



WRITING A SPEECH WITH PURPOSE

LEVEL 1 PROJECT



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TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

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PART 1: WRITING A SPEECH WITH PURPOSE



LEARN ABOUT BASE CAMP AND ANSWER QUESTIONS



For most members, this will be among your first few Pathways projects. Set aside some time as you review the learning to explore Base Camp. Make sure you know where to find Feedback so you can send and receive messages and see your badges, review the Tutorials and Resources page for anything that might help you as you work through your projects. If you haven't already done so, check out the Speech Evaluations page and review "How to Evaluate."

INTRODUCTION

Each speech you deliver during your Toastmasters meetings or outside is a reflection of who you are and what you want to contribute. You may be looking to share information, entertain your audience, persuade or inspire them. Whatever your goal, the first step is to write a speech that has meaning, not only for you, but for every member of your audience.

In this project you will learn strategies for selecting a topic, defining a purpose, and producing a well-written and organized speech. You will learn different organizational structures for speeches, and how to create clear transitions between sections of your speech.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT



Purpose: The purpose of this project is to learn or review basic methods for writing a speech and to present a well-organized speech on any topic.

Overview: Select a topic that appeals to you. It can be anything. Be sure your topic is narrow enough to be an effective 5- to 7-minute speech. Clearly define your topic and consider your goal for your speech. Before you organize your speech, identify and express your purpose in a single sentence. Practice your speech and refine its organization. Present your speech at a club meeting.

Throughout this project you will see icons in the margins next to the text. These icons indicate additional resources available online.



Video: Sign in to Base Camp to watch a video that supports this project.



Interactive Activity: Sign in to Base Camp to complete an interactive activity.



Resource: Sign in to Base Camp to view this resource online.



Weblink: Return to your digital project when you see this icon to link to a website or Base Camp location.



For all assignment details and requirements, review the Project Checklist on page 17.

ASSESS YOUR SKILLS



Evaluate your current skill level by rating each statement.

Select the appropriate number based on your skills today:

5 **4** **3** **2** **1**
EXEMPLARY **EXCEL** **ACCOMPLISHED** **EMERGING** **DEVELOPING**

Pre-Project					Statement	Post-Project				
5	4	3	2	1	I am comfortable selecting speech topics.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I am comfortable organizing information into a presentation.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I am confident in my ability to clearly define the purpose of a speech.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I am confident in my ability to create clear transitions.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I am cognizant of the many different organizational styles used to present information to audiences.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I recognize how this project applies to my life outside of Toastmasters.	5	4	3	2	1

COMPETENCIES

The following is a list of competencies that you will learn and practice in this project.

- ▶ Write an engaging speech on any topic.
- ▶ Organize a speech clearly to maximize audience understanding.
- ▶ Design and write a speech with meaningful content.
- ▶ Craft clear and engaging transitions between main sections of your speech.
- ▶ Establish and fulfill a clear purpose for your speech.

PART 2: WRITE AN ENGAGING SPEECH

For some members, writing a speech is the easy part. For others, they struggle with the first step. There are as many methods for developing a strong speech as there are writers, but there are a few general tools that can help, starting with a strong topic. Choosing a topic that lends itself to the time you have to deliver your speech and will engage your audience is the first step to succeeding.

Once your topic is decided, there are a few questions you can answer to help turn the topic into a compelling speech. This section includes resources to help you. Be sure to download the resources and try them. They might be just the tool you need to ease your writing process.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

The first place to start is to understand what a well-organized speech looks like. The design of a speech can enhance audience members' understanding of your topic and your purpose. When your speech is well-structured and easy to follow, it is more effective. The following is a list of some of the organizational structures that may help you during the writing process.

Chronological

Chronologically organized speeches follow a sequence of events.

Topical

A topical structure organizes speeches by topics and subtopics. Break your speech into sections that explain major concepts related to your topic, followed by smaller and smaller subtopics.

Spatial

A spatial structure organizes a speech by geography or the physical structure of the topic. Construct a speech that discusses the impact of your topic upon a region or the world. Spatial also refers to content that covers the physical landscape of a specific location. For example, if you are giving a speech about Germany, you may organize your presentation in a way that implies movement across the country. Your content could begin in the south at the Alps and then travel northward towards the Baltic Sea.

Causal

A causal structure organizes speeches to link a cause to an effect, or an effect to its cause.

Comparative

A comparative structure organizes speeches by describing two or more objects and their shared and/or different attributes. Show how your topic compares to another by examining similarities and differences.

Problem/Solution

Speeches organized by problem and solution are arranged in a particular sequence. First state the issue and explain its significance. Then propose a feasible and advantageous solution.

Particular/General/Particular

A particular/general/particular structure organizes speeches by a specific example that frames broader content and illustrates the main or personal objective of the speech. The example given at the beginning of your speech is echoed in the conclusion to help clarify or elucidate your primary message.

ORGANIZING YOUR SPEECH

1. Marie feels that her Toastmasters club could be doing more to reach out to guests of the club. She wants to start an email list for new potential club members. What is the best way for Marie to present this idea in a speech for her club members?

- Spatial
- Comparative
- Problem/Solution
- Chronological

2. Tomasz is preparing a speech about the impact a positive attitude can have for everyone, and he wants to use an example of a day in his office when he worked with a colleague who approached a project positively. What would be the best way to structure this speech?

- Spatial
- Comparative
- Particular/General/Particular
- Chronological

3. Peter wants to present information about breeds of dogs from three different groups—hound, working, and sporting. He also wants to present examples from each group. What would be the best way to structure this speech?

- Causal
- Topical
- Particular/General/Particular
- Chronological

4. Saif is passionate about trains. He has liked them since he was a child. He wants to share the history of the locomotive with his Toastmasters club—its invention, how it changed the world, and its modern-day role in the transportation industry. What is the best way for Saif to organize his speech?

- Causal
- Topical
- Problem/Solution
- Chronological

5. Zhang wants to tell his audience that regular exercise contributes to better overall health. What would be the best way to structure this speech?

- Causal
- Topical
- Problem/Solution
- Chronological

6. Sonia is interested in the different economic structures of two countries. They would like to present the similarities and differences to their fellow Toastmasters. What is the best organizational structure for Sonia to use?

- Spatial
- Comparative
- Causal
- Problem/Solution

7. Francesco wants to talk about climbing the world's tallest mountain. He'd like to talk about what happens to the body at different levels of elevation on a mountain. What is the best way for Francesco to structure his presentation?

- Spatial
- Comparative
- Particular/General/Particular
- Problem/Solution

Answers: 1. Problem/Solution; 2. Particular/General/Particular; 3. Topical; 4. Chronological; 5. Causal; 6. Comparative; 7. Spatial

WRITING YOUR SPEECH



A successful speech begins with a meaningful topic. A topic that has little or no meaning to you is unlikely to produce an engaging speech. Keep in mind that even when your topic is determined by a Pathways project during a Toastmasters meeting or by the parameters of a work assignment, how you cover that topic is often up to you.

Clearly define your topic and write it down. As you work through writing your speech, return to your topic and make sure the speech aligns with your topic from beginning to end.

For this project, focus on choosing a topic that is meaningful to you. Your goal is to write a speech that is compelling to any audience.

TELL A COMPELLING STORY

Once your topic is decided, it is time to begin thinking about composing your speech. You learned in your Ice Breaker project that a good speech is like a good story. The basic structure is an introduction, a main body with transitions, and a conclusion.



Introduction

At its most basic, your introduction is intended to grab audience members' attention while introducing your topic.

Body and Transitions

In the body of the speech, each section should pertain to a single idea with clear transitions to the next section. Transitions can be as simple as "First, I'd like to talk about..." or "Next, we'll turn our attention to..."

The description of a scene can be used as a transition. For instance, "Now, let me take you to a mid-century farm outside of Dublin."

Time in a speech organized chronologically (e.g., "11:30 a.m. on June 4") can work the same way. Whichever method you choose, the transition signals to your audience that you are moving to another part of the topic.

Conclusion

A strong conclusion brings your speech to a close, tying all the content together and leaving an impact on your audience.

PREPARE YOUR PRESENTATION

Consider your past experiences as a speaker and an audience member when you write your speech. Most of your speeches for Toastmasters will be 5 to 7 minutes in length. For some speakers and speeches, that may seem like forever, but for others, you are likely to feel that you cannot possibly cover the information you want to share in that time.

Often, speakers feel pressure to include everything they know. They may find that even after a speech is written, they feel compelled to add more, want just a few more minutes to make their point, or wish they could add just one more detail.

Each speech will require you to make choices about how you will use your time, what is most important to you and your audience, and what content will deliver your message most effectively.

Compare a time when you weren't able to communicate what you wanted to say in a speech or even a conversation with a time when you accomplished your communication goals.

It is likely that you had a clear sense of what you wanted to say when you accomplished your goals. Uncertainty about what to communicate can make any public speaking situation a great challenge. Stepping back to consider what matters most to you can help you outline your priorities before you begin writing your speech.

Once you have a clear idea of what is most important to you, you can balance delivering the content of your speech with the time you are allotted and make conscious, well-informed choices about what to keep, remove, or add.

THREE SMALL QUESTIONS



Before you begin to write, answer three questions:

What is the most important thing I want to say?

Choose one thing.

Why does it matter to the audience?

Consider only the big things.

What do I want people to hold in their hearts and minds long after my speech?

Again, one big thing.

Meet Alyssa: Alyssa has chosen growing orchids as her topic. She is a botanist specializing in the search for new orchid species. The breadth of her knowledge is hard to distill into a single, narrow topic, but answering the following questions can help.

What is the most important thing I want to say? For Alyssa, it is that cultivating orchids locally encourages people to think about plants globally.

Why does it matter to the audience? Alyssa comes from a place with long, dark winters. She knows that many members of her club like to find ways to bring spring inside during those months.

What do I want people to hold in their hearts and minds long after my speech? Alyssa wants audience members to walk away feeling that it is worth the effort to understand orchids and their benefit.

Once those three questions are answered, Alyssa's overarching goal is clear to her. She is ready to organize her most important points and create a speech that is concise.

The next step is to pull out the details that best support that goal and the main idea of the speech.

For Alyssa, there are five fundamental details:

DETAIL 1: Orchids are rain forest plants, and they are profoundly important to their indigenous ecosystem.

DETAIL 2: They are generally beautiful.

DETAIL 3: They can make wonderful house plants.

DETAIL 4: They are an excellent barometer for the health of a rain forest ecosystem.

DETAIL 5: They have known and unknown beneficial qualities, including medicinal.



TRANSITIONS

Part of developing a strong speech is smoothing the transitions between sections. Transitions most often occur between the introduction and body of a speech, between thoughts in the body of a speech, and between the body and the conclusion.

Alyssa will need polished transitions to help her audience members move with her from one topic to another. These valuable bridges help audiences follow the ideas presented. Words that connect one section to the next are transitional words. There are many. A few examples include *afterward*, *also*, *but*, *then*, *finally*, *instead*, and *later*.

Common phrases can also connect parts of your speech. Phrases such as *according to*, *as a result*, *for example*, and *this means* can ease your audience from one part of your speech to the next.

Because of Alyssa's knowledge and interest, it would be easy for her to speak on any one of the details at length, create smooth transitions between sections, and develop a compelling speech.

However, Alyssa has a purpose beyond sharing information that has to be considered before she begins to write.

PART 3: KNOW YOUR PURPOSE

The interesting thing about developing a speech is that you can have a very clear idea of what you want to say without ever considering why you are saying it. Alyssa has a pretty clear purpose for her speech already, but there are a few other things to know and consider.

DEFINING YOUR PURPOSE

General Purpose

Every speech has a general purpose whether it is defined by the speaker or not.

A general purpose is the broad intent of a speech. The most common general purposes are:

To inform. This type of speech includes lectures, briefings, or demonstrations.

To persuade. This type of speech includes sales presentations, campaign speeches, or fundraising speeches.

To entertain. This is often an anecdotal speech that make a point.

To inspire. This is the type of speech that might be delivered at a commencement or motivational seminar.

SPECIFIC PURPOSE

Concise, well-developed speeches also have a clearly defined specific purpose. A specific purpose focuses on one explicit aspect of the general purpose.

A specific purpose can be expressed as a one-sentence statement about what you hope to accomplish in your speech. The statement should be precisely worded so that anyone who reads your speech will have no doubt about your purpose. Your specific purpose must be realistic and possible to achieve. It also needs to be worded from the audience's point of view. Clarify exactly what you want the audience to be able to do when you've finished your presentation.

Because Alyssa is working in her Engaging Humor path, her general purpose is to entertain her audience.

With that in mind, she will work to bring humor into her speech while meeting her specific purpose. Alyssa's purpose statement is: Audience members will learn about orchids and their value in rain forests and as house plants.

She will share anecdotes and use a multimedia presentation to fulfill both her general and specific purposes.

PART 4: PLAN YOUR PRESENTATION

As adult learners, it can be a challenge to find the time to really think about new information and develop new habits. Every Pathways project includes a section called “Review and Apply.” It is intended to help you home in on what matters in the project and perhaps, to identify what you have learned and what you would like to learn more about.

Many projects in Pathways, including this one, include resources to support your work on the assignment. If you haven’t already, be sure to download the resources and see if they help you accomplish your goals. All resources can be found within the project where they are referred to and also on the Evaluation and Resources page. Many can also be found on the Tutorials and Resources page on Base Camp.

Evaluations are intended to be a collaborative process. Just like the Ice Breaker evaluation, if you know who your evaluator will be, share the evaluation resource before your club meeting with the top filled in with your speech title and any specific skills or behaviors you would like your evaluator to watch for you. Ask questions if you have any and know your fellow club members support you and your effort.

REVIEW AND APPLY

Before you complete the assignment, take a moment to read through the questions on the screen. If you are not able to answer them comfortably, review the project.

- ▶ What three questions can you ask yourself before you begin to write your speech?
- ▶ What is the value of writing a clearly organized speech?
- ▶ What is the value of an engaging transition between main sections of your speech?
- ▶ How can defining your general and specific purposes help you write an effective, engaging speech?

COMPLETE YOUR ASSIGNMENT



Now that you have read through the project, plan and prepare your speech or report.

Review: Return to page 3 to review your assignment.

Organize: Use the Project Checklist on page 17 to review the steps and add your own. This will help you organize and prepare your assignment.

Schedule: Work with the Vice President Education to schedule your speech.

Prepare: Prepare for your evaluation. Review the evaluation resources on pages 19-21 and share all resources with your evaluator before your speech. You may choose to share your evaluation resource online.

PART 5: COMPLETE YOUR PROJECT

Plan your speech before you schedule with your Vice President Education. Because the content of your speech is so important, be sure you have taken the time you need to develop the best speech you are capable of preparing at this time.

BEFORE YOU MOVE ON

Be sure you have completed all components of this project. Once you do, it will show “Complete” in your transcript on Base Camp and your Base Camp manager will be notified you are moving on to your next project.

If you have:

- ▶ Reviewed all the material in the Writing a Speech with Purpose project
- ▶ Delivered your speech to your club
- ▶ Received an evaluation from a fellow club member
- ▶ Completed the “Assess Your Skills—After” screen in your digital Writing a Speech with Purpose project

Congratulations! You have completed your Writing a Speech with Purpose project and are ready to move on to your next project.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

Writing a Speech with Purpose

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to learn or review basic methods for writing a speech with a defined purpose and to present a well-organized speech on any topic.

Overview: Select a topic that appeals to you. It can be anything. Be sure your topic is narrow enough to be an effective 5- to 7-minute speech.

Clearly define your topic and consider your goal for your speech. Before you organize your speech, identify and express your purpose in a single sentence. Practice your speech and refine its organization. Present your speech at a club meeting.

This project includes:

- ▶ Defining a general purpose and a specific purpose.
- ▶ Topic and Purpose Worksheet
- ▶ The Speech Outline Worksheet
- ▶ A 5- to 7-minute speech

Below are tasks you will need to complete for this project. Please remember, your project is unique to you. You may alter the following list to incorporate any other tasks necessary for your project.

- Select a topic for your speech that is narrow enough to cover in your speaking time. For example, the topic of “dogs” is so broad that a 5- to 7-minute speech would appear shallow. Narrowing your topic to “young Golden Retrievers” allows you to develop a speech that will meet a defined, specific purpose.

- Complete the Topic and Purpose Worksheet to choose a strong topic and identify your general and specific purposes.

- Schedule your speech with the Vice President Education.

EVALUATION FORM

Writing a Speech with Purpose

Member Name _____

Date _____

Evaluator _____

Speech Length: 5 – 7 minutes

Speech Title _____

Speech Purpose Statement

Project Purpose

The purpose of this project is to learn or review basic methods for writing a speech with a defined purpose and to present a well-organized speech on any topic.

Notes for the Evaluator

The member completing this project is working to write a speech with purpose. The speech they create must be well-written and clearly focused. Their goal is to meet their expressed purpose statement with a well-executed speech.

About this speech:

- ▶ The member will present a well-organized, well-delivered speech.
- ▶ The speech may be humorous, informational, or any style the member chooses. The speech content and style should work well together.

General Comments

You excelled at:

You may want to work on:

To challenge yourself:

For the evaluator: In addition to your verbal evaluation, please complete this form.

5 EXEMPLARY	4 EXCELS	3 ACCOMPLISHED	2 EMERGING	1 DEVELOPING	
Clarity: Spoken language is clear and is easily understood					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Vocal Variety: Uses tone, speed, and volume as tools					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Eye Contact: Effectively uses eye contact to engage audience					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Gestures: Uses physical gestures effectively					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Audience Awareness: Demonstrates awareness of audience engagement and needs					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Comfort Level: Appears comfortable with the audience					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Specific Speech Purpose: The specific purpose was clear and supported by the speech style and organization					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
General Speech Purpose: The speech effectively met the expressed general purpose					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	

This criteria lists the specific goals and expectations for the speech. Please review each level to help you complete the evaluation.

Clarity

- 5 – Is an exemplary public speaker who is always understood
- 4 – Excels at communicating using the spoken word
- 3 – Spoken language is clear and is easily understood
- 2 – Spoken language is somewhat unclear or challenging to understand
- 1 – Spoken language is unclear or not easily understood

Vocal Variety

- 5 – Uses the tools of tone, speed, and volume to perfection
- 4 – Excels at using tone, speed, and volume as tools
- 3 – Uses tone, speed, and volume as tools
- 2 – Use of tone, speed, and volume requires further practice
- 1 – Ineffective use of tone, speed, and volume

Eye Contact

- 5 – Uses eye contact to convey emotion and elicit response
- 4 – Uses eye contact to gauge audience reaction and response
- 3 – Effectively uses eye contact to engage audience
- 2 – Eye contact with audience needs improvement
- 1 – Makes little or no eye contact with audience

Gestures

- 5 – Fully integrates physical gestures with content to deliver an exemplary speech
- 4 – Uses physical gestures as a tool to enhance speech
- 3 – Uses physical gestures effectively
- 2 – Uses somewhat distracting or limited gestures
- 1 – Uses very distracting gestures or no gestures

Specific Purpose

- 5 – Exemplary speech content and organization clearly fulfilled the specific purpose of the speech with precision
- 4 – The specific purpose was well-executed and the speech style and organization enhanced the speech and topic
- 3 – The specific purpose was clear and supported by the speech style and organization

- 2 – The specific purpose was unclear and/or the speech style and organization did not support the specific purpose
- 1 – The specific purpose was not expressed and the speech style and organization detracted from the speech topic

Comfort Level

- 5 – Appears completely self-assured with the audience
- 4 – Appears fully at ease with the audience
- 3 – Appears comfortable with the audience
- 2 – Appears uncomfortable with the audience
- 1 – Appears highly uncomfortable with the audience

Interest and Purpose

- 5 – Fully engages audience with exemplary, well-constructed content that expertly meets the purpose of the speech
- 4 – Engages audience with highly compelling, well-constructed content that meets the specific purpose of the speech
- 3 – Engages audience with interesting, well-constructed content that supports the specific purpose of the speech
- 2 – Content is interesting but not well-constructed or is well-constructed but not interesting and may or may not meet the specific purpose of the speech
- 1 – Content is neither interesting nor well-constructed and does not meet the specific purpose of the speech

General Speech Purpose

- 5 – Expressed general purpose was met with excellent content and exemplary delivery
- 4 – Expressed general purpose was well met with excellent content
- 3 – The speech effectively met the expressed general purpose
- 2 – The speech came close to meeting the expressed general purpose, but some points or parts missed meeting that goal
- 1 – The speech did not meet the expressed general purpose

SPEECH OUTLINE WORKSHEET

Opening

A. Greeting

You may thank the Toastmaster or person who introduced you and acknowledge fellow Toastmasters and guests.

B. Capture audience interest

Begin with information about your topic that will capture the attention of the audience, such as an interesting fact about your topic that you discovered in your research.

C. Introduce your topic

D. Transition

This is a statement or sentence designed to lead smoothly into your first main point.

Body

A. Main point 1

1. Sub-point

Details and specifics about your main point.

Support/evidence

Use examples, facts, or statistics from your research to illustrate your main point and sub-point.

2. Sub-point

Support/evidence

3. Sub-point

Support/evidence

4. Transition

B. Main point 2

1. Sub-point

Support/evidence

2. Sub-point

Support/evidence

3. Transition

C. Main point 3

1. Sub-point

Support/evidence

2. Sub-point

Support/evidence

3. Transition

Signal that the conclusion of the speech is approaching.

Conclusion

A. Brief summary of your topic

B. Review main points

Main point 1

Main point 2

Main point 3

C. Close with impact

Finish with a strong statement; consider mirroring your attention-grabbing opening.

SPEECH TOPIC AND PURPOSE WORKSHEET

This worksheet is designed to help you narrow or broaden your topic to best accommodate a 5- to 7- minute speech and to provide a framework for defining your purpose. By focusing on broad ideas and narrowing down to themes and concepts that meet your purpose, you can design a speech with strong, well-developed content that fulfills your purpose and meets expectations of any audience.

Take a minute to write your topic in very broad terms. For example, if you were planning to talk about types of clouds, your broadest view of that topic might be weather or the atmosphere.

Broad topic options

Now consider several options for narrower topics based on your selected broad topic. This is brainstorming. It does not matter if a topic sounds ridiculous or far-fetched to you. Write them all down.

If we look at the topic of weather, some of the narrower topics might be hurricanes, types of clouds, lightning, or even umbrellas. There are several lines provided here but feel free to use a separate document to add more.

Narrow topic options

Once you have a list of possible topics, it is important to define your purpose. Take a moment to consider the general purpose of your speech. You are limited to a single general purpose. Select only one from the list below. Consider the Pathways project you are completing and any requirements of your assignment.

- To inform To persuade To entertain To inspire

It is time to describe your specific purpose for this speech. Like the topic-selection activity, this is brainstorming. In the example, the broad topic might be weather. The narrow speech topic could be fluffy, or cumulus, clouds. The general purpose could be to inform. A few specific purposes could be: know when to go inside, recognize cloud shapes, plan your wardrobe based on the types of clouds you see, or recognize when clouds indicate dangerous weather.

From the list of specific purposes you created, choose the four or five that are most important to you and rank them in order.

Turn your top-priority specific purpose into a purpose statement. In our example, the speaker wants to inform and selects a specific purpose of helping audience members to recognize when clouds indicate dangerous weather. The purpose statement might sound like this: “The audience will be able to recognize non-threatening fluffy, or cumulus, clouds and identify the difference between those and the more dangerous storm, or cumulonimbus, clouds.”

You may need to write several purpose statements before it feels right. Remember that a specific purpose must be a single sentence written from audience members’ point of view that is also attainable.

Purpose statements

Once you clarify your general and specific purposes, let’s return to your topic. Of the topics you brainstormed, which one has the strongest connection to your purpose? For example, our speaker might have had “choose the best umbrella,” and “recognize when the weather is turning dangerous,” on their topics list. Either topic could work with the purpose statement but they would produce very different speeches.

Now that you have set a general purpose, defined a specific purpose, and selected a topic that fulfills both, you are ready to plan and write a successful speech.

