking and communication. Avoid that, informal presentations you do not use slang that is what I mean by appropriacy of language. Language should also be sensitive, what is sensitivity in language? We talk about sensitivity in language when others do not perceive it as

offensive. Some of the offensive language result from expressions that can be seen as sexist, racist, communal, offensive to a particular region or a country or group of people and show some kinds of biases and prejudice against someone or a group of people. Any language that is demeaning, belittling to any person or group of people on the basis of their gender, religion, nationality, race, language, etcetera, should be avoided. Please take a look at these references here.

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References

- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/608/05/>
- <http://grammar.about.com/od/ab/g/biased-language-term.htm>
- <https://www.edanzediting.com/blogs/language-matters-importance-sensitivity-writing-part-1>

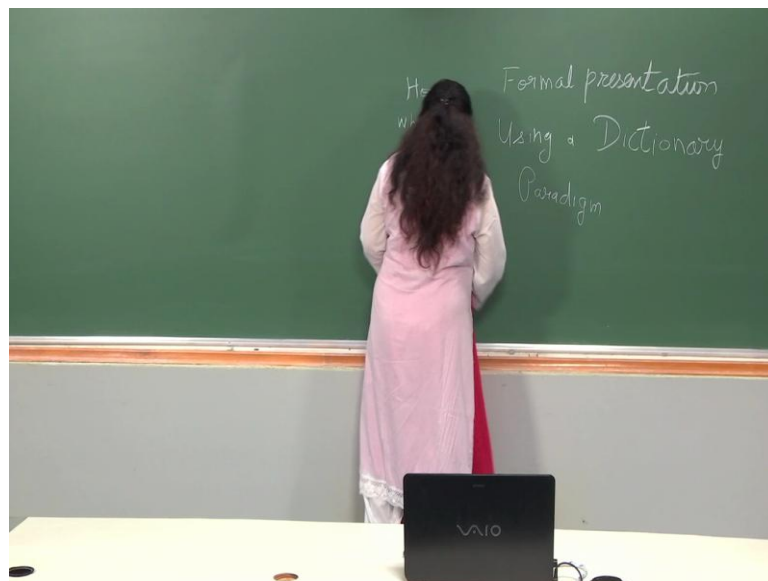
Look at the slide, these are for you to look up and some of these websites will give you information about how to be more sensitive and more unbiased when you use language.

Now, so much about making presentation, now let us move on to talk about another area that I have plan to discuss today, that is dictionary skills, how to use a dictionary? I have already referred one dictionary to so you know that, you should also know that we all choose dictionaries according to our needs. A middle school level child would pick a simpler kind of dictionary, people whose language needs and use are more challenging, more complex; they use more complex kind of dictionaries.

The world is full of dictionaries. Do you know that the biggest dictionary of English is the New Oxford English Dictionary, it has 20 volumes and tells us when, where and by

whom a particular word was used with of specific meaning. However, not all of us need the New Oxford English Dictionary and it is 20 volumes, right? At the same time remember, you cannot expect one or a single dictionary to cater to all your needs. There may be times when you would need or when you may require more than one dictionary. What do dictionaries do?

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Let us take a word such as, how do you pronounce it? Paradigm; 'g' silent. Now, this is a technical word which is also used in philosophy and psychology in the domains of these disciplines, also in grammar. So it is pronounced as paradigm, it is what part of speech? It is a noun. Remember, it is formal and technical. It is a very formal word, we do not throw around words like paradigm, let us say very informal situation. So, these are formal words they require formal occasions of use, what does it mean? It means typical example of pattern, for example a paradigm for a students to copy the template. From paradigm, we also get the word paradigmatic and which is an adjective.

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'Paradigm', 'paradigmatic' and we have changed the class of the word; from noun we have changed it into an adjective. If you look up the dictionary, you will find all these things, you will find the head word paradigm, you will find the pronunciation, the classification that is the part of speech, you will be told whether it is formal or slang or technical whatever, you will be given its meanings, if there are more than one meaning then will you will have those meanings also. As well as using those words in sentences and then you will be given the various word forms. So, you can make an adjective here, and then the pronunciation of that word form.

Generally speaking you will find a word like 'paradigm'; this is a very grand word. Sometimes people use it as in his actions are a paradigm for all other leaders, it is like a model, a copy, so this is rather pretentious use. One must note that paradigm cannot be applied to people, only to things or attributes. Remember, a model person is not his actions are paradigm; we have to say a model person is another paragon, so he is a paragon of virtue. That is the way we use it, you can look up the word paragon it has all kinds of positive attributes to it.

Another word like let us look at parameters. So, a parameter is a technical term and also in maths, it is used in maths. This has a come into general use like budgetary parameters,

parameters of democracy and in such general context we do not need to use a grand duos word like parameter, the word is scope would be better.

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Reduce: Oxford AELD

• Reduce /pronun/ verb.

1. [VN] To make sth less or smaller in size, quantity, price, etc.

Reduce speed nw (=on a sign). Costs have been reduced by 20 percent over the past year. Giving up smoking reduces the risk of heart disease.

2. [VN,N] if you reduce a liquid or a liquid reduces, you boil it so that it becomes less in quantity.

3. [V] (NAme, informal) to lose weight by limiting the amount and type of food you eat: a reducing plan

4. (chemistry) to remove oxygen from a substance

Let us look at the slide. I have given a word reduce, I could have given any word but let us see what we can do with the word reduce, the references Oxford Advanced English Learner's Dictionary. It tells us that reduce and it is given as the head word. They give a key symbol to mean that this is the key word here and the pronunciation of it 'reduce', and the category verb. Please take a look at the slide. Then you have given the first use, how it can be used as a verb and noun phrase VN, which means make something less or smaller in size, quantity, price, etcetera. For example, reduce speed on a sign. So reduce speed now, that is given on a sign, let us say you are driving on a road in it is you see a sign.

Costs have been reduced by 20 percent over the past year. Giving up smoking reduces the risk of heart diseases. Second (Refer Time: 23:52) keep looking at the slide. Second use verb and noun phrase and also has a noun for example; if you reduce a liquid or a liquid reduces you boil it so that it becomes less in quantity. Third use is a verb, an NAmE, North American and informal the use, the meaning to lose weight by limiting the mountain type of food you eat, so it is a reducing plan. It becomes a little informal and

more American kind of (Refer Time: 24:23). In chemistry that is the 4th kind of use, to remove oxygen from a substance. Let us keep looking at the slides.

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Contd....

- IDM reduced circumstances. Meaning. Example
- PHR V reduce sb/sth from sth (usually passive) She was reduced to tears....

Idiomatic, IDM the dictionary also gives you the idiomatic use of this word, reduce circumstances they will give the meaning and example. Phrasal verb, PHR V phrasal verb reduces something from something and it is of passive construction. She was reduced tears. So, one small word and so much of information that is what a dictionary does. A good dictionary will also help you locating idioms. Now, what do you do when you want to have idioms and you have a word like let us say reduce or tall. All very common kinds of some words, deep, shallow, these are just words but they loaded with multiple meanings.

A good dictionary should not only give you the meaning of certain words but also enrich your language with plenty of idioms. The question is where to look the idioms? And answer is many dictionaries include the idioms under the main or head word. Good dictionary should also contain the technical sides of the language. Let us what say for example, you know words that come with pseudo or micro or macro and all and so on those things should also be there. Look at this slide.

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Some idioms related to 'thing'

- All other things being equal
- Do your own thing
- First thing first
- It's my thing
- Have a thing about
- To know the first thing about
- One of those things
- Too much of a good thing

See how very a common word like 'thing' and look at the number of idioms related to 'thing'. Let us look at these idioms. All other things being equal. Do your own thing. First thing first. It is my thing. Have a thing about. To know the first thing about. One of those things. Too much of a good thing. Now, I want you to do this exercise, please look at the slide.

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Word power

- Ambiguous
- Consensus
- Cyclotron
- Differential
- Equity
- Infinite
- Inflammatory
- Momentous
- Precipitate
- Practitioner
- Prescribe

Increasing your word power, look up a dictionary see what it says about these words, Ambiguous, Consensus. Cyclotron, Differential, Equity, Infinite, Inflammatory, Momentous, Precipitate, Practitioner, Prescribe. Remember that your dictionary should give you some certain other uses also, for example other forms of words and usage like, tenses, past participles, etcetera. It should tell you if a word or expression is American English or British English. It should tell you if a word is technical, slang, literary, absolute, old fashion, etcetera.

While using a dictionary ask yourself does it look clear and easy to use. Look for those dictionaries, where different meanings are separated into numbered items starting with the more common and then become more complex. Also check, if the dictionary gives you the pronunciation, nowadays online dictionaries are also give you the pronunciation and click on the word and hear the pronunciation of the word. Likewise, most standard hard copies of dictionaries they are accompanied with the CD, and they are also you have this facility that you can hear the pronunciation that it contains the audio of pronunciation of words.

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Find the meanings

- viscous
- Fragile
- chemistry
- techniques
- molten

Now here is another exercise for you, look at these 5 words, find the meanings. Viscous, Fragile, Chemistry, Techniques, Molten, look up the meanings of these words and look at

the slide.

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Fill in the blanks using these words

- i. Glass bottles have no effect on the flavour, smell or the.....of the contents.
- ii. Glass is....., it should be handled carefully.
- iii. Liquid glass is.....one part will not separate easily from the other parts.
- iv. It is possible to draw.....glass in order to mass-produce sheets of glass.
- v. The actual.....of making glass are different from the way ancient Egyptians made it.

Now using these words fill in the blanks that are given here. Glass bottles have no effect on the flavor, smell or the dash of the contents. Glass is dash, it should be handled carefully. See remember all these words we have already looked at, the previous slide. So please use those words to fill in the blanks. Liquid glass is dash one part will not separate easily from the other parts. It is possible to draw dash glass in order to mass-produce sheets of glass. The actual dash of making glass are different from the way ancient Egyptians made it. So, what is the first one?

Glass bottles have no effect on the flavors smell or the chemistry yes of the contents. Second, glass is fragile, it should be handled carefully. Liquid glass is viscous one part will not separate easily from the other parts. It is possible to draw molten glass in order to mass produce sheets of glass. And the last one, the actual technique of making glass are different from the way ancient Egyptians made it.

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Look up the highlighted words in your dictionary

- Making glass requires the correct **recipe** for a perfect result. Glass starts its life as a range of raw materials combined in a very **specific** ratio. The recipe calls for: sand, soda ash, limestone and other ingredients, such as iron and carbon which provide **colour**. Another important ingredient in the glass manufacturing process is cullet or recovered glass, obtained from **recycling** centres and bottle banks. Cullet usage can vary quite considerably, with as much as 40% utilization per batch. Its **inclusion** in production is most important, as it means that less virgin raw materials are used. It also melts at a lower temperature, enabling us to reduce emissions and save **energy**. Raw materials are stored in large silos, from where they are measured and delivered to batch mixers, according to pre-programmed recipes.
<http://www.consol.co.za/business/why-glass/glass-manufacturing-process>

Now, here is another exercise please look at the slide and look up the highlighted words. I have highlighted certain words for you, look at these words and this is your homework, do it yourself at home and reach your vocabulary, and look up these words in the dictionary. So, making glass requires the correct recipe for a perfect result. Glass starts its life as a range of raw materials combine in a very specific ratio. The recipe calls for: sand, soda, ash, limestone and other ingredients, such as iron and carbon which provide color. So, what are the words highlighted 'recipes', 'specific', 'color'.

We move on, another important ingredient in the glass manufacturing process is cullet or recovered glass, obtain from recycling, so, 'recycling' is the highlighted word here, centers and bottle banks. Cullet usage can vary quite considerably with as much as 40 percent utilization per batch. Is inclusion in production is most important, as it means that less virgin raw materials are used. It also melts at a lower temperature, enabling us to reduce emissions and save energy. Raw materials are stored in large silos from where they are measured and delivered to batch mixers, according to pre-programmed recipes. Here is the link given to the passage.

So please do it at home, do it yourself and find the meanings and the various kinds of uses these words can be put to. You find this exercise enormous beneficial.

Thank you very much.

Tags

Reading English, English for Engineers, English words, English Exercise, Exercises in English, Grammar usage, English Grammar, vocabulary, words and phrases, spoken communication, written communication, English writing, English speaking, scientific English, report writing, CV, formal letter, Speech-Preposition, Noun Phrases, Countable and uncountable nouns, singular, plural, Modals and Voice, Tenses, Effective Speaking

Essay writing, word categories, word formation, formal tone, paragraph writing, tone in writing, speaking tone, signal words, Letter writing, understanding essays, Mechanics of Essays, publishable essays, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, propositions, determiners, linking words, 'be' form, linking words, reading, listening, sentence, Subject, Verb, Object, Articles, comparatives, passive voice, Dictionary skills, Presentation