

Public Speaking
Prof. Binod Mishra
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology - Roorkee

Lecture: 30
Debates

Good morning friends and welcome back to NPTEL online certification course on Public Speaking. My dear friends, in the previous lecture we talked about negotiations and in this lecture we are going to talk about debates. Friends, blessed we are that we have the freedom of speech. We have the facility to argue and to debate on several issues but what if we are to encash on and we use this freedom for greater goods not only for ourselves but also for the society in a world.

So, full of volatile situations-- there comes a time when we have to argue and debate to find out ways to overcome a crisis, be it social, be it political or be it something else, in public speaking we most often come across such situations. **But** with our speaking skills and with our strategies we can always see that we can come out triumphantly. Now when such situations arise most of us start thinking that could we really come out of it? Hence, it will not be difficult to discuss the requisites of a debate.

And how to succeed at it and make life easier by solving or clearing certain doubts through a successful debate. Maybe for some time you may think it is an easy exercise but if you come across certain difficult conditions where you find that debating power always helps an individual win, then you will perhaps find how important are debating skills. You will realize not only its importance as an individual skill but also you will be able row your boat successfully throughout your lives.

So, let us find out what are debates and what are the skills that can help you overcome the difficult task of winning in a debate. In the previous lecture we had already discussed that negotiation is a sort of art.

(Refer Slide Time: 03:26)

Debate: An Indispensable Art

Debate is a form of public speaking which involves the process of **inquiry** and **argumentation** in order to arrive at a **reasoned judgement** on a **proposition**.

- ❑ An indispensable skill for a democratic society – since majority of its decisions are arrived at by debates in law courts and legislative bodies.
- ❑ The ancient Greek scholar, **Aristotle**, emphasized the significance of debate in its four functions:
 - It **checks** the triumph of **fraud and injustice**.
 - **Rhetoric**, a crucial component of debate, serves as a **method of instruction** for the society.
 - It generates a **balanced outlook** by making us see both sides of a case.
 - A powerful tool to **safeguard our interests**, freedom and rights in a democratic society.



You might also have a sort of question as to--- Can debate also be an art? Debating is an indispensable art. Now during your school days, you might have come across debate competitions where you might have seen that there are two contestants and these contestants either speak for or against on a topic that is a given and then the audience members apart from the audience members you have some panellists. So, debate is a form of public speaking which involves the process of enquiry and argumentation in order to arrive at a reasoned judgment or proposition.

Those many of you who might think that debating should be confined only to schools and colleges perhaps skip over the fact that in most of the conditions of life whether it is in parliament or in politics, it is one's debating skills that helps one have an edge over other. So, debating is an indispensable skill for a democratic society. Since majority of the decisions are taken after the debates, either in law courts and legislative bodies.

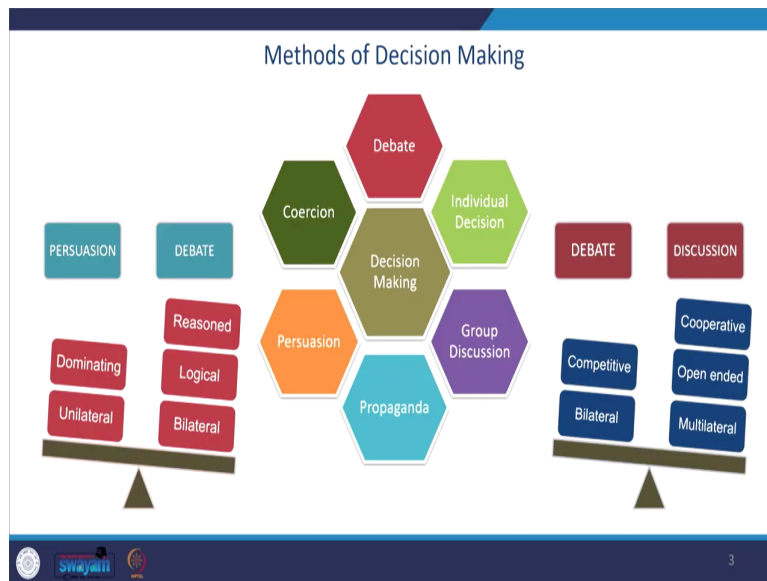
It is very pertinent to be reminded of the great Greek scholar Aristotle who emphasized the significance of debate having its four functions and what are these four functions? Debates actually help check the triumph of fraud and injustice, fine. You might have felt that when a topic is given and when the two parties put forth their views, you try to, as an audience, you can find out where lies the fairness. It is not only about the speaking skills but it is also about the reasoning skills.

And as Aristotle says----“ Rhetoric is a crucial component of debate as it serves as a method of instruction for the society.” In addition, debates generate a balanced outlook by making us

see both sides of our case. So, people who win in the debates---- it is not they win only because of their speaking ability but also because of their ability of reasoning. So, debate is a powerful tool to safeguard our interests, freedom and rights in a democratic society.

We will always find that in a debate what a person, what a debater says, for the same is said against by the other party and the audience members actually out of this and against deliveries they try to find out where lies the truth where lies the reason. Now after every debate we can come to a decision, is not it?

(Refer Slide Time: 06:38)

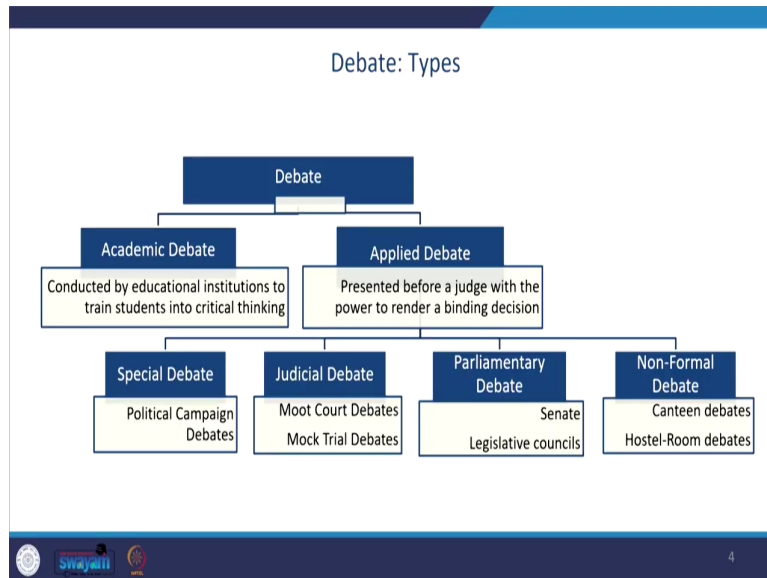


If we simply look at some of the debates and if you also look at some of the decisions that we make in our life in our organizations, you will often find that at times the two parties which one is in favour and the other party is against, have their own lines of thinking fine. So, debate at times becomes a sort of discussion but then a discussion in the debate requires co-operative open ended multilateral fine.

So, in discussion what we do? We try to cooperate but in debates what we do? In debates we always try to contradict through our reason through our logic. And you have to practice the art of persuasion. In debate what a person speaks as a debater, it is it is actually his own line of thinking but he has to take other people into confidence by his reason. So, here we can find several methods of decision making, say for example that debate is one, then one can have an individual decision, then group discussion.

All these are certain ways through which, certain processes through which we can come to a decision. Now you might be thinking because till now you might have only experienced debates in schools and colleges but of course there can be debates in parliaments which you might have watched either on TV or you might have listened to on radio or whatsoever.

(Refer Slide Time: 08:19)



So, debate can be both academic debates can be applied. So, an academic debate is often conducted in schools and colleges where students are trained and the basic aim behind this training is to develop a sort of critical thinking ability whereas when we talk about an applied debate you might have at times if you have visited the law courts you might have found an advocate. The two advocates are actually while they are discussing a case one is speaking for and the other is speaking against.

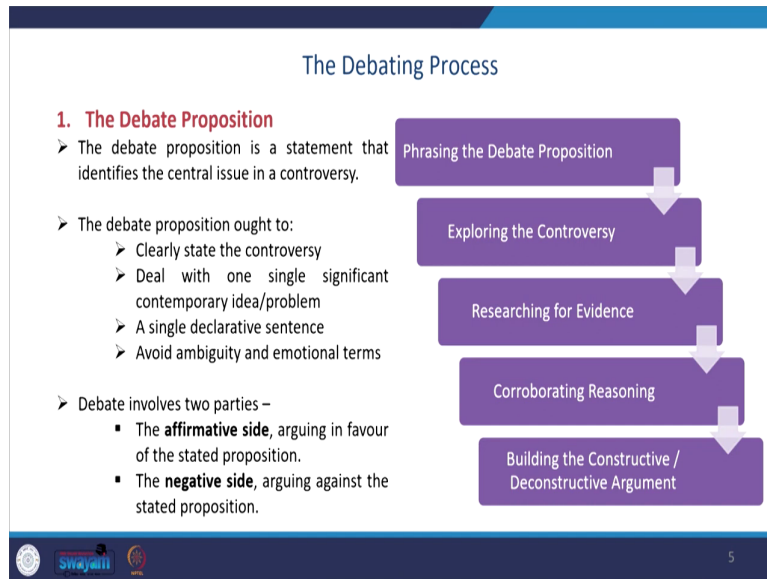
And the judge who is listening to everything, he finally based on what arguments for or against; are delivered. So, some decision out of this is taken. Now, when we talk about applied debate there can be some other types also---o special debate you might have found that during elections there are political campaign debates. So, every party tries to speak in its own favour and at the same time they also try to sow the other side of the other parties in order to gain the access, gain the confidence of the audience members.

Then you can also come across judicial debate where court debates are there, mock trial debates are there then parliament in most of the cases you might find that there are debates going on in parliament also fine. And especially nowadays you can find if one can listen to these debates one can gain a lot of confidence and conviction fine. So, this can be one

training ground for many of the youngsters who want to try their luck in politics or in some other such professions where debating works.

And then there can be non- formal debates also where you sit in a very informal manner, you are debating with your friends especially in canteens in restaurants, in hotel rooms and all. So, these are some of the types of debates.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:41)



Now the question is when you get a time to participate in the debate. What should you do in order to win. Now debating is a process and there are certain steps involved into it. The very first is the debate proposition. You will find that a topic is given and when the topic is given, the topic is actually framed or phrased in such a manner that both the sides appear to be true are to the debaters.

And in this, one can put forward his or her views against the topic, they always say for the move and against the move. So, the debate proposition is a statement that identifies the central issue in a topic. Topic, at times, may appear to be a bit controversial because unless and until it is there, you will not generate much food for thought. So, the debate proposition should be, fine, it should be very clearly- stated. Of course, it is framed in a very subtle manner very clever way.

It should deal with one single significant contemporary idea or problem. At times in order to get the feedback of what other people think what are the views of the people also sometimes debates are organized. On many occasions the topics of debates can be a declarative sentence,

fine. And there is no room for ambiguity and emotional terms in debate proposition. We have always been saying that debate involves two parties--- one party speaks for which is affirmative side and the other is the negative one which actually speaks against the motion against the move.

So, the debating process involves phrasing the debate proposition. Then exploring the controversy. Now how to, do that. If you are going to participate in a debate how to start so, research for evidence corroborate for reasoning build the constructive or the deconstructive argument because some persons who will speak for the motion I will speak for it will appear to be very constructive. Whereas the other party because in debate one can always speak on both sides of the topic.

(Refer Slide Time: 13:09)

2. Exploring the Controversy

- For a productive debate, **controversy is an essential prerequisite**. An informed clash of ideas, interests or positions motions the debate towards effective judgement.
- A rigorous enquiry into the controversy involves:
 - Brainstorming of ideas
 - Gathering background material
 - A critical reading of the sources
 - Recording materials in an organized form
- The sources for researching into the controversial debate question include :-

Public Records

Library Visit

Books
Newspapers
Periodicals

Interviews
Correspondence

Direct Commu-
nication

Official
Database

Testimony

The World
Wide
Web

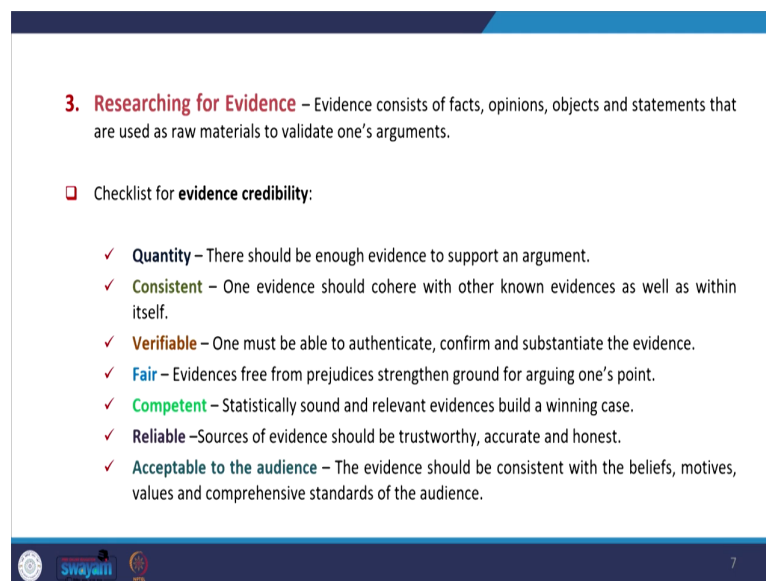
JSTOR
Google Scholar
ERIC

Now, how to explore the controversy, where to get the knowledge? Because as a debater; you do not have too much of knowledge about the topic sometimes even though you are interested. So, there are certain places where you can go and explore. Nowadays, of course internet is making your task easier but then in most of the debates when you require facts and figures you must consult the public records, visit library fine.

You must also get the data from newspapers, from periodicals, fine. There are certain interview correspondences also fine. Sometimes you can also go to several journals or JSTOR or Google Scholar or ERIC. We have already discussed how to get information, how to gather information when you are going to speak on a topic. So, debate is also one such example where you have to gather all sorts of data.

So, for a productive debate, controversy is a prerequisite, I mean topic will be framed in such a manner that it will appear as if it is very controversial. So, an informed clash of ideas, interests or positions motions the debate towards effective judgment and for that what a debater needs to do is to have a rigorous inquiry into the controversy by brainstorming, by gathering material, by having a critical reading of certain sources. And when you do that, you have all these you know all these places where you can search for information, explore information.

(Refer Slide Time: 14:54)



3. Researching for Evidence – Evidence consists of facts, opinions, objects and statements that are used as raw materials to validate one's arguments.

☐ Checklist for **evidence credibility**:

- ✓ **Quantity** – There should be enough evidence to support an argument.
- ✓ **Consistent** – One evidence should cohere with other known evidences as well as within itself.
- ✓ **Verifiable** – One must be able to authenticate, confirm and substantiate the evidence.
- ✓ **Fair** – Evidences free from prejudices strengthen ground for arguing one's point.
- ✓ **Competent** – Statistically sound and relevant evidences build a winning case.
- ✓ **Reliable** – Sources of evidence should be trustworthy, accurate and honest.
- ✓ **Acceptable to the audience** – The evidence should be consistent with the beliefs, motives, values and comprehensive standards of the audience.

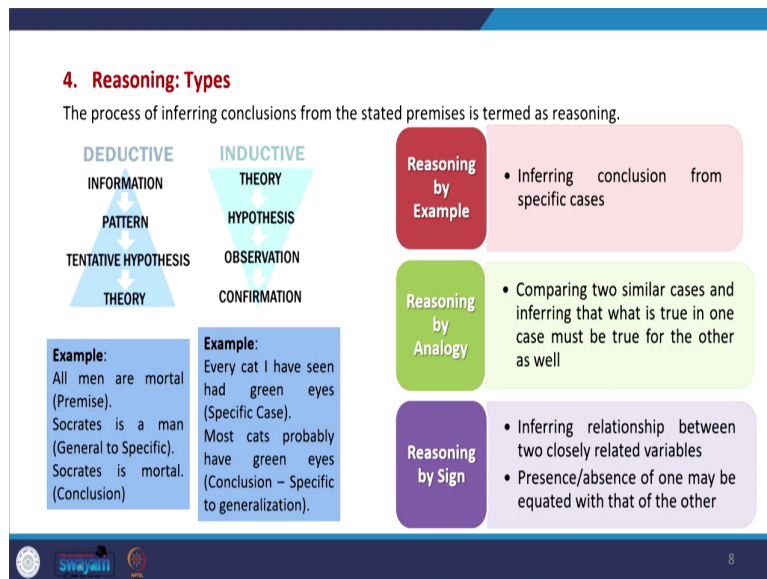
7

Now while you are researching for the matter or the content you must also see that whatever you have found out should have certain evidence and these evidence may come to you in the form of facts that is why at times in parliament you might have seen many parliamentarians having at their fingertips what happened when on what date. They also bring with them certain documents which actually are the evidential proofs so and objects and statements that are used as raw materials to validate or to satisfy one's arguments to support one's arguments.

Now in order to see are the credibility of this evidence, what things should be kept into consideration are quantity fine. Then consistency and it should be such that it could be verified at any point of time and it should be fair fine it should be competent. Reliability matters the most and it should also be framed in such a manner or documented in such a manner that it is acceptable to the audience members.

The evidence should cohere with the beliefs with the motives values and comprehensive standards of the audience.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:15)

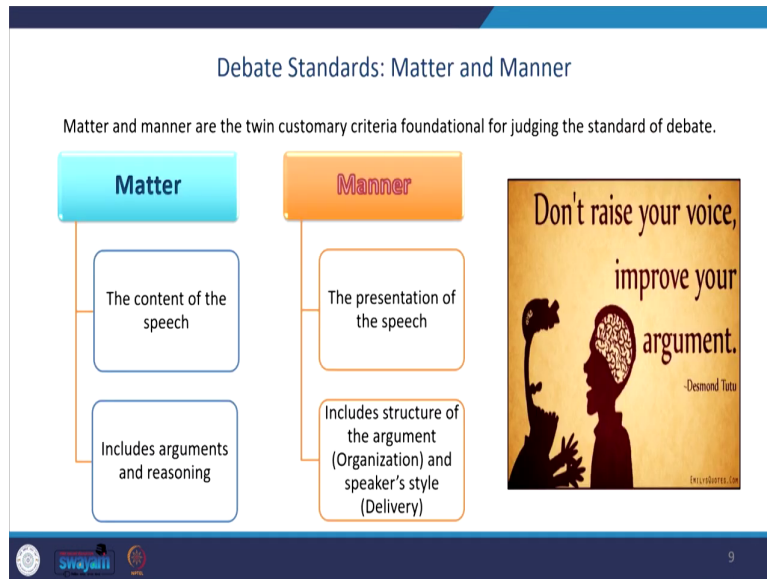


Now in every debate one has to reason either one speaks for or one speaks against. So, the process of inferring conclusions from the stated premises is termed as reasoning. So, how can you reason? You can reason by providing examples that could be at times deductive that could be inductive, fine. So, first you can say something general or sometimes you can give examples and from the examples you can come to the statement.

Here, we have already given some examples which can help you. So, when we apply the deductive method, first we provide the information then pattern then tentative hypothesis and then theory. But on the other side, when we come to the inductive one it is just the opposite. So, through that we confirm. Now you can also reason with the help of analogy by providing two statements, two similar cases and inferring that what is true in one case must also be true in other case that this is called analogical reasoning.

And then sometimes you can also reason by sign where you can talk about the relationship between two closely related variables or either the presence or absence of one, may be equated with that of the other. So, these are some of the reasoning types.

(Refer Slide Time: 17:38)



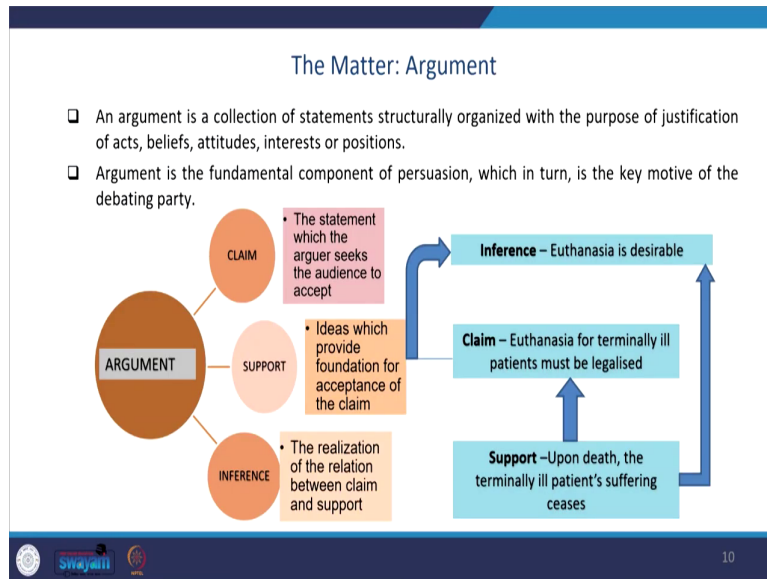
Then what are the other essentials in order to help us have an effective debate. So, matter and manner, so, matter and manner are the customary criteria which are foundational for judging the standard of debate. So, as regards matter by matter we mean only the content of the speech the content that you are bringing, and these this content may be a combination of several arguments and reasoning and then manner is what is important.

I mean language works its best here because even if we are going to contradict or even if we are going to oppose the motion, we should oppose in such a manner where there is a combination of humility where there is a combination of reasoning and where there is a combination of facts, so how you are going to present. So, it also includes the structure the way, you have structured.

Your sentence the sentence would be structured in such a way and the vocabulary that you are putting there should be very familiar for the audience members and also for the judges. So, the speaker's method of delivery that you can find it is not essential that a debater should remember everything and when he comes for the debate he forgets everything know. It should actually create a sort of pattern where it is very systematic.

And it should flow in such a manner that it appears that the reasons which you have provided not only are they relevant, not only are they logical but they also cohere. Now argument is also the hallmark of every debate one wins not by the gift of the gab only but also with the help of the argument one provides.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:35)

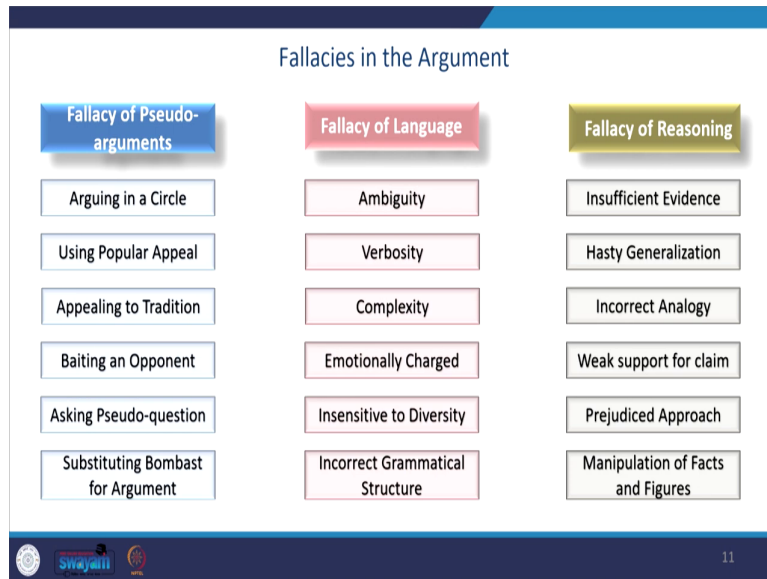


An argument is a collection of structurally organized sentences with the purpose of justification of whatever you are saying----- whether it is belief or it is interest or position. And it includes persuasion and how you persuade you know better which actually can be the key motive of the debating party say. For example, there is an argument. So, while you put the argument you are claiming something and in order to claim, you must have some support because on the basis of that only you can justify your argument.

The statement which the person who is going to argue seeks the audience to accept, because you have finally to win not only over the judge but also the audience members. So, and based on that, your ideas have to be acceptable to the audience and this can happen or materialize with the realization of the relationship between the claim and the support. Say for example if somebody says that euthanasia is for terminally ill people it actually must be legalized if it is so.

So, this is a claim and in this claim what you will support upon death the terminally ill patient suffering will cease. And that is why the inference or the conclusion somebody can draw out is euthanasia is desirable. So, unless and until it is supported by valid reasoning, one cannot come to a conclusion.

(Refer Slide Time: 21:09)



Now, at times it so happens that many of us who despite the fact that we have brought our content we find that our cases do not become acceptable to the audience and we lose as a debater, why? There are chances of fallacies, there are chances of having some defects in it. How can we detect these fallacies or are these difficulties there may be a fallacy in the argument fallacy of a pseudo argument?

Sometimes people simply think that only by the gift of a gab, they can win and naturally there can be fallacy of pseudo argument while you are arguing in a circle, you are trying to appeal make an appeal you are sometimes appealing to traditions. So, these are what? These are fallacy of pseudo arguments. My dear friends, we are living in a world where things are changing every moment fine.

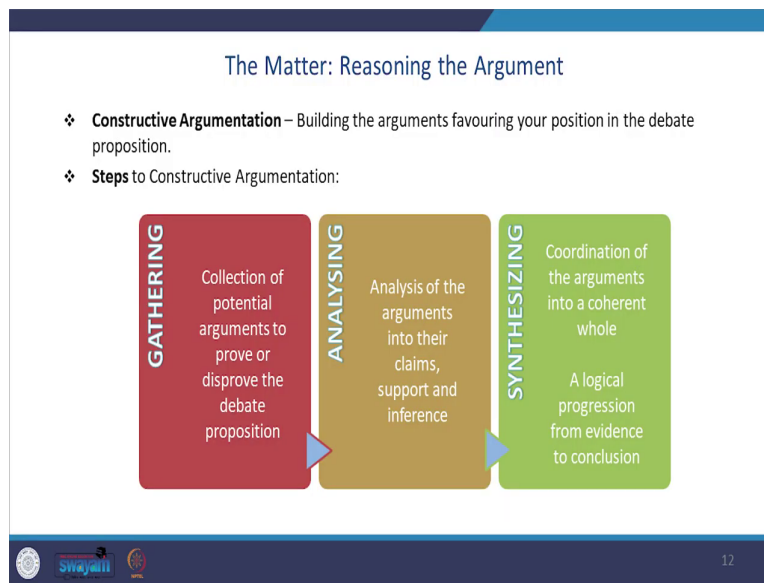
You are also trying to bait the opponent; you are asking sometimes pseudo-questions sometimes there can be fallacies or difficulty in terms of language where you can pick up words or sentences which are very ambiguous full of high sounding words in order to motivate or in order to attract the people no but then there are no reasoning. So, simply flowery expressions will not win my different and sometimes some people become so much emotionally charged that they feel that they can win the crowd.

No, it is not going to help you win a debate, my dear friend. Sometimes they become so spontaneous that they do not keep track of grammatical standards. So, that also results in a into a sort of difficulty and then there is also some problem with your reasoning where the

evidences are not enough where you have jumped to a conclusions without providing the proper reasoning where the analogies are also not correct or the claims are also very weak.

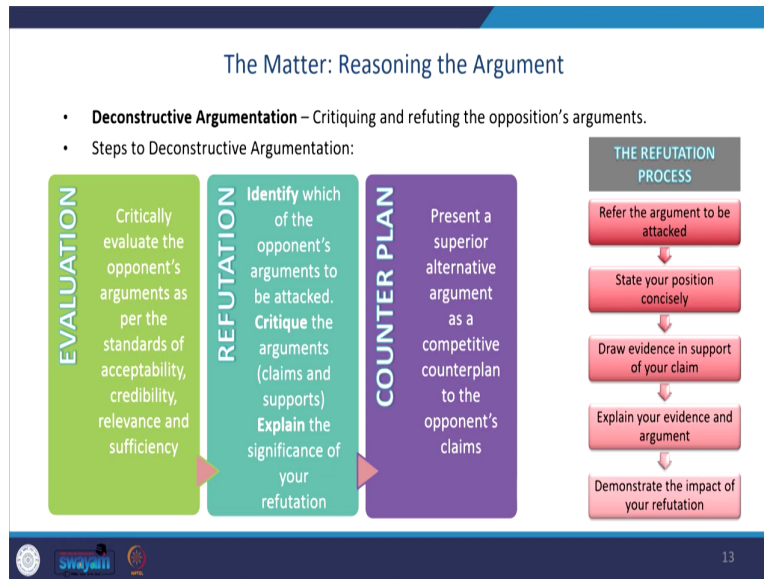
And the facts have been manipulated. Of course, at times you find that when somebody tries to put forth one's case only in order to win a mileage then they provide some pieces of information which are not factual, which are simply manipulated. So, in such a situation you cannot prove yourself to be a good debater.

(Refer Slide Time: 23:41)



Then comes the matter. While you are reasoning the argument, see the way you have gathered the data the way you have analyzed your support or your claims and the way you synthesize with the help of co-ordinating your arguments into a coherent language, and also a logical progression, systematic progression should be there only then you will find that you are supporting reasons to your argument. Otherwise, it can be a far-fetched thing and you will prove yourself to such a situation where people will not accept your line of thinking. Now, while you are reasoning the argument, I mean, especially on the other side when you try to deconstruct when you try to oppose what do you do? You have actually to critique and refute falsify the opposition's arguments how can you do that. So, there are certain steps because you every now and then cannot speak for you also have to speak against. So, in such a situation you have to evaluate the opposition's arguments as per the expectations of the acceptability how to do that by finding some fault in the line of facts, in the line of reasoning. There are certain arguments which the opponent is putting but then they are lacking in this support, fine.

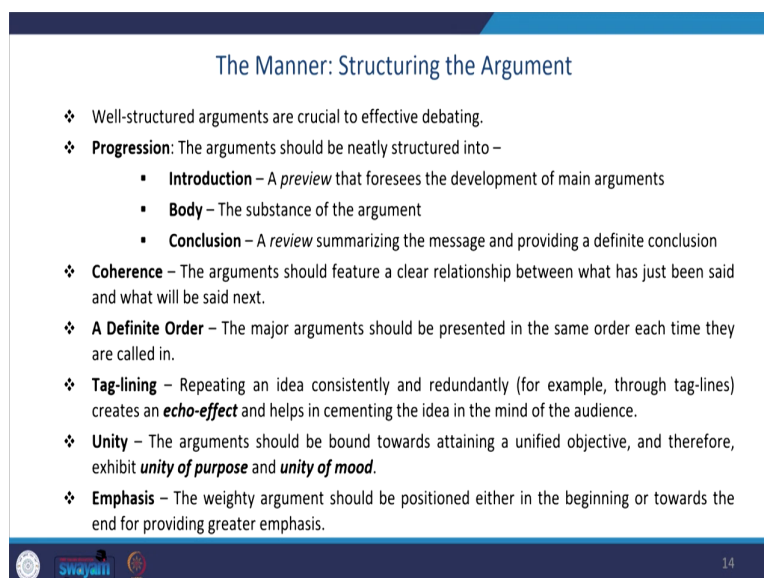
(Refer Slide Time: 25:05)



So, at that time you can refute the other person’s line of thinking and then when you have a counter plan sometimes you may also get the chance of having a counter plan where you can get a sort of rebuttal which the last divider often gets. So, during that time you can present a superior alternative argument as a competitive counter plan to opponent’s claims. Now when you are speaking against or when you are trying to refute the charges, refute the arguments of the other party, how can you do that.

Refer to the argument to be attacked. State or deliver your proposition clearly, bring evidence in support of your claim. Explain but explain with evidence and demonstrate fine proof. The impact of your refutation, I mean, the way you are trying to put down what other party has already said.

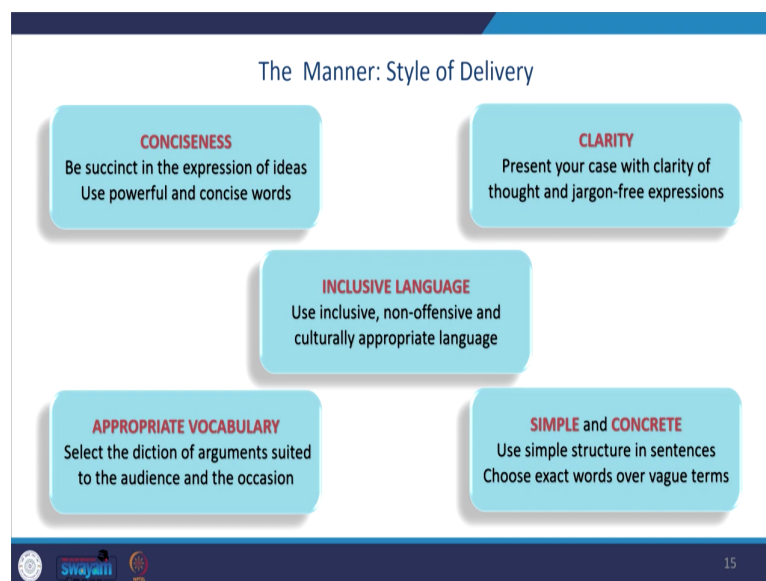
(Refer Slide Time: 26:03)



Now as I said earlier in a debate matter is important. But no less important is the manner I mean the way you are going to deliver, I mean first you naturally you are going to structure it. So, it could be divided into three maybe it is an interaction it is a body and then conclusion. So, while doing that see that arguments have a clear relationship, fine? The orders are maintained fine and then repeat an idea consistently and redundantly but when you are doing that please attach importance to it in a very coherent manner so that it can create an echo-effect and helps in cementing the idea in the mind of the audience.

So, the audience will come to know and they will find that this sort of tag-lining the way one speaker is doing, naturally it actually justifies his claim. Let there be unity of purpose and unity of mood and then let there be emphasis. The weighty argument which you are going to put should be provided either in the beginning or towards the end. But see to it that if you have some weighty argument never ever put that only in the beginning unless until you are going to refute the claims of the other party.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:46)



Now, not much should be shared about delivery because we have been talking about delivery time and again. All of us know as public speakers that our sentences are to be concise. Our delivery has to be clear, language has to be accommodative and inclusive. The use of vocabulary should not only be familiar but it should be appropriate fine. The diction that you use should suit to the occasion and the formality and the language has to be very simple as well as concrete.


(Refer Slide Time: 28:04)

The Manner: Steps to Good Delivery

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

<p>Vocal Expression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Rate – Moderate <input type="checkbox"/> Pitch – Varied Intensity – <input type="checkbox"/> Adapted to Occasion <input type="checkbox"/> Tone – Flexible <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal Fluency 	<p>Body Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Eye Contact – Direct <input type="checkbox"/> Movement – Purposeful <input type="checkbox"/> Gestures – Aid in Communicating <input type="checkbox"/> Facial Expression – Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Posture – Relaxed
--	---

- Speech Outline** – Get ready with a detailed plan of exactly **the content (the 'what')** and **the manner (the 'how')** of your speech.
- Speaker Notes** – Prepare notes in advance for
 - ✓ The key points of your speech
 - ✓ The responses to anticipated arguments of refutation.
 - ✓ Also, record notes from the opponent's speech for an effective refutation.
- Prepare and Practise** – Prepare by building a strong case and rehearse your delivery. Improve upon your presentation by listening to professional speakers.


16

Now let us come to good delivery; what are the requisites of a good delivery? We have already talked about while we are discussing a non-verbal that not only through your language but also through are the bodily cues, you should try to justify your own claim by the way you speak the rate of words the volume the pitch your spontaneity and then your body movements you can also make use of your proximity, chronemics, fine and then your tone of language.

So, as a speaker you should always make notes much in advance unless and until a good debater anticipates what the other party will say he will not be able to refute the charges. So, he must always make use of the presence of mind and prepare and practice these are actually the two ways that can help a debater win. So, prepare by building a strong case and rehearse your delivery.

During your school days you might have found your teacher might be telling time and again how every word that you speak should not only be appropriate should not only be articulated properly create a sort of impact upon the audience. Improve upon your presentation by listening to, which we have already been doing, listening to effective and professional speakers. So, if you can do that you are now ready to debate there are certain do's and do not's, fine.

(Refer Slide Time: 29:40)

Dare to Debate – Do's and Don'ts

QUESTIONER	RESPONDENT	BOTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid open-ended questions <input type="checkbox"/> Elicit brief responses <input type="checkbox"/> Keep questions brief <input type="checkbox"/> Do not attack the incontestable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Be on guard <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid unreasonable questions <input type="checkbox"/> If you do not know the answer, admit it <input type="checkbox"/> Do not defend the indefensible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct with courtesy and professionalism <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid distracting mannerisms <input type="checkbox"/> Show passion, sincerity and confidence <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare and practice

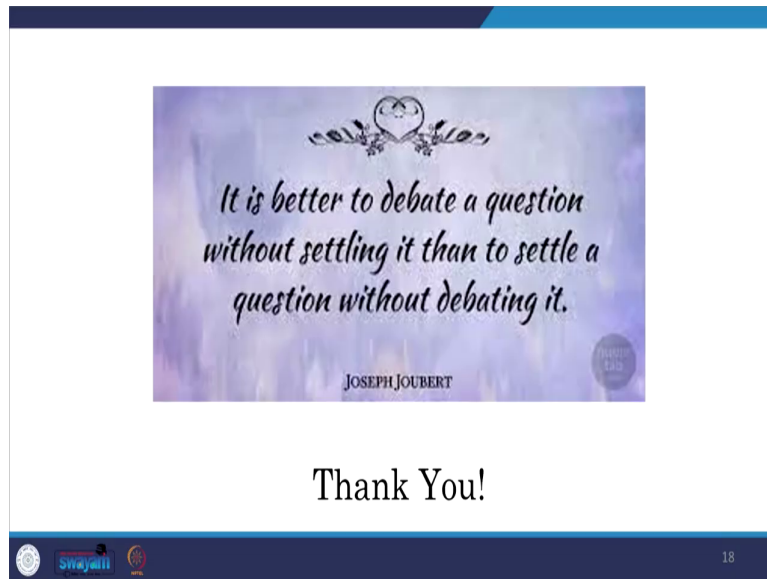
17

So either you can be a questioner or you can be a respondent meaning thereby you can speak for or you can speak against. So, if you are putting questions please avoid open ended questions, see to it that you try to elicit brief responses let the questions be sought do not attack your opponents. As a respondent, when you have to respond because maybe at times other debaters may put these questions.

So, be on guard meaning thereby you have to be vigilant throughout. Avoid unreasonable questions. If you do not know the answer, please admit it honestly and do not defend the indefensible. Now if you are both the questioner, I mean, the person who puts the question or the person who responds. So, in both the cases there is one common or the *madhyam marga* that is conduct with courtesy and maintain your professionalism avoid distracting manners.

So, your passion sincerity and confidence and not the last but the least please see that you prepare and practice. So, if you keep all these things into consideration, all sorts of debates will become an easy affair or a sort of entertainment for you. So, my dear friends, with all these prerequisites of a debate and as a public speaker that you have been trying to inculcate certain mannerisms in yourself, you can prove yourself to be one of the best debaters.

(Refer Slide Time: 31:16)



But before we come to the end of a debate let us take a quote by Joseph Joubert, who says---“
“It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle a question without debating
it.” So, keep on debating but also get ready to have the questions. Before you go to debate,
anticipate the questions so that you may never lose but always come out triumphant. Thank
you very much. I wish you all a good day.