

Public Speaking
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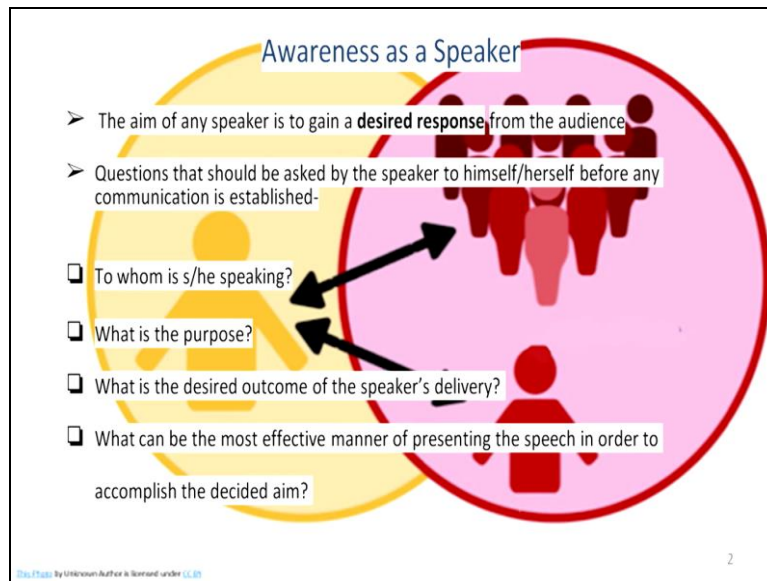
Lecture: 07
Audience Awareness and Creating Credibility

Good morning friends and welcome back to NPTEL online lectures on Public Speaking. In the previous lectures we have talked about the role of ethics in public speaking and we have also talked about the relevance. Now knowing well that public speaking is always relevant, who would not like to be an effective public speaker. But in order to become an effective public speaker all one needs to understand beforehand is-- who are actually the audience members, fine?

Imagine whenever you are going to listen to a talk or a presentation or a lecture the very first curiosity to you as an audience is who is going to talk, fine? In the same way the speaker is also interested to know who are going to be my listeners and that is why this lecture, lecture number seven is titled as audience awareness and creating credibility. My dear friends, is it necessary to be aware of audience and majority of you will respond to in the affirmative.

Of course, if we do not know who our audience members are, if we do not know what are actually their tastes what are their interests, what are their faiths what actually are the purposes for which they are listening to this lecture or talk or a presentation I think the lecture will not be interesting or the speaker would not be able to put his enthusiasm into it. You might have often seen that whenever there is a big crowd or a big audience, the speaker actually feels very much excited, very much enthusiastic. And that is why in most of the cases speakers are to be aware of their audience members.

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Now why awareness about audience is essential as a public speaker? Because one thing that all of you will admit is that as speakers all of us want to gain a sort of respect and the respect can come to us only when we have been able to do our task in the best possible manner and the audience have responded very positively. So, there are certain questions that the speaker should put to him before he goes to deliver or address his crowd, isn't it?

Why it is so because as a public speaker one has to establish one's credibility. Now you might be thinking about the word credibility as to what credibility is why you want to listen to the talk of a person who has got a good rank, who actually is at a lofty position, who actually is very famous. This is only because of the credibility fine. But then that does not mean that people who begin of late as a speaker also cannot be credible. I think credibility does not come just in a day. It takes months and years So, as a public speaker all of us want to know to whom are we talking, to whom are we speaking and why are we speaking. We do not speak or we do not deliver a formal presentation or a talk without any purpose. All talks have got a sort of purpose. Now as a public speaker we also want to know what would be the outcome of this talk, fine? And audience members also want to know what shall they take away from this talk.

And if it is so then, actually much depends upon the manner. Majority of these speakers have believed that their matter gets proper response only when they are put forth in the proper manner. So, the most effective manner of presenting this speech in order to accomplish the decided task in the first instance is to know who are my audience members? Now, why it is

so, and why should a public speaker be aware of or how can he analyze. What will this give to him in return, fine? So, he needs to do a little bit of audience analysis.

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Audience Analysis

A good public speaker knows the difference between “over-adapting” and “under-adapting” while taking audience preferences into consideration.

“There is a general agreement that a person who is a full member of a crowd... is likely to behave differently from the way he would behave if he were by himself.”(W.J. H. Sprott, Human Groups)

The diagram illustrates the factors of audience analysis, centered around 'Audience Analysis Factors'. The factors are: Knowledge of the topic, Audience Expectations, Attitude towards topic, Audience size, Demographics, and Setting.

My dear friends, a good public speaker knows the difference between over adapting and under adapting. Now these two terms you might be knowing that when you actually make a lot of expectations about the audience members fine. And then you actually prepare a lot in the best possible manner sometimes you either over adapt yourself because you know when you do a sort of research about the audience members about their demographics.

You actually try to make yourself fit in and sometimes you over adapt yourself but sometimes when you come to know that the audience members only comprise or may comprise people who are of my discipline, who are from my field you never know that sometimes or the other one of the members in the audience members could be your boss also, could be the manager of the same unit that you are working in.

And much of your fate depends upon the talk because the boss is not only looking at you from the outside but he is also trying to fit in for you a position that he has been anticipating for you over the months, over the years. In this regard it would quite be pertinent to know what are the various factors which can help us analyze our audience. The very first thing, my dear friends, is when you get to know about the topic either you give the topic or you are given the topic.

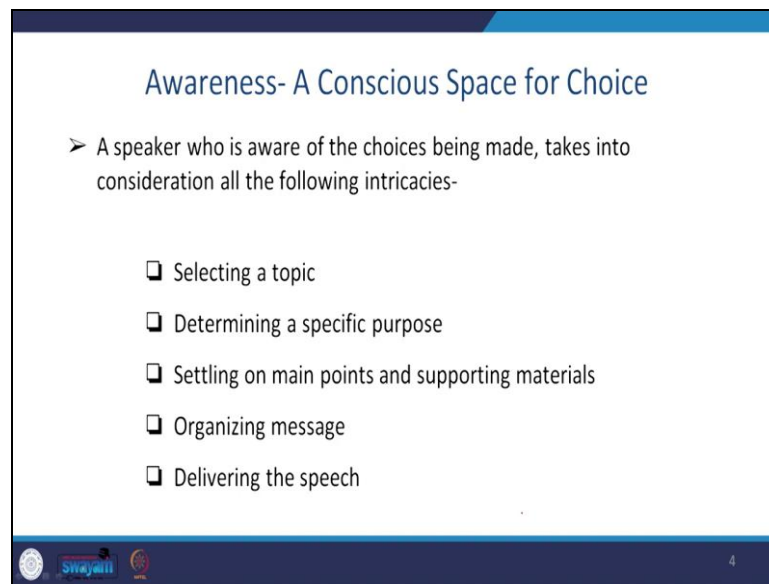
So, based on the topic, now you have to amass the knowledge, you have to gather the information. So, knowledge of the topic is one factor, then if the knowledge of the topic is important equally important are the expectations of the audience members. Now, when one is going to talk on a subject that can be debatable--- now in this regard you can at times find there can be different views and attitudes even among the audience members.

Because you know my dear friends, the audience members in majority of the conditions or situations have the qualities of a crowd. And you know when a man is in the crowd he actually loses his own individuality, fine. Because there are certain factors that we shall also discuss even though he is in a crowd, even though he is an individual but he can actually be guided by the whims, the norms and the views of the crowd. So, that may be dangerous to me or to you as a speaker and then at times we have also found that the size of the audience is also one factor to analyse, larger the gathering the excitement level will be more, the noises can be more, the disturbances can be more. Now as a speaker put yourself in those conditions. Anticipate yourself as a speaker during such conditions and then also the demographics.

Now when I talk about demographics I actually mean what is the age of the audience members, what is the sex of the audience members, what is the background of the audience members. Not all people belong to the same group, same age- group, same knowledge, fine? Same culture same faith and that is why when we talk about the demographics of the crowd-- all these actually provide you a sort of filtering as to how you can prepare your talk speech so that you can be acceptable you will not be adapting either over or under. Moreover, the setting is also very important in which way the chairs have been arranged. Sometimes, you can also find people sitting scattered, haphazard, they are not gathered fine. So, all these are deviations that can actually hamper the focus that can actually impede the focus of the speaker. In this regard it would actually be apt to take a quote by W J H Sprott from his very famous book entitled human groups, where he talks about human groups and says that, "There is a general agreement that a person who is a member of a crowd is likely to behave differently from the way he would behave if we are by himself." You might have, at times, found and realized that when you are called by a high official and you are called alone imagine the situation, then you have several fears. But when you are actually called in a group you actually feel more empowered.

And when you are alone you feel yourself isolated, you feel yourself frightened, because you know people in a group have actually a reduced sense of responsibility. And, of course, when they are in a group, they are in a crowd, emotionality is heightened, emotionality is heightened by several factors, fine? Because the group members-- even the group members also there is a sort of polarization there is a sort of bi-polarization. There is actually a sort of inter- stimulation I mean each group even sub groups they affect each other and that is why it is very important for a public speaker to understand why he or she should be aware.

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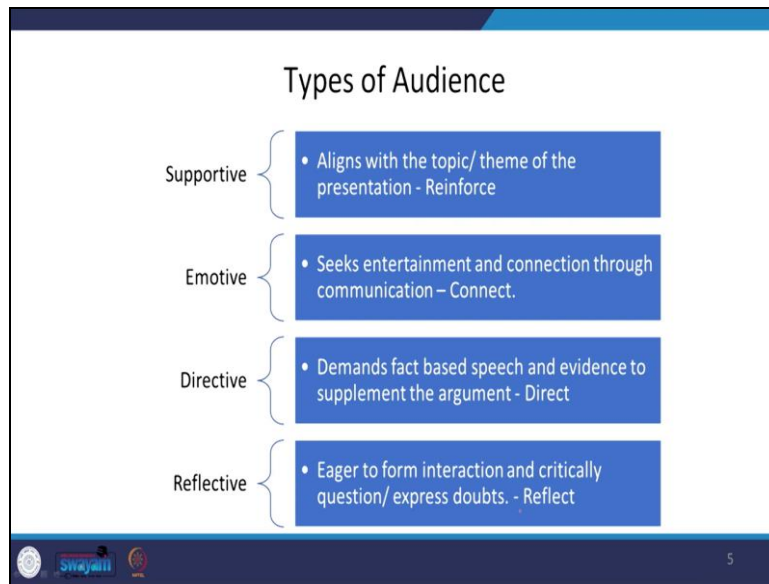


Awareness- A Conscious Space for Choice

- A speaker who is aware of the choices being made, takes into consideration all the following intricacies-
- Selecting a topic
- Determining a specific purpose
- Settling on main points and supporting materials
- Organizing message
- Delivering the speech

And if a speaker is aware of the choices then perhaps what are the various aspects that he should take into consideration---- topic, we have already said topic is the first thing. And then purpose why, no? For every topic it has to have different purposes sometimes you are as we have mentioned in earlier lectures, sometimes you are going to inform, sometimes you are going to impose, sometimes you are going to inform, sometimes you are going to entertain. Sometimes you are going to convince, sometimes you are going to persuade, sometimes you are going to make people aware. And that is why when you have settled yourself on the main points of the topic then you think about gathering supporting materials. I think in an age today when you have several facilities at your beck and call, it would be quite easier for you to gather the material and organize them before you finally go to deliver the talk or deliver the presentation.

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Now in this regard it perhaps will not be offending to note that our audience members can be categorized into four. What are these four categories? Some of the audience members will be very supportive, no? When you speak on a particular topic and as I have been saying that even though they are in a group they are individuals even though they are in a group they have got sub- groups. So, if the topic interests them, you will find some of the faces very radiant and these radiant faces are actually very helpful because they are supporting you, supporting your point of view.

But remember one thing, my dear friend, while they are listening to you, they are interpreting also. So, these category of people who are supportive-- they align with the topic and they actually make your task easier by reinforcing. You will have to be very much aware by looking at their body reactions, fine? Some of them will smile some of them will cut a very sorry figure some of them will have a very indifferent sort of opinion or indifferent sort of face.

There are often people who also can be emotive. Now you know you cannot be emotional or you cannot show your emotionality unless and until the topic is related to something which you have either faced. So, people who are emotive I mean the audience members who are emotive actually seek entertainment and connection through a sort of communication, you will always find such people. If you have ever been able to address a gathering you will find then there are also people who are directive. Such people actually demand fact-based speech, they actually want that whatever the speaker says has actually to be testified, verified, justified by evidence, by supporting materials. And then, there are also people of a category

who are reflective-- they are actually eager to form interaction and critically question. Such people can, at times, towards the end or maybe sometimes, if they are very much enthusiastic, they may raise their fingers or they may ask some questions.

So, they can express their doubts as well. Now it is very much significant to note in this regard that as a public speaker we must understand the psychology of the crowd. Does the crowd have a sort of psychology? You might have come across several plays, several stories even several real time incidents also across your own surrounding or even in your own lives. So, it is better that we need to understand a little bit about the psychology of the crowd.

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Classification of Audience

H.L. Hollingworth in his book, *The Psychology of Audience* :

- ❖ Pedestrian
- ❖ Discussion-passive
- ❖ Selective
- ❖ Concentrated
- ❖ Organized

Demographics of Audience

- Age,
- Gender,
- Education
- Language,
- Ethnicity
- Culture
- Attitudes & Values

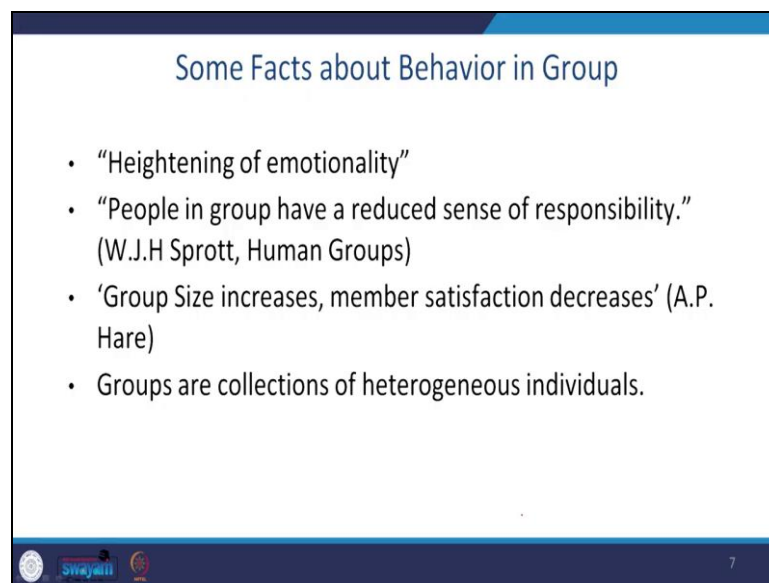
H. L. Hollingworth in his book entitled *The Psychology of Audience* actually categorizes people into four or five. One is a sort of pedestrian-- I mean, by the term itself you can understand those people whose can be found very easily on the pavements in the streets, I mean such people are very vulnerable people. You can actually captivate them very easily but if you are going to talk about some serious things naturally these people will not get attracted.

Then there are also people who are passive. I mean they actually want to listen but their passivity should not dupe you. At times there are many people in the crowd because in crowds you can find there are individuals also and these individuals sometimes or the other we can also call the crowd as a part of super ego because they start judging you, isn't it. Then there is a category of people who are selective.

Why they are selective because they know that this particular topic and it is related to them. So, these people actually try to find out something which actually they are interested in. And then there is another category which is concentrated. Such people are very much focused there are also some audience members who are very much organized they will only expect the public speaker to stick to what has to be said-- nothing more, nothing less.

Now if you come to know about the psychology of the crowd, at times, or the other you may be flustered, frustrated. But my dear friends, you need not get frustrated or flustered or get nervous.

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Some Facts about Behavior in Group

- "Heightening of emotionality"
- "People in group have a reduced sense of responsibility."
(W.J.H Sprott, Human Groups)
- 'Group Size increases, member satisfaction decreases' (A.P. Hare)
- Groups are collections of heterogeneous individuals.

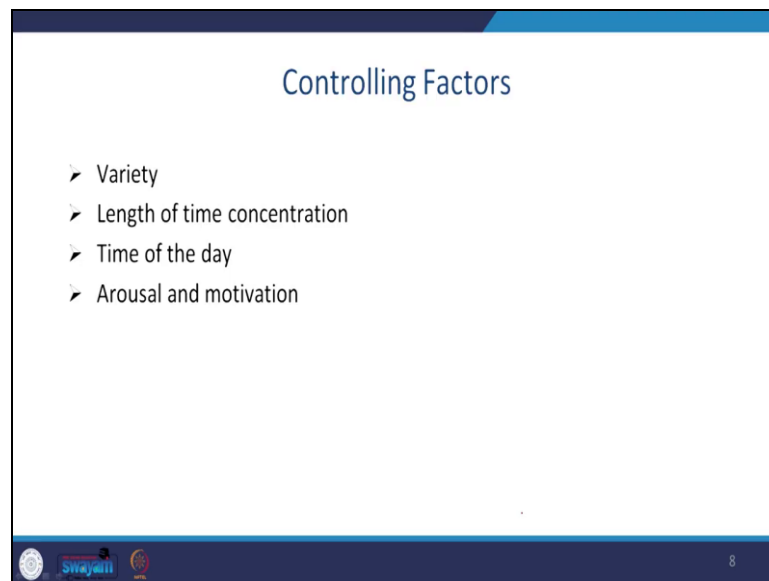
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Because you know emotionality heightened is a part of the crowd as I have been saying because even though we are in a crowd, we can be stimulated, no? Encouraged at times, we can be incited also and we start, we lose our own individual responsibility. We start behaving like a crowd that is why at times it is said that you cannot believe in a mob, you cannot believe in a crowd, isn't it.

So, and the size is also a very important factor, how? If the group size increases, member satisfaction decreases why is it called so? Because if the group size increases naturally there will be people of different categories and you cannot as a speaker cater to the expectations of everyone. Actually, groups are or audience members are collection of heterogeneous individuals they are not homogeneous.

And never should we expect them to be homogeneous. That is why it is always better if we can apply the third line and apply a sort of neutrality, thinking that most of them might be unacquainted with or either they must be familiar with. But what you are going to say should have some amount of innovation, only then the crowd will accept you. Now, can there be some controlling factors also? Can we really control the crowd because if we become aware of the crowd? Of course, there can be certain measures that can help us control the crowd and in this regard the very first thing that comes to be discussed is variety.

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My dear friends, variety is the spice of life and when as a public speaker you are going to speak you can bring variety not only in terms of your tone, not only in terms of the stylistic features, but also in terms of how you present things, how when it is a serious debatable issue how you are going to make it less controversial and for that one needs to have a lot of information, isn't it?

And then, what is actually the time limitation? Imagine, no one wants to listen to a talk or a presentation which is going to be too longer. It has always been realized and admitted by many of the speakers that initially for 10 to 20 minutes, majority of the people in the crowd listen to a speech or a talk but after that there are different reactions. People actually start getting uneasy. And from the point of view of speaker also--- the speaker actually is duped into repeating the same thing if it is going to be a very long talk or if it is going to be a spiel. Another important thing that can help you as a public speaker, if you have got the choice to decide the time of the day what is it you might have found that first half that is the forenoon

session, that during that period most of the audience members actually feel more enthusiastic, more encouraged.

And as speaker you also feel that you have got more passion, more energy. The latter half of the day that is afternoon that can induce a sort of siesta, that can involve a sort of sleep and at times you can also find from the audience members several reactions of being drowsy, sleepy and naturally however hard the speaker might have prepared the entire content will fall flat. In psychology they use a term like arousal. Meaning thereby you actually need to keep the passion or the sentiment or especially the emotions of your audience members aroused. I mean, we shall discuss about arousal when we talk about Glossophobia or the anxiety of speech. But remember one thing that all of us as public speakers have to be careful that the interest of the two parties, meaning thereby, the audience and the speaker should at some point of the time have some amount of commonality.

If you talk something of the interest of the audience members, the audience members are bound to speak. The audience members are bound to listen, they are bound to respond but if you are unaware of their interest naturally, however, hard you try you will fail as a speaker. And then there is actually a sense of security. As a public speaker if you are thoroughly prepared and if you know that you are talking of their interest not only the audience members also feel that they have actually a sort of security that the speaker is not going to speak of something uncommon, something controversial, fine?

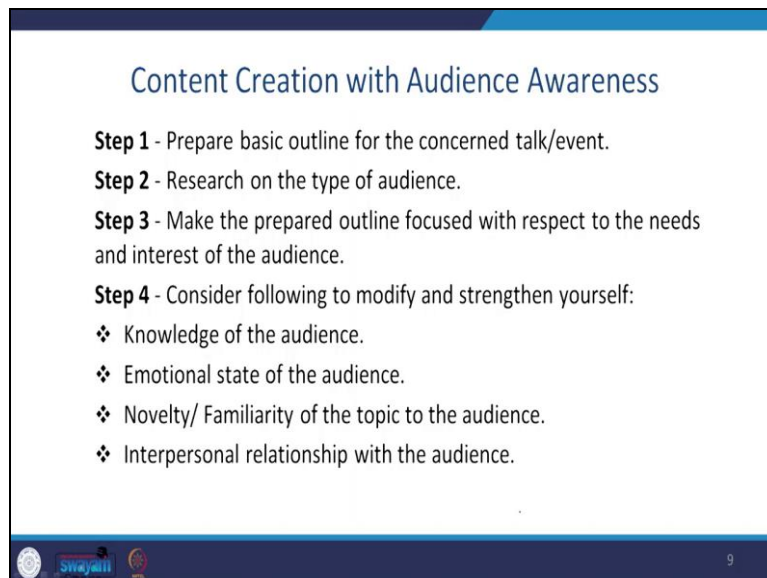
So, if they do not have this security perhaps they will not be able to listen to you. And then sometimes or the other, you know, if you simply believe that you can impose a sort of silence, I mean, this is very dangerous. So, this enforced silence it actually represses and suppresses levels of arousal. That is why initially if you feel that there is a little bit of noise, you must not feel insulted. Maybe we can look at the other way around that perhaps they are becoming more enthusiastic.

And it is not mandatory that every now and then they will make sounds. Sometimes through their body postures gestures through their facial expressions also they can provide you some amount of feedback regarding your talk. So, as a careful public speaker you need to work on that, my dear friends. And finally, as a speaker, you need to communicate fine. If a speaker always thinks how are the reactions of my audience members and he feels that he is being

obstructed. If his content is deviated by some way or the other because of the audience members' reactions, then it will not work. So, it is better as a public speaker that we communicate and as I have been saying that you need to tell them that what you are going to tell them is of utmost interest and of utmost importance to them. Now, when we say that we need to be aware of audience or we need to analyze our audience, then comes another term which is of course very important that is how to create a content so, that I can allow.

So, that I can sustain the interest of my audience members, majority of the speakers if you can interview them and talk to them in isolation you can find that they will tell you that they depending upon the topic the time, the venue, the occasion they actually prepare their content. And when they have already prepared their content what they do is they actually make a sort of outline. Every presentation cannot be remembered. Every speech cannot be remembered and if you remember every speech of yours, once again you are going to fail because those who remember too much are bound to fail they are bound to skip over certain things.

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Content Creation with Audience Awareness

Step 1 - Prepare basic outline for the concerned talk/event.

Step 2 - Research on the type of audience.

Step 3 - Make the prepared outline focused with respect to the needs and interest of the audience.

Step 4 - Consider following to modify and strengthen yourself:

- ❖ Knowledge of the audience.
- ❖ Emotional state of the audience.
- ❖ Novelty/ Familiarity of the topic to the audience.
- ❖ Interpersonal relationship with the audience.

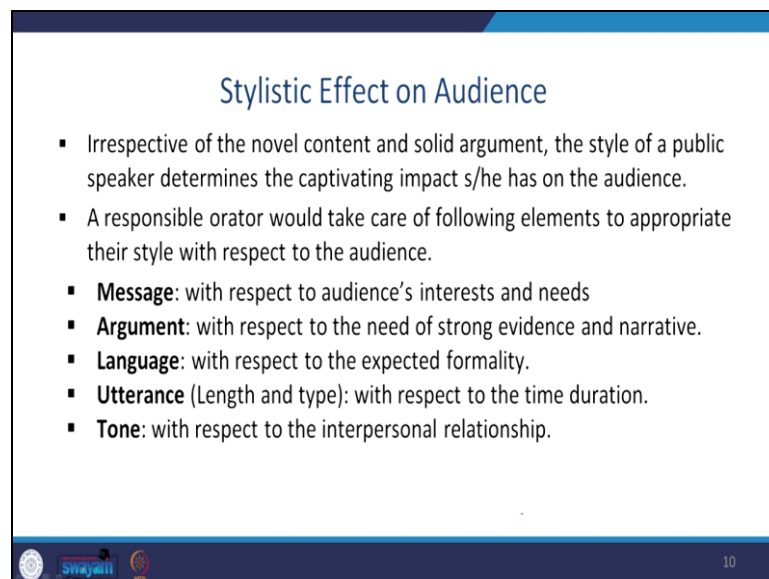
So, having researched over the audience and having made an outline which is actually focused with respect to the exigencies, expectations of the audience members, one has to strengthen himself as a public speaker and for that what a public speaker needs is as I mentioned I once again am going to emphasize on that--- the need of the audience. Why am I speaking what is actually the emotional state of the audience?

That is why when you are deciding the time at times it has also been said that weather also impacts. And a public speaker who is well aware of, if there is a certain change in the weather if he can really relate to the change in weather as for the exigencies of his own talk, perhaps will be more fruitful. And then are my audience members familiar with the topic. Of course majority of them will be familiar.

But they will not be as familiar as you are and that is why as a public speaker you need to develop a sort of interpersonal skill what do I mean by interpersonal skill? Most of the speakers speak on their own part but if they can tailor it as if they are talking to their audience, as if they can bring a sort of conversational tone, it is going to be more effective the impact is going to be better.

So, interpersonal relationship also can be created with our interpersonal skill. Maybe at times you can raise a question in and between when you are presenting your own content maybe while you are saying something you are also trying to grasp the attention of the audience and you are making use of certain tags and all. Maybe if you feel that even among your audience members there are not only men but also women. You need to guard yourself as if to use a language that may not be derogatory or some way or the other might not be insulting for not only for women but also for people of other religions and for that one has to be very broad minded, my dear friend. And all these can be done before you go to deliver.

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Stylistic Effect on Audience

- Irrespective of the novel content and solid argument, the style of a public speaker determines the captivating impact s/he has on the audience.
- A responsible orator would take care of following elements to appropriate their style with respect to the audience.
 - **Message:** with respect to audience's interests and needs
 - **Argument:** with respect to the need of strong evidence and narrative.
 - **Language:** with respect to the expected formality.
 - **Utterance** (Length and type): with respect to the time duration.
 - **Tone:** with respect to the interpersonal relationship.

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And that is why I mean to understand that a public speaker actually requires a sort of stylistic effect on the idea audience members and his stylistics will work. And what sort of stylistics

the very first is content as I have been saying the content or the message, then argument if you are actually trying to advocate something, if you are trying to convince something, or if you have brought something new as the advertisers most of the times do. So, what do they do they first provide you a sort of proposition.

And then actually they give you examples and then they give you a sort of supporting thing and then while they are making arguments they see to it that they need to be logical. Same is also true of a public speaker and language as I have been saying in order to prove yourself as a speaker who is effective, never should one try to use words which the audience members cannot understand.

Difficulty level-- we always have to visualize. Because you know most of the people might not be having this sort of language which you have already practised and experienced that is why the familiarity in terms of language in terms of words is also very important. The language has to be formal. Never have your presentation or your speech have some amount of informality unless and until it is actually the demand of the hour.

And then comes the utterance how long I have to speak. Let us try to respect the time if I have been given 15 minutes I should say to it that I do not go on speaking for 30 minutes. At times, enthusiastic speakers skip this but then they do not do it willingly, fine? But it is always to be taken care of that time has to be respected and not only the time because you know in non- verbal, we say **time talks and space speaks**.

So, apart from time your space that you are maintaining we shall talk about space also in the subsequent lectures. But then your tone is also very important and in tone are there are certain variations. Now you can bring variations as I have been saying. Bring variety in terms of your voice fine. Then as we have discussed the psychology of the audience, let us also keep into consideration certain things which are very important.

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Psychology of Audience

- It is essential for the speaker to make the audience **choose** to listen.
- Keeping the interest of the audience intact throughout is challenging.
- Response to any communication is not based entirely on what is spoken but especially on the **understanding of the audience**.
- The **basis of judgement** for the audience is what **they already know and believe**.
- The **message** should always be related to the audience- they should find it **as relevant as the speaker does**.

Patterns
Polarization
Interstimulation
Bipolar

“ Without an audience women relapse and men become unkempt.”(Hollingsworth)

Swayam
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Make the audience choose to listen. And how can one do that only when talks about and talks or caters to the interest of the audience. Let the audiences' attention be intact even though it is challenging, fine. One needs to understand the need of the audience sometimes it may also be that audience shows you as a speaker the signs of boredom, the signs of envy. But as a public speaker because the control button is with you, see to it that whatever has been spoken is some way or the other related to the understanding of the audience.

Because as I said the audience members also apply their super ego. The basis of judgment of audience is what they already know and believe. Meaning thereby does your talk or your presentation have something new for them, then perhaps they would be interested. Familiarity is essential but apart from familiarity some new thing is there.


And the message should always be related to the audience-- related in the way it has to have a sort of relevance to what the speaker does. If I speak something which I myself do not believe and if I speak something which I myself do not stick to, I am not going to be believed by my audience members. My dear friends, audience members, actually, at times behave like crowd and in the crowd one at times or a group of audience members may be polarized. Maybe at times bipolar, their judgments are always not single but they can actually change their judgments frequently because they can be inter-stimulated by the other members.

In this regard you know Hollingsworth gives a very pertinent example that 'Without an audience women relapse and men become unkempt'. The truth of the matter is that all of us want to be heard and that is why all of us want to speak.

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Classmates as Audience

- Classroom is often considered as **artificial speaking situation**
- One can develop speaking skills within the classroom and can use it in the outside world
- Classroom can provide opportunity to inform and persuade same age group as well as elder people
- No immediate impact can mostly be registered but it can nourish one's speaking ability profusely



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So, as a public speaker if you are a novice one or going to start you start this experiment from your classrooms by giving small talks making it artificial because that will allow you some breathing space where you not only can speak but where you can also gather feedback. This can actually provide you an opportunity where your friends can provide you with honest feedback but you as a speaker have to work.

On this honest feedback because you understand that no immediate impact mostly can be registered but it can actually nourish and it can cherish one's speaking ability or speaking talent to a great extent. Now sometimes you will also find that you can also treat your clients as audience members, especially, in the area of or in the field of marketing.

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Client as Audience



- "Because it is what I like"- this is not a competent strategy
- Being Demonstrative is essential when dealing with client
- Know the difference between Prospect and Client

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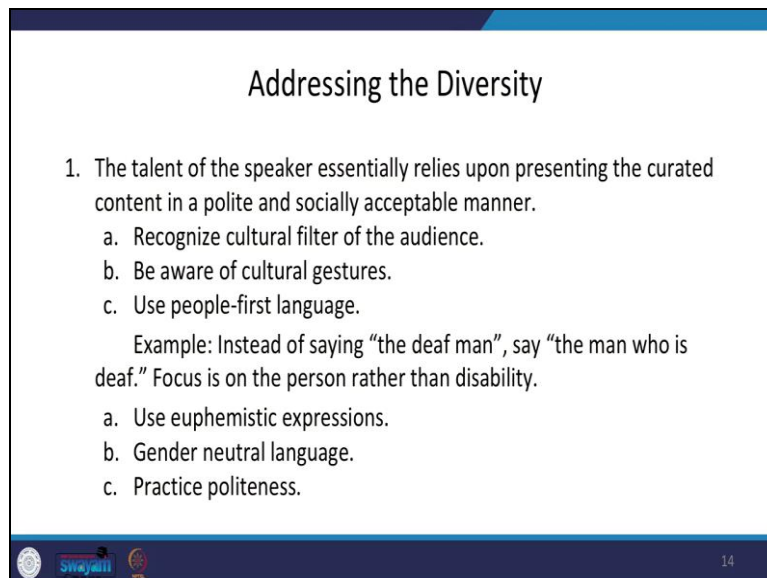
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Because you know most of the time they believe because it is what I like, I think one should always see to it that one does not impose such a view that it is because I like this actually does not work this may work at times but not always. So, please beware of it this is not a good strategy. If you really want to demonstrate it is of course essential but with demonstration what is also important is a sort of advocacy, my dear friend.

One needs to understand the difference between the prospective audience members and also clients. When we have clients before us, our main thing is marketing. But when we have a prospective audience one should always think that the audience can think even more than what is being said that every man even when he is in a group he not only listens to but he also critically analyzes.

And as the audience members are a heterogeneous group we have to address the diversity. By diversity, I mean as I have been saying and we shall also go into the details when we talk about the role of culture.

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The slide is titled "Addressing the Diversity" and contains the following content:

- 1. The talent of the speaker essentially relies upon presenting the curated content in a polite and socially acceptable manner.
 - a. Recognize cultural filter of the audience.
 - b. Be aware of cultural gestures.
 - c. Use people-first language.

Example: Instead of saying "the deaf man", say "the man who is deaf." Focus is on the person rather than disability.

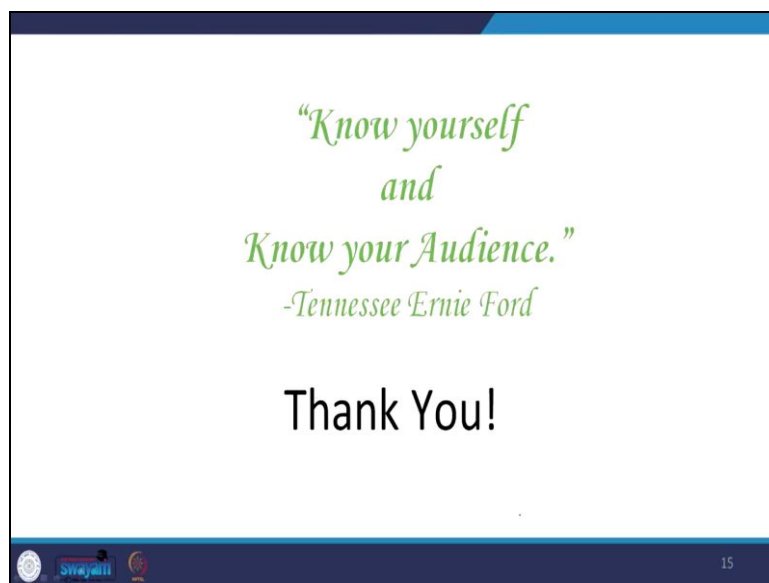
 - a. Use euphemistic expressions.
 - b. Gender neutral language.
 - c. Practice politeness.

At the bottom of the slide, there are logos for Swayam and a page number 14.

One needs to be very careful regarding the culture of the audience members. Of course, it is very difficult an exercise to understand each and everyone's culture but then through some gestures you can anticipate and visualize. Sometimes when you say something, this may be misunderstood by people. Say for example if you have to say the deaf man or the blind man fine. I think it is going to hurt it is we can also refer to by saying the man who is deaf.

One must always try to see that if there is some space for euphemistic expressions and as I have been saying that let our language be free from a sort of bias of gender, the bias of sex. It is always better if we can practice some amount of politeness. My dear friends, through our speech and through our talks we actually want to bridge the gap. We not only want to make people aware but we actually try to unite people. Because we have among our audience members people of different faiths, people of diverse cultures, people of different religions people of different genders, people of different age, that is why one needs to address them not only as singular but we need to understand them as multiple groups. And if we practice that, we are bound to succeed my dear friends.

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One always should ask and one should always believe in what Tennessee Arne Ford has said; “Know yourself and know your audience.” If I am going to talk to my audience members before I think of my audience members, I should think of myself, I should know about myself. And if I know about myself and at the same time when I know about my audience when I have the knowledge of the two. I think most of the communicative situations will have an easy sail through.

And I think this will keep you selling your own skills as a public speaker. I do understand that you when the next time you are going to speak and you get a topic or you are invited, you will work on these areas before you are going to deliver. And I think success is bound to come your way. With this I come to the end of this talk. Thank you very much I wish you all a good day.