Three-Minute Thesis Workshop

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and that's just four of its nine functions.
The Rhetorical Situation

Rhetorical Situation = the situation that shapes the argument and the potential of the argument

What’s in that situation?
- Audience
- Speaker/author
- Purpose
- Constraints (word limit, medium, etc.)
- The particular moment/exigence
Audience

- For 3MT – knowledgeable, academic, cross-disciplinary
  - So what does that mean about how to talk to them?
Purpose

- The purpose of my research is. . .

- Finish that sentence
  - Why does your research matter?
  - Why should people care?
  - What can you attach it to?
  - What questions has it answered?
  - What results can I share?
Constraints

YOUR THESIS IN 3 MINUTES:

WHY YOU'RE DOING IT
("MY SUPERVISOR TOLD ME TO DO IT" DOESN'T COUNT)

HOW YOU'RE DOING IT
(ASSUMING YOU KNOW)

HOW IT RELATES TO THE REAL WORLD
(UHM... PAUSE!)
Constraints

✓ One slide, no animation
Simple Rules for Success

1. Change the world
2. Make me care
3. Be passionate
Simple Rules for Success

1. Change the world

✓ Start with the big picture, a broad context

✓ Help your audience see that there is a problem (even if the problem isn’t at the top of their list) (create exigence)

✓ THEN explain how you are contributing to a solution
Simple Rules for Success

2. Make me care

- The audience needs to relate to the issue in order to follow the delivery
- Your audience has a broad capacity for caring—but you have to help develop it
Amy Marquardt,
Material Science Engineering, 2014 Winner
WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME?
WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME?
WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME?
Simple Rules for Success

3. Be passionate

✓ If you aren’t excited, why should I be?
Carly Muletz Wolz, Biology
“It’s the nature versus nurture debate applied to ideas: Are ideas born interesting or made interesting?”
A medium sized movie popcorn contains 37 grams of saturated fat, twice the recommended daily amount of saturated fat.
“A medium-sized ‘butter’ popcorn at a typical neighborhood movie theater contains more artery-clogging fat than a bacon-and-eggs breakfast, a Big Mac and fries for lunch, and a steak dinner with all the trimmings—combined!”
Made to Stick

1. Simple
2. Unexpected
3. Concrete
4. Credible
5. Emotional
6. Stories
Simple

- Not simplistic, not dumbed down. But the CORE of your idea.
  - Limited, focused
  - Often, you have to know the complex idea to make it simple (but not to make it dumb).
Overall, misnaming occurs typically within the same semantic social groups, with family members calling other family members by a wrong name belonging to another family member. Our finding that, across studies, most misnamed–named pairs were rated as only somewhat physically similar suggests that misnaming is likely not due to perceived physical similarity between the named and the misnamed. Our data instead suggest that, similar to studies of TOT states and slips of the tongue, misnaming of highly familiar individuals are influenced by both semantic and phonological factors. Potential substitutions for the correct name may be more likely to be used if they share semantic or phonetic properties with the correct name (Dell & Reich, 1981; White, Abrams, & Frame, 2013), which suggests that misnamings can occur at different stages of speech production. A comparison of the effect sizes for semantic similarity and phonetic similarity from the chi-square analysis revealed a larger effect of semantic group that was consistent across all four studies, even though sample characteristics and participant perspective (misnamer or misnamed) varied.

"It's a normal cognitive glitch," Deffler says.
Consistent with Study 1, these results suggest that instances of misnaming are common occurrences that participants can remember and report on; however, the retrospective nature of the survey may influence these findings. Additionally, misnaming between familiar individuals is not random. Rather, the wrong name used tends to be within the same semantic category and is affected by the phonetic similarity between the correct name and the name used.

It's not related to a bad memory or to aging, but rather to how the brain categorizes names. It's like having special folders for family names and friends' names stored in the brain. When people used the wrong name, overwhelmingly the name that was used was in the same category, Deffler says. It was in the same folder.
Results and discussion
Participants provided a total of 292 cases of misnaming. Note that here and in the subsequent studies, because of missing data, some frequencies do not sum to the total N, and some percentages may not sum to 100%. Here and throughout the paper, we report all of our results, but mainly discuss those that address our hypotheses. (See Table 1 for the relevant data on the demographics of the misnamer and misnamed, as well as characteristics of the misnaming incidents.) To summarize, misnamers were more often female than male, were almost always older than the misnamed, and saw or spoke to the misnamed regularly. Each reported misnaming was typically experienced every few months, yearly, or rarely, and the misnamed tended to be called a single name only during a misnaming episode. Perceived negative mood did not have an effect on misnaming.

And there was one group who was especially prone to the naming mix-ups.

"Moms, especially moms," Deffler says. "Any mom I talked to says, 'You know, I've definitely done this.'"
The Unexpected

“Instead of sucking out your blood, it’s liquefying one of your internal organs.”

“We are covered with microbes”
The Unexpected

- There’s probably something so familiar to you that you have forgotten it’s interesting
- Tell a neighbor the most interesting thing about your research
Abstract/Concrete

- What in your draft is abstract? Should it and could it be more concrete?
- What in your draft is too concrete? Could it and should it be more abstract?
ABSTRACTION LADDER

Start reading from the bottom UP

8. "wealth"
   8. The word "wealth" is at an extremely high level of abstraction, omitting almost all reference to the characteristics of Bessie.

7. "asset"
   7. When Bessie is referred to as an "asset," still more of her characteristics are left out.

6. "farm assets"
   6. When Bessie is included among "farm assets," reference is made only to what she has in common with all other salable items on the farm.

5. "livestock"
   5. When Bessie is referred to as "livestock," only those characteristics she has in common with pigs, chickens, goats, etc., are referred to.

4. "cow"
   4. The word "cow" stands for the characteristics we have abstracted as common to cow1, cow2, cow3 . . . cown. Characteristics peculiar to specific cows are left out.

3. "Bessie"
   3. The word "Bessie" (cow1) is the name we give to the object of perception of level 2. The name is not the object; it merely stands for the object and omits reference to many of the characteristics of the object.

2. The cow we perceive is not the word, but the object of experience, that which our nervous system abstracts (selects) from the totality that constitutes the process-cow. Many of the characteristics of the process-cow are left out.
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1. The cow known to science ultimately consists of atoms, electrons, etc., according to present-day scientific inference. Characteristics (represented by circles) are infinite at this level and ever-changing. This is the process level.
Abstract/Concrete

- Effective speakers “climb up and down the ladder of abstraction”

Roy Peter Clark *Writing Tools: 50 Essential Strategies for Every Writer*.
Emotional

- Emotions ≠ tears
  - *Pathos* – appeal to the concerns of the audience
Stories

- Characters/actors (not necessarily human)
- Challenges/a quest
- Some kind of tension about whether the characters will succeed or fail in the challenges
- A beginning, middle, end
The Slide

- **Persuade** with the image: what do you need to explain that your words can’t fully convey
  - Illustrate
  - Explain a process
  - Offer data – graphic representation of results
  - Offer analysis or causality
  - Tie things together

- But not all of that!
Spoken v. Written Prose

You are speaking these presentations. So to compose, don’t just write them, but speak them.
Using Questions

You may have been told not to use questions in academic writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal</th>
<th>Formal Alternatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do we mean by “stalking”?</td>
<td>McEwan et al. define stalking as “a long-term commitment to engaging in persistent campaigns of harassment that have the potential to cause immense ...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://nool.apa.uoit.ca/portfolio/formal-academic-writing/
Using Questions

- But this isn’t academic writing.
- Questions engage
- Do you remember the answer to this: “But why care about woodland salamanders and their microbes?”
- Were you compelled to wonder about the answer?
Words

- What are the key words that your audience really needs to know?
- 1000 most common words
- Words to use, words to explain
- Connecting to the known
  - Metaphors/analogies, stories, “known-new”
Questions?