



Beijing Foreign Studies University|
教育部 - 出国人员培训部

i Based on: 《公共演讲的艺术》（第7版），乔治·L·格赖斯、约翰·F·斯金纳 著，中国人民大学出版社，2012年。

Public Speaking

Unit 1, Topic 1: Elements of Communication



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2026

Lesson 1

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01. Course Overview:

This course is designed to assist students in developing skills for effective public speaking. At the end of the course, students will have learnt practical strategies they can apply to deliver academic presentations and engage in group discussions and debates successfully.



Goal # 1

Acquire knowledge and skills to plan and structure speeches effectively.



Goal # 2

Develop awareness about elements of speech delivery (vocal & physical) and apply them successfully while delivering a speech.

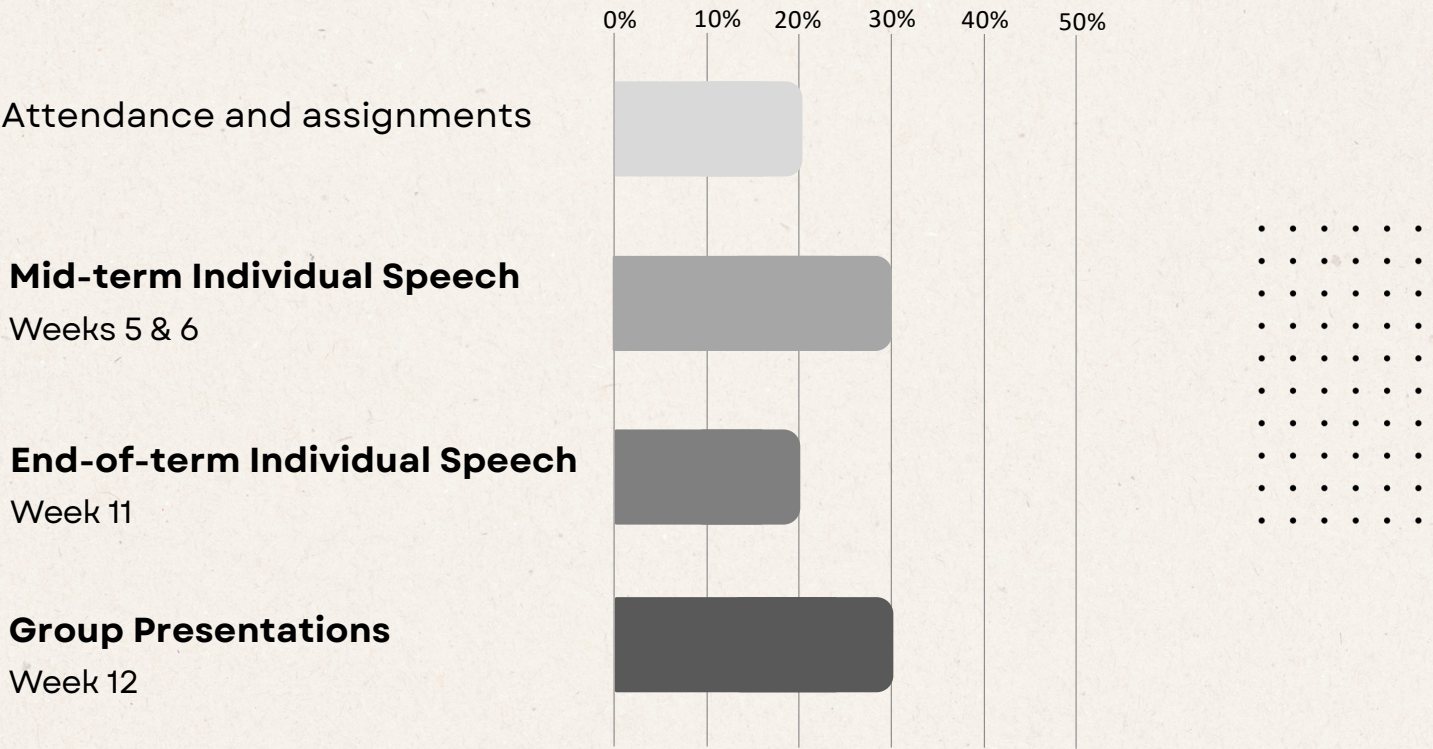


Goal # 3

Develop elements of critical thinking applied to communicative situations both as listener and speaker.



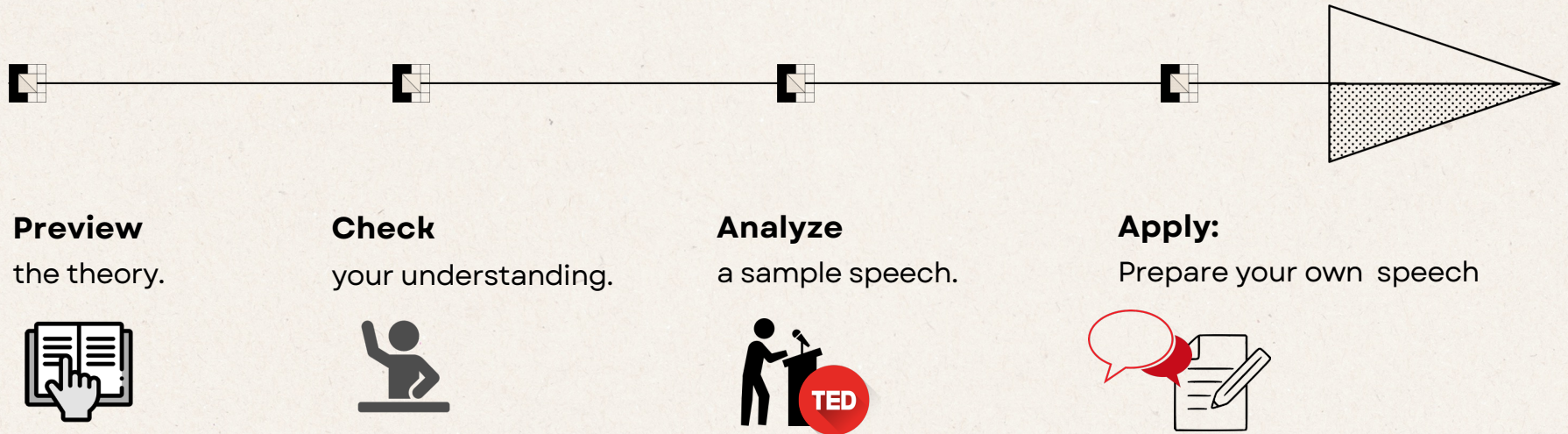
02. Assessment Criteria





03. Teaching Methodology

Briefly discuss the key dates for the project.





Warm-up: The origin of miscommunication

Watch this brief video clip and discuss the following questions as a class:

While you watch:



DreamWorks Animation (2008). *Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa*.

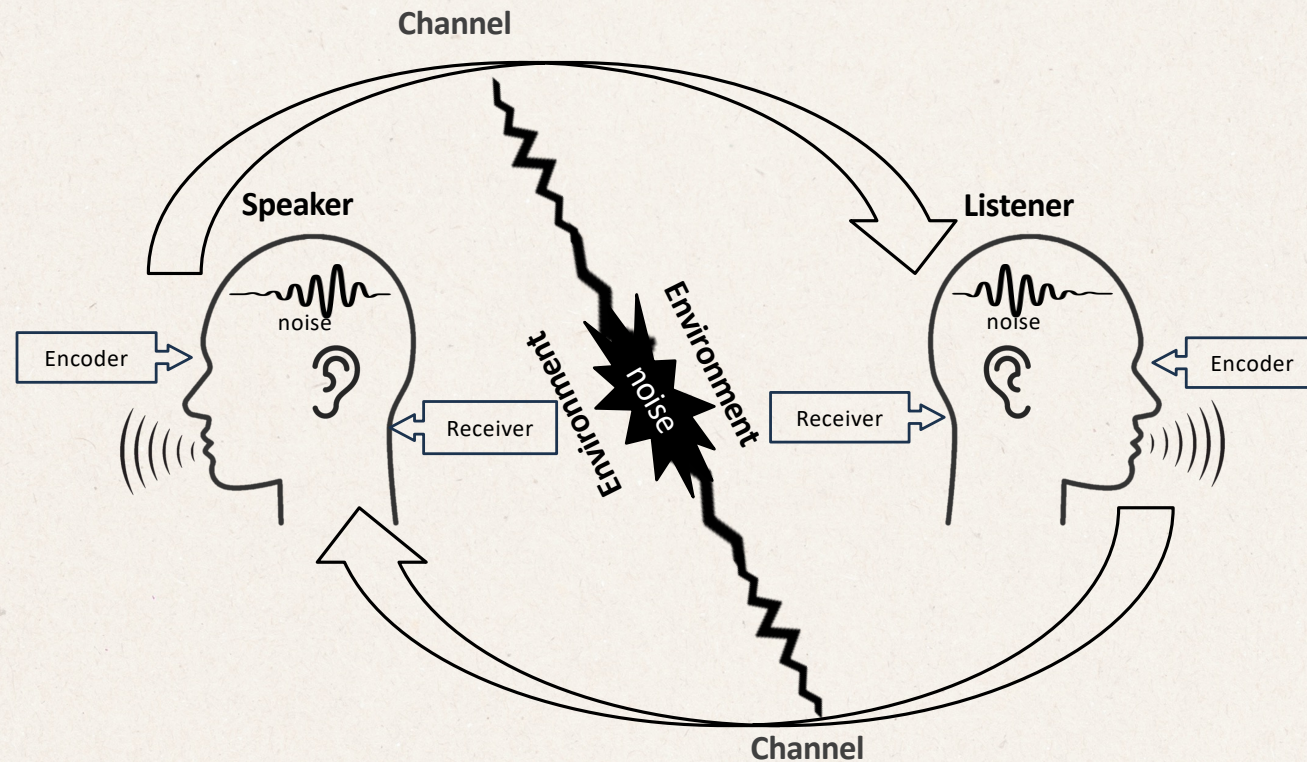
- 01 Who sends the message? Who receives the message?
- 02 Which were the original **messages**?
 - A. Let's have some fun and take out the dam.
 - B. She's got a gun, let's get out while we can.
 - C. Tell them "no". Pull up! They'll kill us.
 - D. They say no pull up, kill us.
- 03 What was the channel used to pass the message?
- 04 What factors made it difficult to pass the message properly?
 - A. The helicopter noise
 - B. The loud music
 - C. The dangerous situation
 - D. The distance between speaker and listener
 - E. All of the above



Topic 1: Communication Elements



Effective public speaking is a dynamic, transactional process. To be an audience-centered speaker, you must consciously **manage these seven interconnected elements**:



Adapted from: 《公共演讲的艺术》(第7版), 乔治·L·格赖斯、约翰·F·斯金纳 著, 中国人民大学出版社, 2012年。第1章第9-12页。

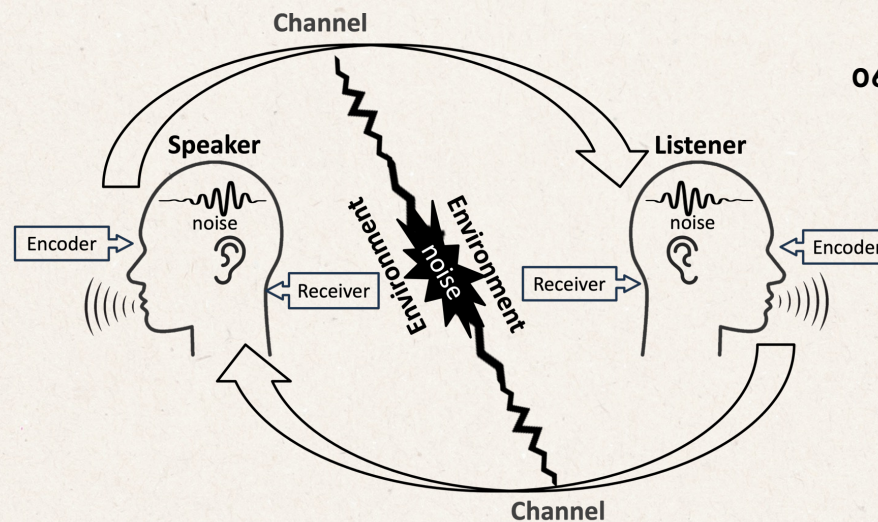


01 Speaker: You are the **encoder**, translating ideas into words, voice, and gestures.

02 Message: The core content, filtered through your unique presentation and perspective.

03 Listener: The audience are active **decoders**, interpreting your message through their own experiences. Success is a **similar** understanding, not an exact copy.

04 Channel: The delivery mediums: *Auditory* (your voice) and *Visual* (your body & aids). Use them in sync.



05 Environment: The context, shaped by the occasion (purpose of the speech) and the physical setting (room, tech, layout).

06 Noise: Any interference blocking the message. It can be:

- **Physical:** External distractions (e.g., heat, sound).
- **Physiological:** Bodily states (e.g., headache, hunger).
- **Psychological:** Mental barriers (e.g., anxiety, preconceptions).

07 Feedback: The audience's verbal and non-verbal responses (nods, expressions, posture). Monitor and adapt to this continuous loop.

Let's play a game!
You have 10 minutes to read pages 9 to 12 of 《公共演讲的艺术》 Mastering Public Speaking

Encoding is the process of...

Putting symbols into ideas



Putting ideas into symbols



Feedback includes the messages sent by the listeners to the speaker. An example would be...

When you tell a joke, your listeners will tell you with their laughter if they understood the joke.



When you deliver a presentation in class, your teacher will give you a grade to evaluate your effort.

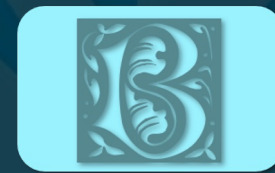


Decoding a message is...

using words and gestures to
translate a message or idea so
that others understand



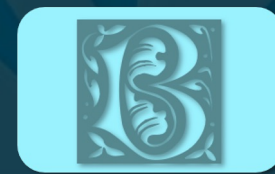
attaching meanings to the
words and gestures used by the
speaker



The **transactional interactive** nature of communication means that...

Each communication element simultaneously influences and is influenced by the other elements.

Some communication elements are more important than others because they have more influence.



The environment refers to...

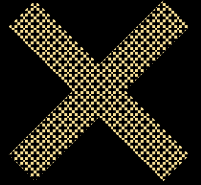
The natural conditions in which the communication happens; including the temperature, for example.



The occasion or time during which the communication happens and the physical place where it happens



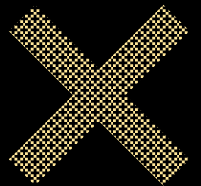
What are the three main forms of noise?



1

Physical (e.g: the sound of traffic)

50



2

Physiological (e.g: a headache)

40



3

Psychological (e.g: anxiety)

30





05. Practice: Analyzing communicative situations

Discuss this situation with a classmate:

You are halfway through your speech and notice a large portion of your audience shifting in their seats, glancing at the clock, and whispering. According to the transactional model, what two elements are most directly interacting in this situation?



- A. Message and Environment
- B. Speaker and Channel
- C. Feedback and Noise
- D. Listener and Message



05. Practice: Analyzing communicative situations

Discuss this situation with a classmate:

During a presentation on campus sustainability, the air conditioning fails, making the room uncomfortably warm. Several audience members begin fanning themselves and lose focus. Which type of noise is the *primary* interference here?



- A. Physiological Noise
- B. Psychological Noise
- C. Physical Noise
- D. This is not noise; it is an channel issue.

05. Practice: Analyzing communicative situations

Discuss this situation with a classmate:

You deliver a persuasive speech, but you rely solely on **complex data** and a **monotone voice**. Afterward, a classmate says, "I understood your points, but I wasn't convinced or engaged." Which two elements most likely failed to work in sync, causing the message to lose impact?



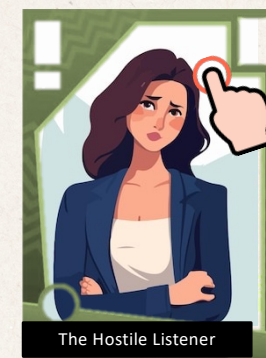
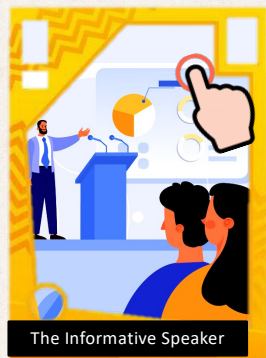
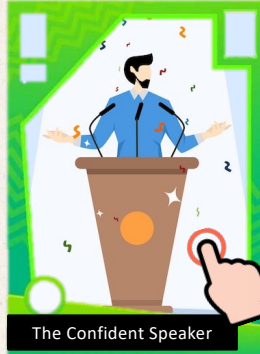
- A. Speaker and Listener
- B. Message and Channel
- C. Environment and Noise
- D. Feedback and Environment



Mini-speech: role game to understand the elements of communication

12/15

Visit the online game. Shuffle the cards, then read the description of your assigned role. Take two minutes to practice before performing with the whole class.



Beijing: A remarkable megacity!



NOTE: This is a resource slide for "The Informative Speaker" in the role game on the previous slide.



- Capital Megacity:** The political heart of China, with over 21 million citizens.

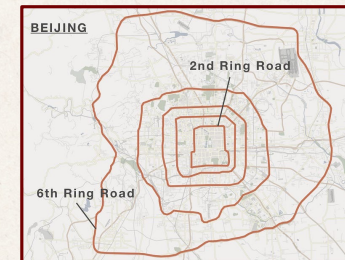
- Dual Olympic City:** The first city worldwide to host both Summer (2008) and Winter (2022) Olympics.

- UNESCO Hub:** Home to 7 World Heritage Sites, including the Forbidden City and the Temple of Heaven.



- Political Center:** Hosts the central government.

- Ancient Layout:** Historic center organized in concentric circles around the Forbidden City.



- Home to World's Largest Airport:** Features the massive, efficient Daxing International Airport terminal.



- Traditional Hutongs:** Characterized by its ancient network of narrow alleyways and courtyard homes.





Mini-speech: role game to understand the elements of communication

14/15

As a class, discuss the following questions:



Questions for Speaker Reflection:

1. Noise

What audience “noise” (distractions, behavior) did you notice? How did it make you feel in your role?

2. Feedback

What positive feedback (nods, eye contact, smiles) did you notice? How did it affect your delivery?



Questions for Listener Reflection:

1. Listener Impact

How do you think your assigned listener behavior affected the speaker’s performance?

2. Channel Effectiveness

Which speaker’s use of body language, voice, or visuals was most effective? Why?

3. Vote & Analyze

Which speaker held your attention best? Explain why using specific communication elements.

