Language Use in Public Speaking

Language use in Public Speaking has some relationship between interpersonal and group communication, the focus will be mainly on formal presentations. We need to address some things which in phrase must have precision and must be accurate. For basic understanding and parts of your public presentation, it can be artistic; you can use certain memorable pieces, so that people take away something from your presentation.

Let's get into precise language, you probably remember from your English courses about denotation and connotation. **Denotation** as per dictionary meaning refers to words with intended meaning, their conventional meaning. Here you want to **avoid being vague**, the standards for language are higher and formal presentations. So, you want to use reference without boundaries to speak, so while in conversations you can say 'a few' or 'a many' or 'a lot' and always joke that 'a lot' is always a plot of land and it has become a colloquial expression, instead of saying you can; just give a number, so you need to be more precise and more specific. Also, **ambiguity** (words with two or more meanings) I have them on the slide and a pdf along with such referential pronouns (that, these, they) you are perhaps discussing with a group of people and later you say (he or they) and it's always clear what pronoun traces back to; it can become ambiguous, meaning that if you want to talk about different user group, let say Mac and Windows and later you can say, something like they believe that their platforms are superior because it has a greater stability, let's say which one of those groups are you talking about; this can be ambiguous expression and in public speaking there are greater or higher requirement for language usage in say a conversation over lunch. I just for fun looked up in the dictionary, the meaning for the word 'low'; I got 26 meanings all the way from 'little height' or 'elevation' to 'near the equator' sometimes you are helped out by the context of the discussion of your presentation and people can't figure out the meaning of certain words. The point is not to take a chance being more precise, there is one example of ambiguity. In a commercial of a bank, which said 'are you loosing interest in savings account', well hope you get the joke, that would be more of a pun (successful or not), this was a example for purposeful ambiguity.

Now we move to **Connotation**, which would involve using words that indicate the correcting motion, shading or coloring, I have them on the 3rd slide with an exercise that I do in class. Like the terms you use for people who work in police department, usually people will say cops, an old term would be flatfoot officer, positive connotation might be peace officer and perhaps a negative connotation would be a pig. We used have in our area a football game between the county sheriff and the city police department. Now I think it is fire fighters versus police called the Pig Bowl, so a way to understand the negative connotation to pig is to refer to yourself that way, that was kind of clever one. Other examples would be University professor referring to 'A' grade student as 'scholar' or 'intellectual' (genius) would be positive connotation and negative would be 'bookworm', 'nerd', 'geek'. For one who saves money positive connotation would be

thrifty and negative would be cheap, stingy. For attractive person positive connotation would be gorgeous, cute; for females it would be hot not many would like to be called handsome, at the same time guys being called gorgeous.

Now we move on to higher level language usage, we got **schemes** and **tropes.** Schemes take us back to Aristotle, probably should have said in a public speaking review podcast, that many of the ideas are not mine and come down from Aristotle and reason they service is they are useful. **Schemes** are the artful variation of the usual word order. In around is an artistic way for the sequencing of the order of words, here are some specific types of schemes. **Repetition of a word or phrase**, one old example would be 'I am a pepper cheese of pepper, wouldn't you like to be a pepper, then in our area we got a commercial where it says 'open open open,' the women outside the door or window hopefully opens in'. **Parallelism** is repetition of a pattern and it changes into poetic language. From Reagan's speech to congress, state of union which the presidents are required to give; like problems with getting economy under control, although there are some repeated words which forms a pattern, that is the stress pattern as well as the beats almost like you say pop music which gets in here somewhere, the trials will be similar. It almost will be grammatical pattern, we also got some other schemes illustration, and some of those we remember again from speech class or English class. **Alliteration** is repeating the initial consonant sounds in two or more successive words. A consonant would be non-vowels like the p sound or k sound. Anyway, this lecture requires **p**atience and **p**ersistence. This helps your audience to understand the section of presentation, now we have got **Antithesis** and also if you are a star trek fan, it is not 'Anti matter' or 'anti time'. Antithesis is a kind of contrasting ideas, you must have heard this 'when the going gets tough and tough goes shopping'. Of course this is still semi funny because this is built upon the original one 'when the going become tough then the tough gets going'. Other one would be 'which I like to sell around my house is to better have it or not needed, than needed to have it be prepared'.

Tropes involve changing meanings for words or phrases, in our discussions on connotation we talk about **Simile** or personification and many other which all of you are familiar. Simile is an explicit comparison between two different things, explicitly would be using 'as' or 'like'. **Metaphor** is pretty much like simile, but it is implicit comparison between two indifferent things. **Personification** is giving abstractions for non-living things or non-human things which are personified. In class if I ask who has a pet and what are their names (if you are using human names then you are personifying them). From the Watergate era, John Dean the president's lawyer said to the president in a meeting that 'Cancer is growing on the presidency'. So this presidency is abstraction, of course John Dean was not saying that the president has a lump on his shoulder then that would be literal.

In closing, I would say specifically with these artistic forms to be used sparingly, if you litter your speech with all these schemes and tropes then they would not stand out, working means that they are remembered and stand out from regular language usage, which is kind of you buying a case of fine wine and probably won't go home and drink the entire case right away. These are

some refinements of your presentation that you need to punch it up so that people take away certain idea.