

Artistic Hints for Lecturing in Medical field

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Abstract

We have all experienced the unpleasant feeling of being forced to sit in boring lecture sessions. The purpose of this article is to introduce a new perspective to maximize audience attention in lecture sessions. So it will be useful for people who are looking for practical techniques and methods to make a successful lecture. After holding several workshops about "Lecture Principles", followed by two main goals including creating the highest level of communication with the audiences and improving the level of information absorption by them, we found that the current principles of an impressive lecture require more artistic aspects.

Keywords: lecture, medical field, art of lecturing

Introduction

A lecture is originally defined as a presentation of a given topic to audiences in a comprehensible manner. Some obvious instances include a scientific lecture to a large number of university students, scientific presentation at a conference, motivational lectures to publics, and etc.[1]. Every lecture is based on three essential elements including audiences, lecturer, and lecturing medium, which can determine the success or failure of a lecture. The audiences are considered as the most important element of a lecture. Indeed, the audiences are the main foundation of a lecture and also a source of energy, motivation and inspiration for the lecturer. Therefore, a lecture will be basically meaningless without its audiences[2]. The second basic element of a lecture is the own lecturer who is responsible for managing the lecture and providing an attractive atmosphere for audiences. A good lecturer has sufficient skills to draw the audiences' attention to the subject and to motivate the audiences' desire to focus on the presentation[3]. The third important element of a lecture is the atmosphere of the lecturing, providing a communication way or link between the audience and lecturer. It depends on the lecturers' ability to make the lecturing medium interesting and convenient for audiences, however, use of some lecture tools such as PowerPoint presentations, slide shows, and chalkboards could help lecturers engage the audiences in the subject[4].

A lecture can achieve its predetermined goals if it is properly executed in addition to being well-designed in content and structure. "Performance" is one of the septet arts and it may be said that "lecturing" is an art. Therefore, a speaker may not be unaware of these artistic principles in order to attract maximum audience participation in the discussion. The speaker must train and practice these principles in order to be able to successfully organize and direct the lecture session with respect to listener's feedback and their capacity to learn[5]. In this regard, we aimed to practically examine the efficiency and effectiveness rate of a scientific lecture on audiences and receive their feedbacks.

Study design

We firstly reviewed the relevant literatures and found that many critical and delicate tips related to lecturing are not available in resources like the Internet and also it was not possible for us to read all the relevant art texts. Therefore, we specifically invited a popular Iranian musician- Maziar Fallahi- to participate in our "Lecture Principles" workshops. During the study, Mr. Fallahi was asked to attend to several scientific lectures and share his scientific point views based on his expertise in the sciences of directing and articulation and experiences of nearly a thousand live performances. The common point between performing a concert and presenting a scientific lecture is the need to become familiar with the art of performing and communicating and an artist who performs the concert does this action in the best possible way. In fact, our goal in this approach is to act in such a way that the artist not only presents his practical points and concepts, but also teaches swimming exactly inside the water (and not outside it).

Findings

We first invited our artist to a few lecture sessions in the field of medical science, without any prior explanation, and asked him to evaluate and criticize the performance ways followed by the lecturers. After attending several lecture sessions, Maziar Fallahi expressed his opinions as follows: "In terms of executive attractions, I encountered boring sessions. Meetings in which scientific articles were presented in a completely boring and monotone manner. Since the majority of the lecturers were unaware of even the most basic principles of representing a lecturer and also due to lack of attention to the artistic and aesthetic aspects of a lecture, the behavior of the attendees clearly implied their suffering and fatigue".

In the lecturing science it is said that a speaker has only 7 to 20 seconds to attract the audiences' attention to the lecture. Otherwise, he/she may miss out a golden opportunity to present the results obtained from the years of his/her research and study and consequently his/her findings may not be addressed at all[6, 7].

Depending on the scientific level of audiences and the environmental conditions, giving lectures can lead to extremely high levels of stress.

It may be even more difficult to lecture in a scientific community than to perform a concert. In an artist's concert, the artists only meet a huge crowd of people, most of whom are fans of him or her and the artist is going to create pleasant moments for them. While in a lecturing meeting, a speaker may be confronted by opposite ideas from professors, and students who are about to criticize him or her, and the speaker, by contrast, must present scientific lecture in a way that encourages the audiences to listen to and follow the subject. Thus, it can be said firmly that a scientific lecturer should not refrain from any effort[8].

Someone may believe that giving lecture in the medical field only depends on the lecturer's expertise and knowledge and does not require any education. But it should be noticed that physicians are also human beings possessing diverse merits and disadvantages. They may be really professionally and academically capable but may not be good speakers at all. They also

are subjected to judgment from audience in terms of their behavior, dressing and sense of humor. On the other hand, the most important issue in giving a lecture is to get a pleasant experience. If one cannot enjoy the performance, he or she must be sure that he or she will not succeed to attract the audiences' attention and it may be better not to present a public lecture at all. Because an unsuccessful lecturing will destroy a golden opportunity to present the valuable results obtained from years of research and studying and summarized as a short scientific report[9].

According to the literature reviews and our artist's (Maziar Fallahi) experiences and fundamental opinions that he shared in this study, some significant principles of giving a lecture have been provided and described as follows.

Strategic principles of lecturing

1. **Hard rehearsing:** successful performance requires a lot of training and numerous experience. In order to be able to stay in space for a week, an astronaut needs to be trained several months in Microgravity condition (the condition in which people or objects appear to be weightless). A wrestler also has years of training for just 6 minutes of fight. Therefore, it is imperative that we put ourselves under the most difficult pressures, regardless of our expertise and knowledge, before the lecture session. Successful management of a 6-7 minute lecture requires precise timing and intensive practice in order to achieve a perfect performance[10].

Although having self-confidence is certainly required during the performance, but it is recommended that the lecturer gives up his/her arrogance completely before the meeting. The speaker should simulate the meeting environment before performing, pay attention to different people's judgments and accept any criticism sincerely. However, practicing in front of the mirror is recommended as a practical technique for improving the presentation, since we are not good judges for ourselves (because we love ourselves), it is better for the speaker to practice in front of real audiences [6]. Furthermore, it is strongly advised that a speaker should do new practices for each lecture (especially for challenging and complicated subjects in order to be able to convey content more easily and discuss about it properly).

2. **Taking advantage of an experienced lecture consultant:** a professional lecture consultant who may also be a director, singer, or actor, will help lecturers with the delivery of teaching, pay their attentions on the details of the lecture and teach them some techniques related to giving lecture, getting dress, and body language.

One of the most important points in this field is expression skills including for instance his "tone of voice". Due to the inevitable effects of the Internet on human life in the present century, many of the principles and recommendations in cyberspace have lost their effectiveness in people's lives. Therefore, a lecturer is advised to be up-to-date and to consult a stylist exclusively on how to perform. An experienced stylist gives useful information about various topics like as dressing (which can vary depending on audience and environment characteristics), head address, body language, walking pattern and the standing and turning style in the small conference hall. An artist consultant can also analyze the lecturer's behavior and guide him/her on more slight issues such as blinking, clearing the throat and coughing. For example, soccer players get a lot of advice to learn how to express their happiness after their goal scoring. They even pay close attention to the color of their shoes because the particular color making them better seen by the reporter as well as their fans. It should be noted that some behavioral habits may be ridiculous or surprising to some audience and it can interfere with a successful performance[11].

3. Use of a professional team accompanying in creating the audiences' awareness of and facilitating the process of communicating with them: As mentioned before, lecture session is a full-fledged battlefield and the lecture must be fully ready and equipped. Having a team to see the execution environment beforehand, gives you a report of participants' status, be familiar with technical and technological matters, and fix potential technical defects, can be very effective in the quality of performance. It's definitely up to you how guests are treated and how the temperature, light and conditions of the chairs are. Furthermore, accompanying team members can sit amongst listeners and guide them in communicating as much as possible. People possessing more flexibility and high skills in social relationships will be more successful in lecturing. We need to be flexible in order to reinforce and return the energy we receive from our audiences. We need to be able to manage and take advantage of all the unexpected events that occur during the speech[12]. In this case, Maziar Fallahi states that "I remember once the electricity was suddenly cut off in a big concert, and I decided to continue to my performance without the music and the microphone. The sound of the crowd along with the light of their mobile phones made a romantic situation. Not only that situation was very pleasure, but also it exhibited an example of a crisis management".

Ahead of live interviews, a president recruits several journalist to ask him/her unexpectedly difficult, unrelated and challenging questions in order to develop his/her ability to answer such questions in front of the people.

It is very important how to start a lecture. In fact, in a 5-minute speech, the first seconds are the golden time to attract the audiences' attention. If a lecturer cannot communicate well in the first few seconds, he/she may miss an opportunity to have a successful lecture. The first minutes of a performance are so significant that there are usually various programs for these critical moments. For instance, at concerts, it is important to plan how a singer enter the stage (called concert opening). Depending on the emotional atmosphere of the session, it might be more appropriate to start a lecture with a bit of poetry, an interesting sentence, or an exciting topic. To do these, you can also consult with a lecture trainer[7].

4. Sense of humor: having the sense of humor is another fundamental factor in a lecture. It is really helpful in both attracting audiences and communicating with them. Actually a very serious and formal lecture can never be successful. However, it is definitely not allowed to exaggerate using the humors. The lecturers also have to be careful not to use the offensive humors. "I'm sorry to be lecturing among your speech session!!!!" This is an example of a humor sentence which can be used sometimes to silence people who disturb your lecture session by speaking together. With this kind of sentences, in addition to achieving your purpose, in a humorous way, you have asked people to respect ethical principles[13].

Finally, it should be addressed that none of the performances are the same as before and all current formulas and rules may also not be responsive during performance session. So the more performance a lecturer has, the better he/she will get familiar with the art of performance. The art which results in the acquisition of "improvisation" in order to create pleasant scientific session for the audiences. Since we live in a century that breaking the norms seems to be acceptable, sometimes we can utilize this method to distinguish our lecture from others'. However, it should be considered that a lecture session is not a suitable place for any joke or sentence that suddenly comes to the mind.

Conclusion

To sum up, we emphasize that performance is an art and learning artistic perspectives to enhance listener's engagement and interaction, is key factor for being successful in lecture sessions. Therefore, learning these principles is essential for critical lectures and we

repeatedly recommend that if you are not going to use these artistic principles, it is better not to lecture at all.

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