Chapter 2: Oral and Written Communication

1. Oral Communication

1.1. Definition

Oral communication is the transfer of information from the sender to the receiver through verbal and visual means. Examples of oral communication include presentations, speeches, discussions, etc.

1.2. The Advantages of Oral Communication

- This method of communication is fast and direct.
- This method of communication allows for immediate feedback and thus constitutes a form through which two-way communication can take place.
- Another key advantage of this method of communication is that it helps convey the
- message with the appropriate volume and tone.
- It also saves a great deal of time and effort.
- Oral communication is a less formal method than others and therefore adds a personal touch to your message.
- When combined with an appropriate style of verbal communication, oral forms can build trust and loyalty on the part of the recipient.

1.3. The Disadvantages of Oral Communication

- This method of communication can very easily be misinterpreted or misunderstood.
- The listener cannot retain verbal messages in memory for a long period of time.
- Oral communication is often considered informal.
- Effective oral communication requires strong speaking skills. People who lack confidence may struggle to express their ideas clearly, which hinders effective communication.

2. The Oral Presentation (Oral Defense)

2.1. The Oral Defense: This is an oral presentation in which an individual or a group speaks to an audience and a panel of judges on a specific topic. The goal is to educate, inform, entertain, or present an argument. An oral presentation at the university level

assesses the presenter's ability to effectively communicate relevant information in an interesting and engaging manner. An effective presentation requires:

- Speaking clearly and confidently,
- Convincing the audience that your topic is important,
- Presenting your information in a logical and interesting way.
- Answering questions from the audience and managing the discussion afterward are other requirements for a successful presentation.

The defense allows the candidate to:

- Showcase their research work and the knowledge acquired during their years of study.
- Demonstrate the importance and relevance of their research question.
- The research topic must be understood by the members of the committee and have a positive impact on them.

For the committee, the defense allows them to:

- Evaluate the candidate's work and skills.
- Better understand certain points presented in the thesis.
- Assess the candidate's ability to clearly articulate their ideas and answer questions posed, as well as the originality and quality of their presentation.

2.2. Types of Oral Presentations

Generally, there are three types of oral presentations:

- Short presentations (5 to 10 minutes),
- Medium-length presentations (15 to 20 minutes), and
- Long presentations (approximately 45 minutes).

These types of presentations differ not only in duration but also in the presenter's academic status and the topic of the presentation. It is therefore essential that the presenter know what type of presentation they have been asked to give in order to prepare accordingly. Despite these differences among the types of presentations, there are basic principles common to all of them.

2.3. Strategies and Tools

Oral communication is both verbal and visual. The use of visual aids can make your presentation more interesting and informative, in addition to helping you engage your audience.One strategy for preparing an oral presentation is to compile your content into a brief PowerPoint presentation. PowerPoint is an effective way to present visual information. It offers several useful features and looks professional when used appropriately.

- Create charts and tables, add images, convey your message in the form of brief text, and organize the slides in a logical order. You can then go back and edit, add, or delete slides to finish your presentation.
- Be sure to use the notes section of a slide to include your main talking points.
- You don't want to simply read the text on your slides, so keep the text on the slides that the audience will see to a minimum and rely on your notes to remind you what to say for that slide.

2.4. Preparing an Oral Presentation

Preparation is essential for a successful oral presentation. Allow enough time to prepare; otherwise, you may experience writer's block before and during the presentation. Consider the following steps in this process:

- Choose the topic of the presentation.
- Make sure you understand the topic as well as the presentation guidelines.
- Do some research.
- Outline and plan the presentation.
- Prepare your talking points.
- Remember to tailor your presentation to your audience.
- Prepare visual aids (posters, PowerPoint slides, etc.).
- Slides should not be a verbatim copy of your talking points.
- Graphics aid retention and are engaging, so use them whenever possible.
- All visuals and graphics must be simple, professional, accurate, and clear.
- Revise the outline and visuals as needed.

2.5. The Structure of an Oral Presentation

An oral presentation requires an introduction, a main body (the development), and a conclusion.

2.5.1. The Introduction

- Provide a brief introduction explaining why you conducted the study and why it is important for further learning.
- State the research question, identify your research objectives or hypotheses, and make predictions (even if the predictions were not confirmed by your results).
- -Provide a brief overview of the main points you will cover in your presentation (outline the structure of the presentation).

2.5.2. The Main Body (Development)

- Highlight the main method used in your work. If you are using a multi-step method or a somewhat complex design, it is helpful to provide a diagram or a summary overview.
- -Highlight the main results. You should include at least one graph or a table summarizing the statistics.
- -Explain your points. Provide clear explanations. Offer sufficient evidence to be convincing.
- -The discussion should include your interpretation of the results. Consider a few alternative explanations, especially if they cannot be ruled out by your data. Try to compare
- your results with those of similar studies. Mention the implications of your work and your recommendations for future research.
- -Use transitions between the sections of your presentation (introduction, body, and conclusion) as well as between the points in the main body of your presentation.

2.5.3. The Conclusion

- -Introduce your conclusion with a transition.
- -Summarize your points.
- -Refer to future actions if necessary.
- -End with “Thank you.”
- 2.6. Some Practical Tips

***Before the presentation**

- Take a few deep breaths if you're nervous; this will help you relax.
- Get enough sleep (while preparing and rehearsing your
- Review your notes one last time.
- Rehearse the presentation. Practice in front of a group of people who are willing to listen and give feedback, but if that's not possible, practice on your own, ideally in front of a mirror. You should rehearse until you feel very comfortable with the presentation.
- Keep in mind that this will take some time, but you'll be much more comfortable if you've rehearsed thoroughly. Rehearsing will allow you to:
- Practice staying within the allotted time. Overcome "stage fright" before the actual presentation.
- Become more familiar with the material.
- Identify the areas that need revision (content, organization).
- Wait for the chair of the panel to give you the floor before beginning your oral presentation.

*During the presentation

- Start by thanking the chair, then thank the panel members and the audience.
- Don't get lost in the details. Stick to the essentials.
- Focus on the message.
- Be sure to maintain good eye contact with the audience.
- This is a presentation, so don't read from the text. Reading from a text will cause you to lose eye contact, proper intonation, and good posture.
- Be sure to stay within the time limit. If you take too long, you're taking up someone else's time. At the same time, don't finish too early, as it may seem like you didn't understand the topic or didn't do enough research.
- Speak loudly enough so your audience can hear you. Don't speak too quickly, and make sure to speak clearly. Try not to speak in a monotone; instead, vary the volume, speed, and pitch of your voice.
- Use the presentation outline as a guide, not the full text.
- Take a break if you need a moment to collect your thoughts.
- For group projects, organize the speaking order and coordination well when presenting the materials.

***After the presentation**

- Thank the panel member and the audience for their time for their time and attention by saying, “Thank you for your attention.”
- Ask if there are any questions.
- Answer questions thoroughly and honestly; if you don’t know the answer, say so. Maintain a polite and positive tone.

3. Written Communication

3.1. Definition

Written communication refers to the process of exchanging information or messages through written words. It can take many forms, including emails, letters, articles, social media posts, and even text messages. In written communication, the sender conveys a message to the recipient using written language that can be understood and interpreted by the recipient.

3.2. The Advantages of Written Communication

- -Written communication is suitable for long-distance communication and
- recurring orders.
- -Written communication creates a permanent record of evidence. It can be used
- for future reference.
- -Written communication gives the recipient sufficient time to think, act, and respond.
- -Written communication can be sent to multiple people at once.
- -Written communication is suitable for sending statistical data, graphs,
- charts, images, etc.
- -It is easy to share news through written communication.
- -Effective written communication can build goodwill and promote business.

3.3. The Disadvantages of Written Communication

- Drafting a written message takes a lot of time.
- The feedback process is not instantaneous.
- Written communication offers no opportunity for immediate clarification if it is not properly understood.
- Written communication is not effective in emergencies.