

Beginning in the Course

When this course was in its beginnings, I would have described my skills in speaking as functional, and not very confident or polished. In informal situations, I was able to argue my thoughts well enough. In contrast, in a formal presentation where it is time to convince audiences and give an improvised speech, I was very nervous. I was sometimes also inclined to rush my delivery, and I used more filler words or notes than necessary to express my thoughts. It was not as complex as I expected; however, in most instances, I had ideas I wanted to say, and all I had to do was transform these thoughts into a completed form of spoken language. Reflectively, I realize that I felt no presence and intent whilst talking; I was concerned more with the need to pass, and not necessarily the need to connect with the audience (Gamble & Gamble, 2023, p.52). With this course being at the end, I can say that my speaking abilities have now become much more confident, more organized, and oriented to the audience. Now I have understood that I should be quite direct in speech, use pauses as a way of using pause but not signifying hesitation, and I should approach every speaking assignment more organized and clearer.

Development Throughout the Course

I did not develop my skills in speaking explicitly overnight, but I have engaged in a gradual process, where I saw that my presentations guided me where constant practice and exposure in different speaking situations were evident (Gamble & Gamble, 2023, p.61). The practical preparation, rehearsing, and reflecting as the focus of the course led me to understand that speaking is a skill that is improved through practice and through tactical awareness. One of the most valuable ideas I got out of my development made me recognize the concept of the rhetorical situation in relation to audience, purpose, and context. be able to state the right information.

Greatest Strengths and Weaknesses

The assignments also assisted me to put forward. The informative speech also helped me practice putting complex ideas together in a coherent and comprehensible pattern, and due to this success, I gained the knowledge of having clarity and organization. The persuasive speech task helped me to understand that, in respect to persuasive speech, where I should have been more strategic in the evidence presentation, emotion appeal, figure of voice. At the same time, it has taught me that I need to structure the information in such a way that it will reach out to the audience. The other activity that was also very fruitful was the speaking assignment in the beginning (Gamble & Gamble, 2023, p.39). They made me stronger as I improvised, and made me more confident. Over time, I started to feel less threatened whenever forced to engage in spur-of-the-moment speaking tasks, furthermore, I was more able to be in a position to once again construct coherent responses without prolonging my time significantly.

On a personal level, I am able to organize ideas in a rational manner, and that is my most significant development in the form of strengths, and maybe one of the strongest skills currently. At the initial stages of the semester, I could not always speak to the point and even had no clear transitions, which complicated the situation with following points. The coursework allowed me to know how to outline, write effective introductions and conclusions, and body to make things easy for the listeners. I have also discovered that I am competent in connecting ideas at its conceptual level. Considering the time to be prepared, I will be able to integrate information, story making, and explaining in such a way that is natural and entertaining. I harnessed the strengths, which I lacked prior to the course, but it has evolved with time as I became adaptable the development and delivery of content.

As far as the weaknesses are concerned, I faced challenge with anxiety, especially when speaking in front of the camera (Gamble & Gamble, 2023, p.43). Deep breaths, taking breaks, and being grounded have assisted me in being more conscious and relaxed during a speech. Experiences on the speeches made me more dependent on the focus on essential words, the variability of the voice, and allowed me to demonstrate enthusiasm and vigor in my voice. I have become more aware, so that I can complete the speech accurately.

There are definitely changes in some of my strengths and weaknesses during the semester. E.g., where I would have regarded clarity and order as the deficiencies, I now realize them as the strengths due to the work and the help that I received through this course. Vocal delivery and confidence, on the contrary, are better, but something that could always be perfected (Gamble & Gamble, 2023, p.71). I am also grateful to learn that the path of turning into a good speaker is endless; there is no professional speaker who has ceased to train his/her skills throughout his/her career.

Areas For Improvement

There are several areas that I desire to improve in the future. On one hand, I would want to make my voice even more powerful, particularly in the projection, articulation as well as expressive variability. It will turn out valuable to talk more even in low-stakes situations. The other strategy that I need to focus is recording myself so that the speech is appropriate. When I view the videos of my speeches, I critically think about the gestures, eye contact, and overall delivery, and how I need to work upon. This kind of self-reflection helps me to pay attention to some habits that I otherwise would not be able to acknowledge.

The second area that should be enhanced is by reducing reliance on notes. They are not applied to me now in the same way that I was used to, but occasionally I still use them as a way

to obtain some sort of assurance. I would still prefer to continue using well-understood thoughts and not the information that is whipped to death when speaking.

Finally, I would also like to continue practicing and challenge myself to speak in unfamiliar circumstances. I do not want to lose my momentum since I have achieved this momentum during the current semester in class discussions, in presentations in other classes. I will practice and be resistant when it comes to seizing opportunities to practice my communication skills in order to develop myself.

Overall, this course has transformed my speaking capabilities and my general attitude towards communicating with the audience to a great extent. I have also grown to be more confident, strategic, and self-conscious when speaking. Although there are more to be done, at present, I find myself more equipped to become not merely a good speaker but also an even better speaker once this course is finished.

Reference

Gamble, T. K., & Gamble, M. W. (2023). *The Public Speaking Playbook*. SAGE Publications.