

Chapter 2

Exploring Public Speaking, 4th edition

Open Resource Textbook for Basic Public
Speaking Course

Authors: Faculty of Dalton State College, Dalton,
Georgia

Overview of Chapter

- Why Audience Analysis?
- Demographic Characteristics
- Psychographic Characteristics
- Contextual Factors of Audience Analysis
- Listening in Public Speaking

Why Audience Analysis?

- Public speaking involves content and relationship.
- Relationship depends on knowing your audience through analysis of
 - Demographic characteristics
 - Psychographic characteristics
 - Contextual characteristics

Demographic Characteristics

- “Describing the people (*demo-*)”
- Not all demographics important for every speech situation

Demographic Characteristics

- Perceive them in a positive and negative sense
 - What to appeal to
 - What to avoid
- Not for stereotyping or totalizing
 - Stereotyping: overgeneralizing about members of a group
 - Totalizing: one characteristic of a person defines them totally

Demographic Characteristics

- Age
- Gender
- Race, Ethnicity, Culture
- Religion
- Group Affiliation
- Region
- Occupation
- Education
- Socio-economic level
- Sexual orientation
- Family Status
- COMMON BOND
- LEVEL OF HETEROGENEITY/HOMOGENEITY

Psychographic Characteristics

- Beliefs
- Attitudes
- Values
- Needs

Beliefs

- “what we hold to be true”
- Hard but not impossible to change
- Come from experience and authority
- Traits of
 - Stability
 - Centrality
 - Saliency
 - strength

Attitude

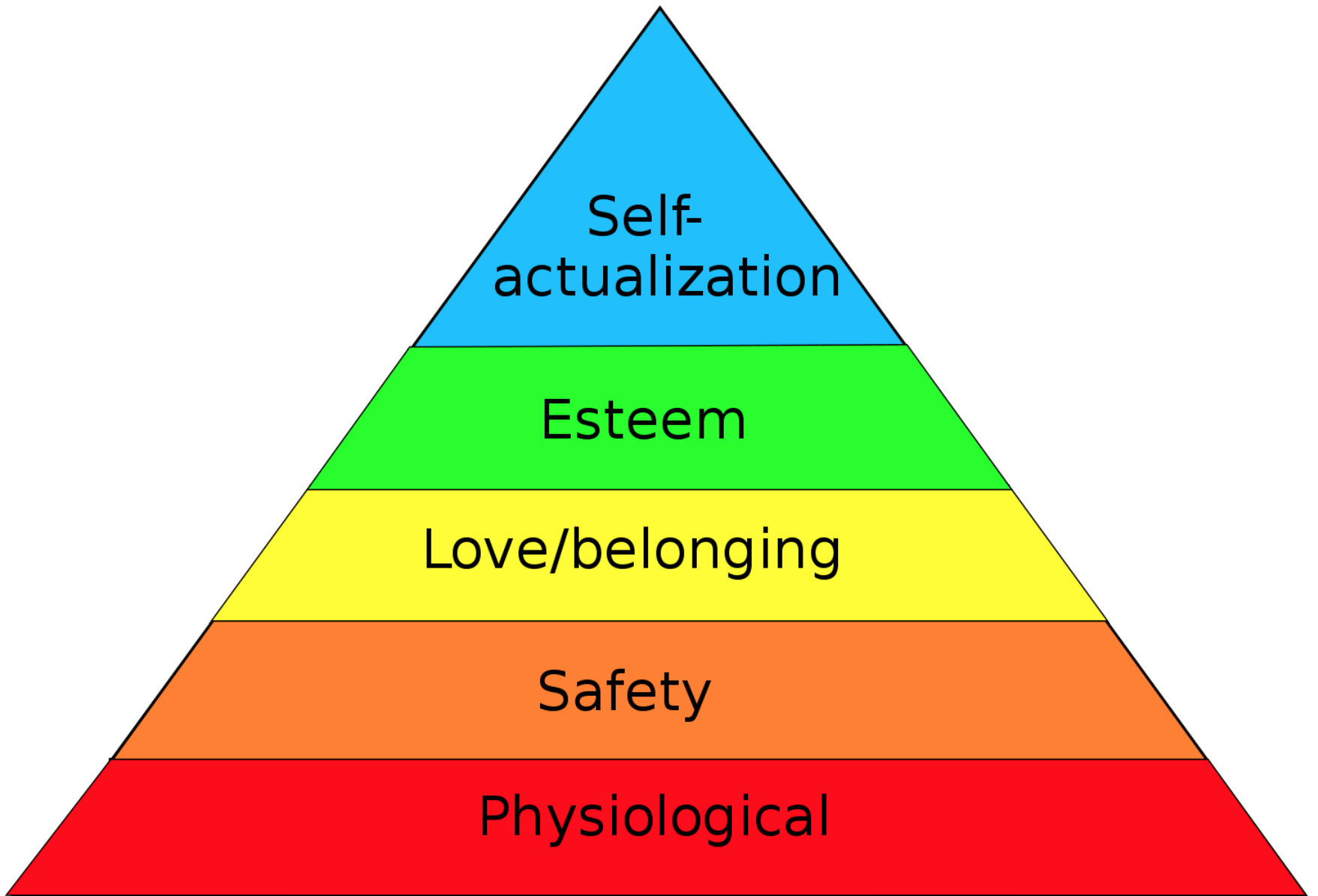
- “stable, positive or negative response to a person, idea, object, or policy”
- Not same as mood or emotion
- Most direct link to behavior
- Attributed to many sources

Values

- “goals we strive for and what we consider important and desirable”
- Not same as wants
- Not same as physical objects

Needs

- “important deficiencies we are motivated to fill”
- Maslow’s hierarchy commonly used to describe how needs operate in communication, organization, education, etc.
- Lower level must be met and satisfied before the next level up is “felt”



Contextual Factors in Public Speaking

- Time
 - Amount allotted for the speech
 - Time of day speech is given
- Why is the audience gathered?
- What is the physical space like?
- How large is the audience?
- What are audience expectations? Why are you speaking to them?

Listening

- Hearing: “the physical process by which sound waves hit the ear drums and send a message to the brain”

VS

- Listening: “an active process where one is specifically making an effort to understand, process, and retain information”

Types of listening

- Comprehensive: understanding and remembering important information
- Empathetic: understanding feelings and motivations with a goal of helping; relational
- Appreciative: artistic pieces; benefit from knowing the patterns and concepts in the art
- Critical: evaluating quality of evidence and arguments

Your Audience and Listening

- Definition: deliberate repeating of structural aspects of speech
- Planned redundancy helps a speaker and audience, using
 - A clear central idea statement
 - Preview of the main points
 - Connective statements
 - Overall summary in the conclusion

Barriers to Listening

- Neuroplasticity has changed our ability/willingness to process long speeches
- Noisiness and constant electronic distractions of our lives
- We can process faster than speakers can talk
- Stimuli around you (smells, talking, laptops)
- Going into listening with no purpose, no preparation
- Prejudices and preconceptions; confirmation bias

Ways to Improve Your Listening

- ❑ Believe that improving your listening matters
- ❑ Come prepared
 - ❑ Aware of your preconceptions/confirmation bias
 - ❑ Put up devices
- ❑ Take notes intentionally and intelligently
 - ❑ Not every word
 - ❑ On paper is better than laptop
 - ❑ Write questions for later; avoid side conversations