

Newsletter No. 6

Workshop in January

“Edge of Their Seats Presentation Techniques”

Presenter: Curtis Kelly (Kansai University)

Popular speaker and writer Curtis Kelly (EDD) is a professor at Kansai University in Japan. He has written 33 books, including *Active Skills for Communication* (Cengage), *Writing from Within* (Cambridge), and *Significant Scribbles* (Longman). He has also made over 400 presentations and he has been a presentation trainer at Kansai Denryoku.



Date: January 16th, 2021 9:00-12:15 (Zoom Meeting)

Abstract:

Rather than the usual lecture and workshop, this session will be pure workshop. There will be lots of speaking, but you'll be doing almost all of it. Learning self-presentation skills is useful for anyone in any communicative situation, but especially useful for people who teach, people poor at English, and people who believe they “cannot speak in front of others.” We did this workshop about 5 years ago, and it was the most popular NUFSS workshop I ever did. So by popular request, I'm doing it again, but with some new techniques. We'll do basics in the morning, pro techniques after lunch.

A few are: making the audience care, changing writing to speaking, working on phrasing and movement to reduce cognitive load, making a Wow, and dropping the “superbomb” (a technique so powerful he won't say what it is yet).

The number of participants: 28

1. Interesting activities you might want to use in your class. Why?

- I learned so many useful ideas, but what I liked the best was the little presentation about a product which could make the audience care. I truly felt that the product my partner introduced sounded so wonderful that I would love to own it. I would also like my students to experience this through each

other's presentations in my classes. Moreover, I like the way that having students make a "boring" speech first, and they change it to a dramatic one with this technique. Often in a college environment, we focus more on "academic" speech in which students feel like they need to follow the guideline with certain "appropriate" formatting. But today, I found that "speaking" is a lot different from "writing"; presentation is not the reading-aloud exercise of a written material. The activity to change the written text into a talk made me think a lot about this, and I am now thinking about what I could change in my instructions, too! The textbook is extremely helpful as well for my future classes!

- Making a students' performance video to compare before and after learning the presentation tips was interesting. It is because the improvement in speaking, gestures, postures, face expressions, and impact were obvious to the performers, teacher, and to the audience. Such clear results should motivate the students to keep trying the tips.
- I would like to try recording the students' before and after speech presentations. I plan to use the recordings to motivate even the weaker students.
- Story telling is good activity to make community comfortable.
- I'd like to try using proverbs, textbooks, papers, poems or any sentences that students like to have them give a short presentation with gestures and some tips. I want them to get use to those tips so that they can express their feelings more effectively in front of the audience.

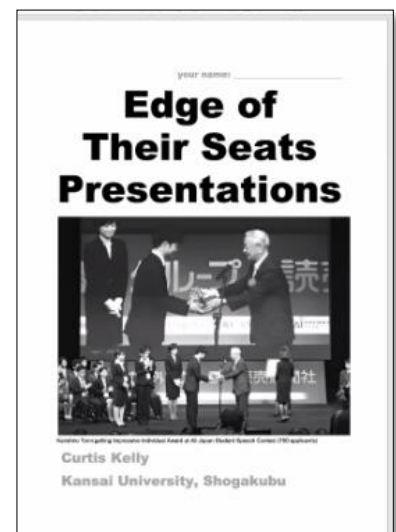


2. What you learned from today's workshop?

- I have experience teaching several presentation classes before, but I was probably more focusing on the contents and the language itself, and didn't put enough emphasis on "how to present effectively". Today I realized that there are some more important aspects of giving a presentation; including the three most important tips, and the techniques we learned today for presentations could even help improve the students' language skills! Now that I learned these tips, I am very motivated to make some changes to my plans for my next presentation classes!
- The most impressive learning was to recognize that languages for writing and for speaking are different. Unconsciously knowing it was not helpful for me in avoiding mistakes such as talking with a loong sentence. Now I am aware of the cognitive load, so I can consciously shorten the sentences into phrases to lower the load.
- I learned the topic of giving presentations is a very broad one with many facets to cover in order to make a "edge of your seats-presentation"! Calming nerves and teaching natural gestures are two areas I have always found difficult to teach students. Therefore, those areas I learned today will be of invaluable use.
- Presentation will one feature that the Ministry of Education show in new course of study. So I want to incorporate presentation project more in my class. All activities I studied today were very useful for students to get skills for presentations. In previous lessons, I just said to students, "You are going to

have a presentation. Let's start!" I didn't give any scaffolding activity or knowledge about sub-skills of presentation. I haven't taught skills I learned today. Today's seminar was very beneficial for me.

- My approach to teaching presentation was not enough good for students to acquire skills of a presentation and learn language proficiency. Also, I myself have found that I am a bad presenter. This seminar gave me a good opportunity how I present to students as a teacher.
- That practice with small changes builds confidence and creates effective improvement. 3 main points: engage the audience, practice with your whole body, speaking not writing.
- The tips on the presentation were great. I'm grateful our school didn't close because zoom lessons are more challenging mainly when teaching young learners. I've learned some useful tips on how to properly present oneself to show confidence. It is valuable and can be used all the time in formal presentations and in carrying oneself, as well.
- In order to communicate ideas and information effectively, it is necessary for both teachers and students alike to examine and utilize specific presentation techniques. Unfortunately, in Japan, we have few chances to learn about presentation techniques and try them in classes. We teachers should provide students with more chances to learn and experiment with these useful learning and teaching tools.
- I learned about important tips for effective presentations today. It was interesting for me to analyze the presentations of Barack Obama and Steve Jobs. Now I know why they are good presenters. I will keep what I learned in my mind and practice it in my classroom.



3. Questions & Answers

First of all, I would like to say to everyone:

- I forgot to ask you to record your proverb again, adding phrasing, a long pause, gestures, movement, and then compare the new with the old. I still suggest you try it!

- If you are ever giving a presentation and would like me to listen and advise, feel free to ask. I do it often. ctskelly@gmail.com

- Feel free to use any of the lessons in the presentation textbook I sent you. There are more activities in the back we never got to.

- At the end of this doc, I am attaching a list of ten presentation tips for presenters that I often mail out. Many of the tips are things we practiced.

Questions to Curtis

Q (1): One thing I would like to ask him is that how he has been dealing with some difficulties in this online teaching situation. Presentation classes are one of the hardest classes to manage online for me because 1: I can't often see a student's whole body, and 2: I can't really know if students are using memo or having a complete script on their screen. Moreover, it is hard to feel the audience through the computer screen. I would really appreciate it if I can learn some tips particularly for online classes!

That is a great question. Indeed, teaching presentation by Zoom is hard. As you point out, the main problems are their sitting and the temptation to read. I make my students arrange a way to stand up if they can, which helps a little, especially if I require them to use a memory card, but not all can stand up. Or, if you inform them that you can tell right away if they are reading by their eye movement, and that they should stare at the camera when they present, that can help. But still, this is a problem. One teacher has them walk around in a circle while they present so that they cannot read, but that seems a bit drastic.

As for not being able to see their bodies, when I teach presentation online, I spend less time on the physical tips and more on the content and voice techniques: For example, PowerPoint techniques. How to add a "Wow." Storytelling.

And finally, there is a great tool that I recommend for any online class, presentation or not: Flipgrid.com. Once you set it up, it is extremely easy for students to record themselves doing presentations, telling stories, etc., and recording replies to other students.

Reduce Cognitive Load

- Speaking, not Writing
- Phrasing
- Dialog Voice
- Long Pause

- Gestures, Drama, Movement

Q (2): I'd like to know the source of the touching video you showed us during a break. You said that you use those videos at the end of every class. As I was not my desk then, I missed most of the video.

I have collected a set of short unusual songs to play as students come into a class, and touching videos to play at the end. I'll share the whole folder with you.

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8h30hqh3gqzpvqz/AAD3b49heSuRlAqta_jp4WW-a?dl=0

Ten Presentation Tips for Presenters - Curtis Kelly

Having someone hear and comment on your presentation can do wonders. In my case, as a presentation trainer, I can help as well. If you'd like to get advice on your presentation beforehand by Skype, write me and tell me when you'd like to do it. For last minute comments, some of us will be at the conference venue the evening before willing to help. To help you get started, here are some useful tips (most **important** in blue):

1) Why should I care? This is the question in everyone's head that you must deal with (Gallo, 2009). The best way to make them care is to start with a problem or question they have, and make your presentation the solution. "Do you have trouble getting students to remember new vocabulary?" Or, "Your job is to teach reading, but do you really know what happens in the brain when people read? You should. It'll make you a better teacher." I often start with a problem or question and then have them do a 2 min. discussion make the problem even more personal. Making them care is needed in every part of your speech. If you are going to show them a technique, connect it to the problem it solves first. "Are your students sleepy after lunch? Then try this..."

2) Try to focus your presentation on just one question to answer, maybe two if they are sequential. (I did this in my recent speech on *Why do we have memory and what does the answer teach us about how the brain processes language.*) No one wants to hear everything you know.

3) Avoid speaking longer than ten minutes at a stretch. Include short discussions, videos, quizzes, music, interviews, energy breaks or whatever to break it up. I often used 30-60 second video slices from TED talks.

4) Good design is a mixture of clarity and mystery. Don't just tell them everything. Have them figure things out themselves. Do things that make them ponder answers to questions rather than just answering them. If you can lead them into finding the solution to the big problem themselves (As I tried in "*Why is memory faulty?*") they'll love it. (I also do this in *Writing from Within* presentations too. Using leading questions, I have the audience pretty much generate the book design before I even show them the book.)

5) Look hard for "Wow" moments. Is there any data you found that was surprising? Big contrasts? Draw those out into things that make the audience feel "wow."

For example, if a study found children studying words by repeating them retained 15%, by writing them, 20%, but by singing them 80%, don't put the whole chart on the screen at once. Have the parts come as "appears" and pause before the last before showing it. "These are two methods we use to teach

vocabulary. Which do you think is stronger? Yes, writing. (show 15 % and 20% bars) Well, putting the words in songs is even stronger. How much stronger? (now show 80% and enjoy the “wow” ripple through the audience) Exploit the wows with repetition. Say “Four times stronger. Imagine if you could increase your vocabulary teaching ability by 400%,”

6) Include stories. A great presentation is full of them. They catch the audience so much better than an explanation alone. “2015. I was teaching a writing class. And then something happened ...”

7) Don’t use the manuscript you wrote. Writing is far too complex, with long strings, for listeners to process. Speaking is made up of short utterances with lots of repetition, questions, and clear references (Say the thing, person or place every time, avoiding memory-taxing references like “it,” or “he”)

8) Avoid Sliduments. This is what Garr Reynolds calls slides full of text, as if someone just pasted their research paper in. Limit slides to 7 words per page, and just one picture, or two if you need to compare something. Avoid moving animations; they distract the audience. We don’t need to know your agenda for the day, every one of your research hypotheses or all the results. Put the latter in your handout. In fact, we don’t care how you did your research. We care about what you found solves our problems!

9) Reduce cognitive load. Listening is not easy. It taxes one’s working memory to the fullest. Reduce the linguistic load by phrasing: short pauses between grammatical chunks (the boy...went out...to play); use long pauses to emphasize; use gestures & drama to help them visualize; use direct instead of indirect speech with different voices; and most important, speaking, not writing language (no. 7 above).

10) Practice with your body. Stand up and speak out when you rehearse. Poise, movement, eye contact need to be practiced too, and from what we know about the brain, practicing in the same way you will deliver makes recall easier when you really do deliver.

There is so much content to manage in putting a presentation together, it is easy to lose sight of these important basics. Then too, speaking in front of teachers adds a huge pressure to it. In the past that has made me add more research and boring stuff to validate myself. Big mistake! So, you need to review these key ideas as you go along. Is each part covered?

Workshop in January (AR Discussion)

Date: January 16, 13:00-15:00 (Zoom meeting)

Title: Group discussion on action research

Advisers: Kazuyoshi Sato, Duane Kindt, Juanita Heigham (NUFS)

The number of participants: 12



Next workshop will be held on February 27th.

Detailed information is on our web site:

<https://www.nufs.ac.jp/workshop/news/>