

CAMBRIDGE

SECOND EDITION

STUDY *speaking*

A course in spoken English for academic purposes

Kenneth Anderson
Joan Maclean
Tony Lynch

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa
<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Cambridge University Press 2004

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2004

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Minion 11/13pt System QuarkXpress® [HMCL]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 0 521 53396 1

The authors and publishers are grateful for permission to use the copyright materials
appearing in this book, as indicated in the sources and acknowledgements throughout.
If there are errors or omissions the publishers would be pleased to hear and to make
the appropriate correction in future reprints.

Contents

To the Student 5

To the Teacher 7

Course Map 13

Acknowledgements 14

PART 1 Scenarios

ROLE A 16

ROLE B 24

PART 2 Discussion skills and Presentation skills

UNIT 1 Work 35

UNIT 2 Food 44

UNIT 3 Language 54

UNIT 4 Health 61

UNIT 5 Environment 75

UNIT 6 Education 84

UNIT 7 Culture 94

UNIT 8 Globalisation 105

PART 3 Class seminars

OVERVIEW 118

CHECKLIST 1 Preparing a presentation 119

CHECKLIST 2 Using visual aids, handouts and notes 120

CHECKLIST 3 Signposts and language signals 122

CHECKLIST 4 Non-verbal communication 123

CHECKLIST 5 Asking and dealing with questions 125

PART 4 Strategies for success 128

TEACHER'S GUIDE

- Scenarios 139
- Discussion skills 151
- Presentation skills 183
- Class seminars 198
- Strategies for success 202

TRANSCRIPTS: Presentation skills *extracts* 205

TRANSCRIPTS: *Sample scenario performances* 212

References 223

UNIT 1

Work

This unit aims to develop your speaking skills by:

- ① increasing your confidence in expressing opinions in discussions
- ② improving your ability to structure presentations effectively.

DISCUSSION SKILLS

Giving your opinion

The main purpose of academic discussion – for example, tutorials and seminars – in the Western educational tradition is for individuals to exchange opinions on the topics being studied. This is true at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels of study. You are expected to express and justify your own views, not simply to repeat information you have been told in books and lectures. The focus of this Unit is expressing opinions about controversial topics. Unit 2 will deal with expressing agreement or disagreement with other people in the discussion.

Useful language

more formal	<i>It is my view that...</i> <i>I take the view that...</i> <i>I believe...</i>
neutral	<i>I think...</i> <i>What I think is...</i> <i>I'd say that...</i> <i>It seems to me that...</i> <i>It seems clear/obvious/evident to me that...</i> <i>I have to say that...</i> <i>I'm (not) persuaded that...</i>
less formal	<i>As far as I'm concerned,...</i> <i>To me,...</i>

You may be surprised to learn that one expression which is not very common in spoken discussion is *In my opinion...*! Non-native speakers of English seem to use this expression much more than native speakers do.

Practice

In small groups, practise using these expressions by *quickly* giving your opinion about:

- smoking
- public transport
- cloning animals
- the Internet
- the state of the economy
- crime in your country
- spiders
- politicians
- traffic in your cities.

Discussion point 1: What work means to you

Preparation (individual)

Which of these factors would be most important to you in choosing a job? Decide on your top three priorities, and rank them in order (1 = most important, 2 = second most important, 3 = third most important).

- high salary
- job security
- interesting work
- pleasant working environment
- good relationships with colleagues and superiors
- opportunities for promotion and career development
- enough holidays and free time
- short journey to work

How would you complete this sentence?

‘For me, work is...

...the way to achieve the lifestyle I want.’

...the way to ensure financial security for myself and my family.’

...my main interest or purpose in life.’

...the fulfilment of my years of study and training.’

...just something everyone has to do.’

...how I can achieve status in society.’

...how I gain recognition and respect in my professional field.’

...how I can do my duty to my country.’

...something else.’ Give details.

Discussion

- 1 Form a group with other students. Compare your answers to the above questions.
- 2 Do you think your parents would have given similar answers to you? And your grandparents? Give reasons for your answer.
- 3 Do you think workers in your country suffer discrimination because of either gender or age?

Discussion point 2

Preparation 1 (individual)

Read this excerpt from a BBC radio programme about changes in working practices in Britain. After the presenter's introduction, two retired men describe what working life in manufacturing industry was like when they were young. (Some vocabulary is explained on page 38.)

John Fortune (presenter)

Travelling on the train down to Bristol, the man opposite me gets out his mobile and rings his secretary to say, "We're just passing Reading. Can you ring me if there're any emails?" This is the new way of working – clean, high-tech, industrious – with none of those shoddy practices of the past. Does it really matter no-one's too sure what we actually *do*? We're an 'enterprise culture', a 'knowledge economy', and our fastest-growing job-market is in – call centres, which employ more than all the men and women in mining, steel and car-production combined. But *something* had to change...
(Noise of machinery)

Dave Bannon (retired worker)

Back in the early sixties, there must have been close to, nearly 2,500 people on this site. Not the site we're currently on now, but across the way, in the old smelter. Blimey, the site was huge!

John Goddard (retired worker)

You just wondered where all these people worked! It was almost like they came in, got paid, and went home again.

John Fortune

Down at the head of the River Avon, there's a huge zinc smelter, where Dave Bannon and John Goddard both started work. Or is 'work' the word I mean?

John Goddard

You could certainly get away with having a kip in the afternoon. There were several guys who I can remember used to regularly nod off in the afternoon, and this guy, I remember, used to smoke Capstan Full Strength cigarettes, and his ledgers was always covered in burn marks where he'd dropped his cigarette, or lines across it, what we called 'zizzers' back in those days, where he'd nodded off, and the pencil or the pen had gone straight across the ledgers there. But people just accepted it.

Transcribed from *British manufacturing: my part in its downfall*.
BBC Radio 4. Sunday, 17 November 2002.

call centre	a place where many people are employed to deal with customers by telephone
blimey!	(British colloquial) expression of astonishment
smelter	a factory where metal is separated from the rock that contains it (ore)
shoddy	of a low standard
kip	(British colloquial) nap, short sleep during the day
guy	(colloquial) man
ledger	a book for keeping the financial records of a company
nod off	fall asleep

Preparation 2 (individual)

You are going to discuss the following question.

What have been the most significant changes in working life in the last 10–20 years?

Think about the situation in *your* country. It may be helpful to consider the aspects of work listed here:

- the type of work available
- employment rates
- working hours
- attitudes to work
- pay and conditions
- participation of women
- working age
- effect of technology.

You may think of other aspects. Have these changes been for the better?

Discussion

- 1 Now work in a group with other students. Compare your ideas on the question above. Do you think the situation in your own country is typical of the world in general, or a part of it?
- 2 What changes in working life do you expect to see in the next 10–20 years?
- 3 The recorded talk in the *Presentation skills* section of this Unit is on the topic of work and family. Is it possible for a woman to be a successful mother and have a successful professional career? Should society encourage or discourage women from combining the two?

PRESENTATION SKILLS

Structuring your presentation

Being clear about your objective

Being clear about your objective is the first and most important rule for giving an effective presentation. If you yourself are not clear about the main message of your presentation, then your audience will find your presentation confusing.

When you are deciding on your objective, you have to take into account both what *you know* about the topic and what *your audience knows*. You also need to take into account the *context* and *purpose* of the presentation. Here are some examples.

- If you have been asked to present a topic to a seminar group, you will provide a basic overview, with suggestions for further reading.
- If you are presenting your own research at a conference, you will explain the background to your research question, outline your method, state your main results, and then offer a brief comment on the results before inviting questions.
- If you are presenting your research to members of your own department, you may not need to explain the background to the research question, but on the other hand you may wish to demonstrate to your tutor that you have read the relevant literature; and you may wish to take the opportunity to have members of the group discuss questions you have about the research method or interpretation of results.

So it is important to be clear about the objective of your presentation, so that you can focus the content appropriately for the context.

Organising the information

Academic presentations are not like after-dinner speeches. Their main function is not to entertain but to provide information. So it is vitally important that the information is presented clearly. Ways of organising the information include:

- chronological sequence
- most important to least important
- general to particular
- one point of view compared with another point of view.

Using familiar information structures like these helps the audience to follow your presentation more easily.

Signalling the structure

Planning a well-structured presentation is not enough. When you actually give your presentation, you must make its structure clear to the listeners. Remember: you may have a plan and know the structure of your talk, but the listeners do not know it unless you tell them! They need to be guided through the spoken information. To do this, you need to use what are often called *signposts* and *language signals*.

‘Signposting’ gives an advance view of the organisation of the whole presentation, or of the next section.

Examples of ‘signposting’

1 Organisation of the whole presentation

First I will tell you something about the historical background, then I will present the two main theories which are currently under discussion, and finally I will add some personal comments deriving from our recent research.

2 Organisation of the next section

*There are **three reasons** why we do this: these are **economic**, **legal**, and **psychological**. The **economic** argument is...*

Language signals are words and phrases that tell the listener where you are in the presentation, where you are taking them next and where they have just been. They may signal either: the topic of the whole talk; the beginning or end of a section of the talk; a new point in a list; a contrasting point; an example; or a point of special importance.

Examples of language signals

1 The topic of the talk

I want to focus on

2 A complete section

And now I'd like to turn to the issue of long working hours

3 A new point in a list

Secondly, unemployment causes social unrest

4 A contrasting point

However, others believe that a woman's place is in the home

5 An example

In some countries, for example India and Thailand, child labour is a fact of economic life

6 A point of special importance

...and here I would like to emphasise the importance of training

The distinction between signposting and language signals is not important. Indeed, some people use the terms interchangeably. But taken together their function is important. If the main points of your talk are well-organised AND clearly signalled, you are well on the way to making an effective and clear presentation.

For more examples of the signposts and language signals that are frequently used in academic presentations, see Checklist 3 on page 122.

Analysis

The listening extract on the cassette comes from one of a series of presentations and workshops on the subject of work. The talk is organised as follows.

- 1 The speaker signals the topic for this talk, 'work-family balance', and gives definitions and examples.
- 2 She speaks more particularly about one aspect of research on work-family balance – how to gather the views of children – and gives an example from her own research.
- 3 She signposts the route ahead, saying what she plans to do for the rest of the seminar session.

FIRST LISTENING

As you listen, indicate to your teacher when you hear the start of each section.

SECOND LISTENING

As you listen, write down the words and phrases used by the speaker:

- to signpost
- to signal examples.

Check your notes with your partner. Then the teacher will collect the phrases and write them on the board. You might like to listen a third time to hear the phrases again in context.

Presentation practice

STAGE 1: PREPARATION

Plan a short talk (two to three minutes) on the topic of work.

EITHER choose one aspect from the following:

- working hours
- equal pay for men and women
- sick leave
- holidays
- work and child care
- work and family time
- child labour
- job security
- interesting or boring?
- unemployment
- manual work and office work
- work and personal fulfilment
- self-employment
- retirement from work

OR you may plan your talk on any other aspect of work that you prefer.

Plan what you will say about the aspect of work that you have chosen. Make *very* short notes – just a word or two – under each of the following headings:

- Introduction (state your choice of topic)
- Main point 1 (plus example)
- Main point 2 (plus example)
- Conclusion

The Conclusion can be signalled with *So*, or *Finally*, or *To conclude*.

For the other sections of your talk, choose from the examples of signposts and signals in the boxes on pages 40 and 41, or in your notes from the listening activity.

STAGE 2: PRACTICE

- 1 Practise your talk by speaking to one other student. They should take notes of your main points.
- 2 When you have finished your talk, look at their notes.
 - Have they understood all your main points?
 - Have they recognised your language signals?
- 3 Discuss what you should do to make your meaning clearer.
 - Should you change the structure (plan) of the talk?
 - Should you change the details of the talk?
 - Should you signal your main points more clearly?
- 4 Then exchange roles with your partner.

STAGE 3: PRESENTATION

Now work with two other students (not with the same partner as in Stage 2) and take turns in giving your talk a second time. Pay particular attention to the way you signal a move to a new section. Check afterwards whether the listeners' notes match what you intended to say. Is any essential information missing from their notes?

STAGE 4: EVALUATION

What did you find when you looked at the other students' notes?

Which of the following did you discover?

- a) They both understood all your main points.
- b) They differed in what they had understood.
- c) They had misunderstood one or more parts.

SUMMARY

Important steps in achieving an effective presentation are:

- 1 Specify the objective to yourself, precisely.
- 2 Select the content.
- 3 Organise the content in a clear and logical order.
- 4 Use signposts and language signals to present the organised content clearly to your listeners.