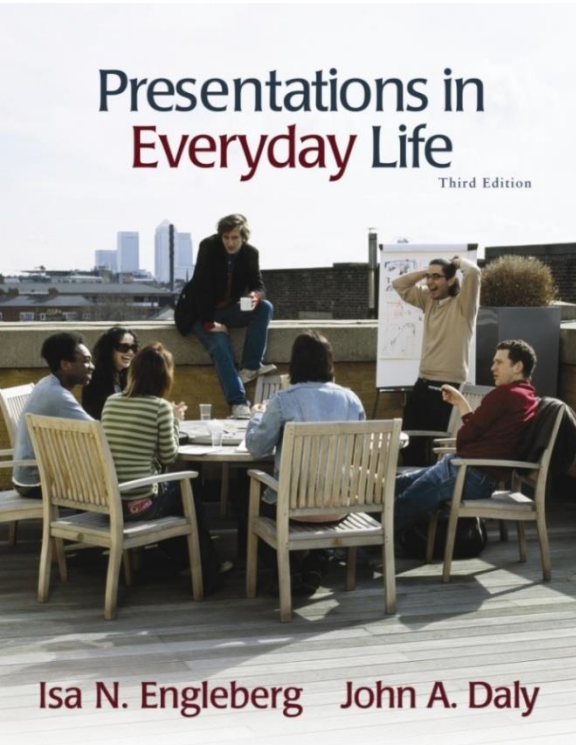


Chapter 11: Engaging Language



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Chapter 11: Engaging Language



The Nature of Language

The C.O.R.E. Language Styles

Stylistic Devices

Your Language and Your Audience

Definition of Language

Language: System of arbitrary signs and symbols used to communicate thoughts and feelings

- Every language on earth is a system—an interrelated collection of words and rules used to construct and convey messages.
- Every language uses signs and symbols.

Definition of Language

- Denotation
 - the literal or primary meaning of a word
- Connotation
 - the feelings or ideas that the word suggests.

DENOTATION

-DICTIONARY DEFINITION OF THE WORD

CONNOTATION

**-THE SECONDARY
MEANING OF THE WORD
ASSOCIATED TO YOUR
EMOTIONS**



Sign

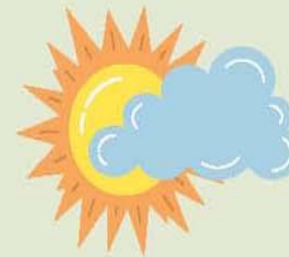
- Stands for or represents something specific
- May look like or depict a symptom of the thing it represents



Pay attention and be prepared to stop! There is a traffic light ahead.



This sign indicates that cyclists and pedestrians must share the walkway. Cyclists must yield to pedestrians.



Partly cloudy

Symbol

- No direct relationship with the things they represent.
- *Arbitrary* collection of sounds and letters that stand for a concept
- **The word is *not* the thing!** You cannot be struck by the word *lightning* or get wet from the word *rain*.

Multiple Choice Question

The term ***connotation*** refers to:

- a. the dictionary definition of a word.
- b. an idea or concept that cannot be observed or touched.
- c. the emotional response or personal thoughts connect to the meaning of a word.
- d. specific things that can be perceived by our senses.

Abstract and Concrete Words

- **Concrete words** are nouns; they describe things you experience through your senses: smoke, mist, a shout.
- **Concrete words** help us describe things; are specific.
- **Abstract words** help us classify them.
- **Abstract words** name qualities: beauty, justice, truth.

Abstract or Concrete Words?

A. Abstract

B. Concrete

___ Patriotism

___ Penicillin

___ American flag

___ Wealth

___ \$2.53

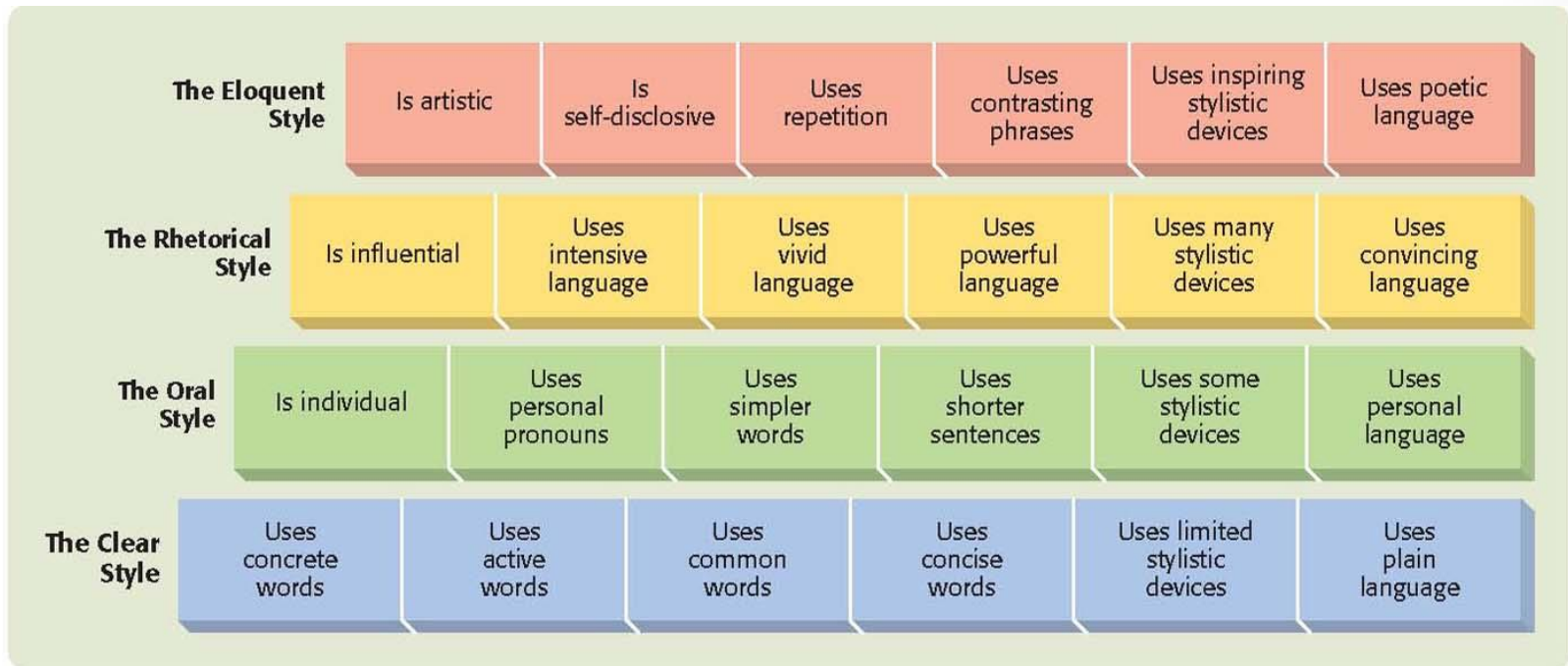
___ Drugs

___ Cupid

Language Style

- **Style** refers to the manner in which a presenter uses language to express a message.
- **Verbal style** is composed of vocabulary, sentence structure and length, grammar and syntax, and techniques used for expressing the message. (Lani Arredondo)

The Four CORE Styles of Presentation Speaking



The Clear Style

The Clear Style

Uses concrete
words

Uses active
words

Uses common
words

Uses concise
words

Uses limited
stylistic devices

Uses plain
language

Active Voice

- In a sentence written in the *active voice*, the subject of sentence performs the action. In a sentence written in the *passive voice* the subject receives the action.
- The candidate *believes* that Congress *must place* a ceiling on the budget.

Passive Voice

- A passive construction occurs when you make the object of an action into the subject of a sentence. That is, whoever or whatever is performing the action is not the grammatical subject of the sentence. Take a look at this passive rephrasing of a familiar joke:
- *Why was the road crossed by the chicken?*
- **To emphasize the action rather than the actor**
- After long debate, the proposal *was endorsed* by the long-range planning committee.

Active and passive voice



What subject does

The focus is on the
action.

Active : Ram killed Ravan

Passive : Ravan was killed by Ram.

Active or Passive Voice?

Which of the following statements is written in the passive voice?

- a. *Hoofbeat* was six horses behind at the half-way point in the race.
- b. The jockey pressed *Hoofbeat* to give him a burst of speed as they rounded the final turn.
- c. *Hoofbeat* passed all six horses ahead of him.
- d. The race was won by *Hoofbeat*.

The Oral Style

The Oral Style

Uses personal language

Uses personal pronouns

Uses simpler words

Uses shorter sentences

Uses some stylistic devices

Uses personal language

Characteristics of Oral Style

- **Shorter, familiar words**
 - *Good* rather than *acceptable* or *nice*
- **Shorter, simpler sentences**
 - *They need help* rather than *They are in great need of assistance.*
- **More personal pronouns (I, you, we, our, me, yours)**
 - *I have a dream* rather than *people should have a dream*

Characteristics of Oral Style

- **Contractions and colloquial expressions**

- *He didn't see it coming* rather than *He did not foresee the event*

- **Incomplete sentences**

- *8:45 p.m. I'm only on page 12. Only 482 more to go* rather than *It's 8:45 and I have only read 12 of the 482 pages in this book.*

Change to an Oral Style

- I require your assistance to achieve the objective of this presentation.
- Effective speakers understand themselves implicitly and find the discourse style that suits them best.
- We highly recommend using personal pronouns in a presentation as a productive means of enhancing speaker credibility.

The Rhetorical Style

The Rhetorical Style

Is influential

Uses intensive language

Uses vivid language

Uses powerful language

Uses frequent stylistic devices

Uses convincing language

Increase the Language Intensity

Neutral Words:

More Intense Words:

Nice:

1. Lovely 2. Delightful

Naughty:

1. _____ 2. _____

Pretty:

1. _____ 2. _____

Tired:

1. _____ 2. _____

Dull:

1. _____ 2. _____

Happy:

1. _____ 2. _____

Avoid Powerless Language

- **Hesitations and fillers:** “well,” “you know”
- **Qualifiers and hedges:** “sort of,” “kind of”
- **Tag questions:** “...right?” “ ...don’t you think?”
- **Disclaimers:** “I’m not an expert, but” “I’m in the minority, but ”
- **Feeble Intensifiers:** “really,” “actually,” “pretty,” “so”
- **Excessive Politeness:** “Please,” “If you don’t mind”

The Eloquent Style

The Eloquent Style

Is artistic

Is self-disclosive

Uses repetition

Uses contrasting
phrases

Uses inspiring
stylistic devices

Uses poetic
language

Stylistic Devices

- Repetition
- Similes, Metaphors, and Analogies
- Contrast
- Personification
- The Sounds of Words
- Lists of Three

Repetition

Repeated words, phrases, sentences

- Martin Luther King said “I have a dream” 9 times and “Let freedom ring” 10 times.
- Abraham Lincoln’s “. . . government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”
- Additional Example: _____

Similes

Similes compare two things or ideas, usually by using the words *like* or *as*.

- “Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee.” (Muhammad Ali)
- She sings like a bird.
- _____
- _____

Metaphors

Metaphors compare two things or ideas without using *like* and *as*.

- “Art is a rebellious child, a wild animal that will not be tamed.” (Chilean novelist Isabel Allende)
- “An iron curtain has descended across the content of Europe.” (Winston Churchill)

- _____

- _____

Contrast/Antithesis

Antithesis contrasts opposite ideas or words in a balanced or parallel structure.

- “One small step for man; one giant leap for mankind.”
(Neil Armstrong)
- “People have always been more impressed with the power of our example than the example of our power.”
(President Bill Clinton, Democratic Convention, 2008)
- “Not that I love Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more.” (Brutus, in Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*)

Personification

Personification explains an abstract concept or complex idea by attributing a personality to an impersonal thing.

- Fear lurked around every corner
- “England expects every man to do his duty.”
(Lord Nelson)
- Money talks.
- My computer loves to crash.
- Oreo’s are milk’s favorite cookie.

The Sound of Words

- **Alliteration**
 - “Muzak . . . vacant volumes of vapid violins.” (student)
 - “The dictator of Iraq is not disarming. To the contrary, he is deceiving.” (George W. Bush)
- **Rhyme** A catchy phrase with similar ending sounds of key words
 - “If it [the glove] doesn’t fit, you must acquit?” (Johnnie Cochran in the O. J. Simpson trial)
 - “For he who fights and runs away may live to fight another day.” (Oliver Goldsmith, 1861)

Top Seven Grammar Problems

1. Run-on sentences
2. Wrong verb form (He has went)
3. Tense shift (I was there and see it)
4. Wrong Subject-Verb agreement (He like)
5. Wrong pronoun (Me and my friend . . .)
6. Adjective/adverb confusion (good or well)
7. Double negatives

Biased Language

- **Gender**
 - Flight attendant, *not* stewardess
 - Police officer, *not* police woman
- **Culture**
 - Asian, *not* Oriental
 - Avoid jokes and clichés with foreign audience
- **Exclusionary Language**
 - Age, politics, religion, disabilities

What is the Grammatical Rule?

- Is it “Him and I laughed” or “He and I laughed?” What’s the rule?
- Is it “They laughed at him and I” or “They laughed at him and me?” What’s the rule?
- Is it “He did good on that speech” or “He did well on that speech”? What’s the rule?
- Is “I was there and seen it happen” correct? What’s the rule?

Analyze the Language

Conclusion of Ronald Reagan's Tribute to the *Challenger* Astronauts, 1986:

“The crew of the space shuttle *Challenger* honored us by the manner in which they lived their lives. We will never forget them, nor the last time we saw them, this morning, as they prepared for their journey and waved good-bye and ‘slipped the surly bond of earth’ to ‘touch the face of God.’”

(From *High Flight*, a poem by John Gillespie Magee, Jr., 1941)