

第Ⅱ部 アカデミック・スキル

9. How to Prepare for a Presentation in a Second Language

The Faculty of Education

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Before I begin, I would first like to welcome all the freshmen to Iwate University and wish you a rewarding, fruitful, and enjoyable 4 years at this institution. I think that one of the differences between university and high school second language classes is that university demands more student participation. Part of class participation involves giving presentations. Giving a presentation in a second language is not easy. When we speak in our native languages we can sometimes improvise while we are speaking and add information or reduce information. When we speak in a second language, however, it is much more difficult to improvise because a lot of our attention is devoted to the language itself. Since it is more difficult to improvise, it is important to prepare thoroughly before giving a presentation in a second language.

How should you prepare? I recommend that you either write out everything that you will say or write simple notes. When I first started giving short presentations in Japanese, my second language, I would write out everything I planned to say. The reason was that I did not have the ability to improvise. After the experience of a few presentations though, I started giving speeches from notes. My notes would consist of some keywords, topics, or quotes to discuss. I recommend that you do whatever makes you feel the most comfortable. If you do not have much time to prepare, I think that giving presentations from notes is the most efficient method.

It is very common to use PowerPoint or similar software for presentations, and the slides you make can serve as your notes. Making the slides can help you organize your talk, and help your audience follow your presentation. However, your slides should only contain keywords or phrases and graphics, not every word that you will speak.

When writing out your presentation, remember that it should be in your own words. The worst presentations in English I have seen were when students wrote their speech in Japanese and then used a translating program to put it into English. When they gave their speech, they simply read the computer translation. In these cases, the audience and even the speakers themselves did not understand! When you put your speech in your own words, your personality is revealed because you have ownership of what is being said. Regardless of whether or not you are advanced in the second language, your personality and interest in the subject will maintain the listeners' interest.

Also, when preparing your speech, consider who your audience will be. Will your audience be familiar with the topic of your speech? If your audience is not familiar with part of the topic, for

example, *Thatcherism* in "The Effects of Thatcherism on Popular Culture in the UK," then you will have to clearly explain what *Thatcherism* is.

The second part of preparation is practicing your presentation. Even though I am fairly experienced at speaking publicly in a second language, I would never speak without practicing and always find the time to practice. Do not feel embarrassed about speaking out loud when no one is in the room or when other people not related to your speech are in the room. I have practiced for presentations in such places as my car outside the venue, a bullet train, a plane, a hotel room, a hotel lobby, a park bench, my office, and, of course, my house. In all these cases, the presentations I gave were successful because I took the time to practice.

When you practice speaking, remember that maintaining eye contact with the audience during a presentation is essential. If the speaker is staring at his manuscript or notes or just reading PowerPoint slides while she is speaking, it will be harder for the audience to understand. Thus, when preparing for your presentation, stare at a wall pretending that it is your audience, and try to say as much as your speech as possible to the wall while occasionally taking quick glimpses at your notes, manuscript, or PowerPoint slides.

Another thing to keep in mind when practicing is time. Time limits for a presentation can be from 5 to 30 minutes. Even 5 minutes can seem very long but when you practice you will realize that you do not have enough time to finish! Usually when I practice, I find that I have to remove a third of the content from my presentation to finish in the allotted time. Finishing on time is extremely important. For example, when a speaker finishes her presentation in 20 minutes when it was supposed to be 15 minutes, it is rude to the next speaker who is waiting. The listeners might also find it annoying because it extends the time of the event.

Although finishing on time is important, your presentation should not be hurried. Let's say that you have to speak as fast as you can to give what should be an 18-minute speech in 15 minutes. If you do this, I can guarantee you that your audience will not understand what you said. If you have 15 minutes to speak, make sure that you can finish your speech within those 15 minutes speaking at a moderate pace that is not too fast or too slow for your audience.

Lastly, when you are preparing for a presentation, it is a good idea to have someone look at your manuscript/notes or listen to your talk. The person could be your teacher, a classmate or a friend. The feedback that you receive from this person will help you give a better presentation.

In conclusion, learning to be a good public speaker in a second language is important, and you will have this opportunity at Iwate University. To give an effective presentation, prepare thoroughly and regardless of your ability in the language, give the talk in your own words. Enjoy yourself while you speak and your audience will enjoy listening to you!

● key words を 5 つあげて下さい。

● まとめて書いて下さい（要約）。