

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY & SYLLABUS: A Brief Analysis

Class: Persuasive Public Speaking

Meets: Twice a week for 75 minutes each class

Composition: a mandatory class for Freshman, about 30 students per class

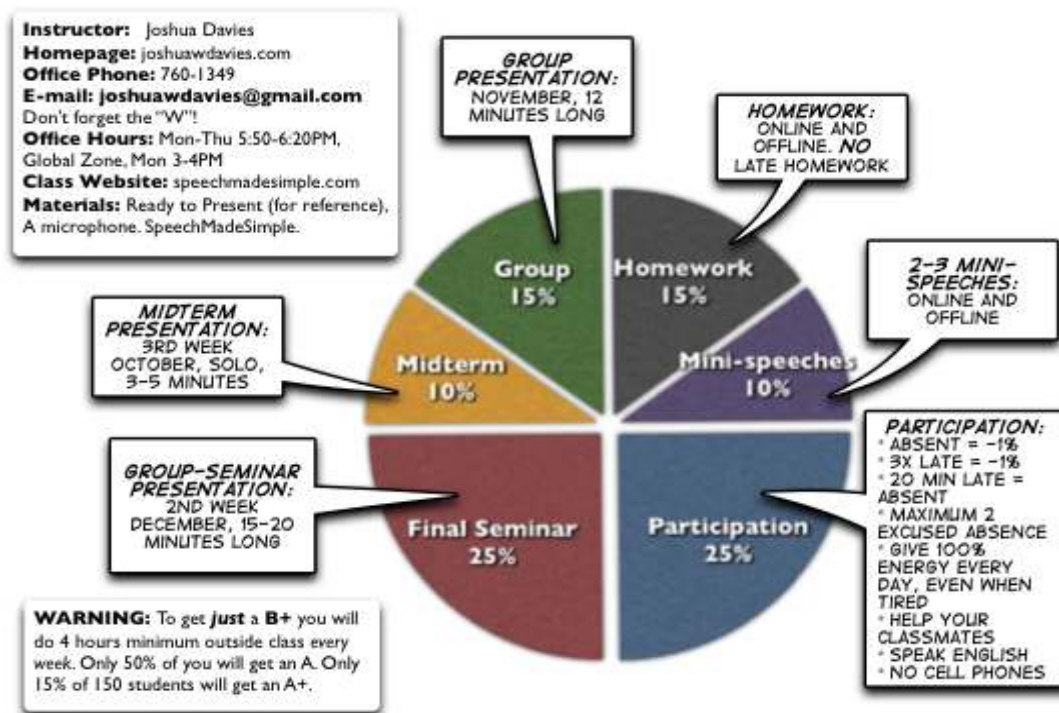


Figure 1: Presentation Class Syllabus Page 1 (see next figure for detailed schedule)

ANALYSIS:

Acquiring the ability to present persuasively in English is one of the core needs of students at SKKU. My class aims to balance the requirements of the course as laid out by Sungkyunkwan's administration, as well as the unique needs of my students.

At the heart of it, the main problem inhibiting students' presenting ability is often not a lack of basic English speaking skill, but rather a mixture of anxiety and initially questionable motivation. My goal is thus to first get them over their basic natural fear of public speaking (which is often present in their first language as well, although certainly heightened by the dual anxiety of having to do so in English) by creating a low-anxiety positive learning atmosphere, and then to work on shifting purely external motivation (grades and getting the major they want) to one which includes high degree of intrinsic self-motivation. Ultimately this leads to learners who don't stop using what they have learned when the semester ends. This is not a "pass and forget" class; it is a class designed to provide them the tools they will need to continue becoming better speakers in English (as well as other languages) throughout their lives.

In order to do so the course has three components- a resource book, a collaborative website, and the classroom experience itself.

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The book:

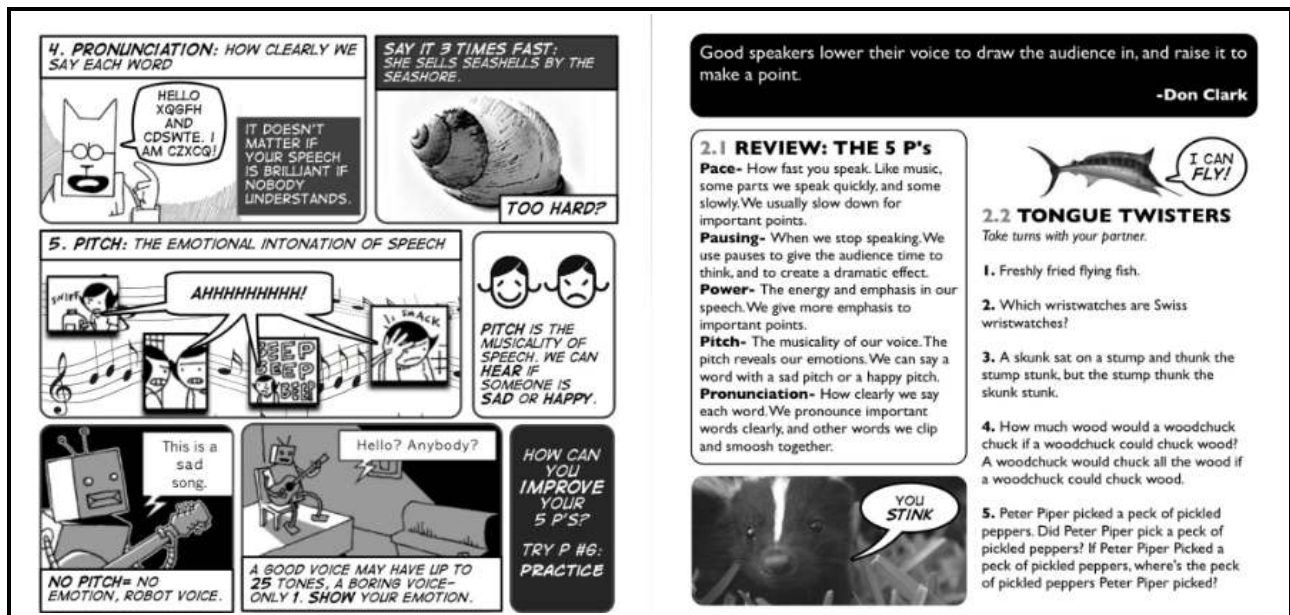


Figure 2: Sample Pages- an example chapter is included in the publications section of this packet- the full book may be downloaded at speechmadesimple.com.

While it contains a number of worksheets and rubrics which are used in the class itself, the book is designed primarily to be used for home study. The primary features of the book are that it is:

- friendly- the book doesn't overload students with lengthy explanations that they are likely to skip, but rather presents concepts in a way that is memorable through a mixture of eye catching visuals and clear topic evaluation.
- understandable- the book focuses on presenting concepts in easily digestible bite sized chunks that connect together to form a logical whole.
- reinforces exercises- the book works to build on what is learned and practiced in class and on the website.

The website:

In many language programs time spent in class each week is overshadowed by time outside. This creates difficulties continuing positive in-class interactive environments beyond school walls, where learners are too frequently on their own. My site (www.speechmadesimple.com) helps to provide solutions to overcome the differences between the in and out of class experience, largely recreating the interactions of the physical classroom, and even moving beyond them. It provides students with a class page for communicating with the whole class, a portfolio page for placing work and feedback throughout the semester and messaging each other, as well as my own page which focuses as an open office for questions and allows me to share homework and other resources. The site integrates with the book and in class work, allowing multimedia recordings of student work and scaffolding through near-peer assessment and mentoring, leading to an overall faster rate of growth, and a higher degree of class cohesiveness and satisfaction. In this manner they are never alone, but always part of a productive learning community.

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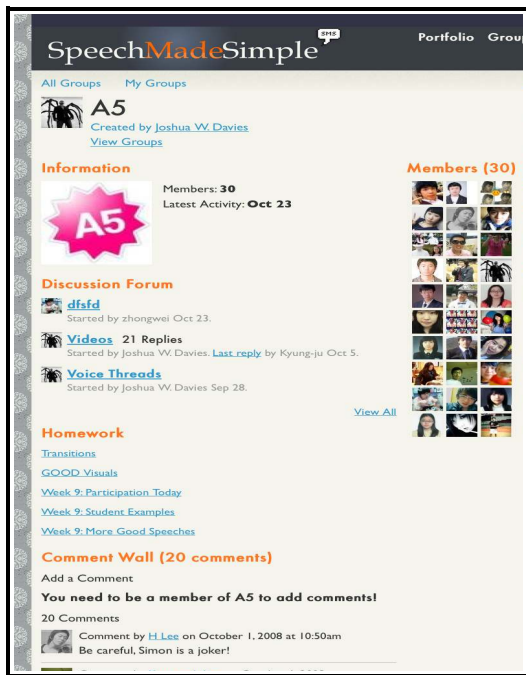


Figure 3 & 4: Images form the online class page with discussions and homework (left), and an example student digital portfolio (right).

In class:

Although the day to day make-up of a given class will change due to projects and testing, the overall underlying format remains the same. Students begin with a high energy warm-up related to the day's theme in order to serve as an introduction and get the students into an English mindset. This is followed by a multimedia mini-lesson that lays out the lessons of the day as well as covering previous homework. Students follow this with a series of activities and practices designed to work on the ideas laid out in the mini-lesson. Pre-prepping is often an element in this segment, done the previous evening for homework. After this is concluded students move on to daily short impromptu speeches with extensive peer feedback that act on the core of their anxieties. A final class review closes the lesson. As can be seen in Figure 1, active participation is paramount, and positive pair-work is used to draw out shy and mixed-ability students.

Overall Class Schedule:

WEEK 1: Introduction- get to know each other and the class.
 WEEK 2: Facing Our Fears- learn techniques for overcoming fear and set goals for the overall semester.
 WEEK 3: Basic Voice- get to know the different parts of voice.
 WEEK 4: Advanced Voice- learn how to use sound scripting to gain a more natural powerful flow.
 WEEK 5: Body Language- basic posture and gesture work.
 WEEK 6: Body Language- use the body to convey meaning and set mood.
 WEEK 7: Get Organized- brainstorming and research techniques.
 WEEK 8: The Hook- how to capture the audience's attention.

WEEK 9: Midterm Speeches- solo speeches one on one with extensive feedback.
 WEEK 10: Think Visually- use of PPT
 WEEK 11: Logic and Evidence- learn how to prove their point.
 WEEK 12: End with a Bang- learn how to make counter-arguments and strong conclusions.
 WEEK 13: Group Presentations (per SKKU requirement)- the semester always ends with a double set of in-class presentations which are peer, self, and teacher evaluated.
 WEEK 14: Final Seminar Speeches (per SKKU requirement)- Classes consist of 30 students and these final seminars are groups of 4/5 students each speaking for about 15 minutes. Afterwards group feedback and discussion takes place.