

# So, er, today I'd like to, er, talk about ... assessing speaking

Jon Hird Moscow, November 2017

So today I'd like to talk about my academic career. First I'd like to talk about my past career. I was studying in Japan my university name is Meiji University which is located er in Tokyo and I studied politics there because er I wanted to know er what's happening in the world and I wanted to know the way to improve it I mean make the world better. And mm also er politics was actually the er only one ers field that I found was interesting in all i in all academic areas. And er now I'm learning er British and er European Studies. Er the reason why I came here is er is my company sent me to this course and also I was very interested in er studying er something that I cannot study er in my company. Er and also this er the good point of this course is er I can learn a lot of things even er through er even with er my er classmates. There are so many er people from different countries and I can exchange different ideas with them so this is very interesting for me. Er but I I oo what I want to improve now is er English and also I often feel that I lack er the knowledge of academic. Erm in future I'm going to work abroad. After studying here my company will think that I have an advantage of of English and also er understanding different values abroad s' er so like my predecessors who studied here er who are sent to Thailand I will be sent to Thailand too and I think er I will work there to support companies er that intend to expand their branches abroad or set up new factories. And and in the end my er main message is er be confident the more you study hard the more confidence you can get.

## **Spoken language: Lexical sparsity and grammatical intricacy**

### **Written language: Lexical density and grammatical simplicity**

*The use of this method of control unquestionably leads to safer and faster trains running in the most adverse weather conditions.*

12 lexical items, 1 clause = a lexical density of 12

*You can control the trains this way / and if you do that / you can be quite sure / that they'll be able to run more safely and more quickly / no matter how bad the weather gets*

12 lexical items, 5 clauses = a lexical density of 2.4

A typical average lexical density for spoken English is between 1.5 and 3, whereas the figure for written English settles down somewhere between 3 and 6. (Halliday)

### Micro skills

- phonemes/allophones
- lexis
- grammatical systems
- cohesive devices
- chunks
- sound, eg stress/rhythm/intonation
- reduced forms
- strategic devices, eg pauses/fillers
- self-correction, repair, reinforcement
- fluency

### Macro skills

- accomplish communicative functions
- appropriate style, register, implicature
- turn-taking, interrupting etc
- links and connections, eg theme and rheme, focal and peripheral ideas, generalization and exemplification
- strategies such as emphasis, rephrasing, establishing context, appealing for help
- nonverbal cues, eg facial features, body language
- assessing own intelligibility

### Key features of spoken English

- The sound of speech: speed, pitch, volume, pausing, rhythm, intonation
- Spoken grammar: idea units / topicalization, heads, tails / 'simple', 'ordinary', generic words / fixed phrases, fillers, hesitation devices
- Planned v unplanned speech: longer more written-like, formal sentences v shorter sentences, idea units, incomplete sentences
- Slips and errors: 'acquire special significance' for foreign language learners

*Luoma, 2004, Assessing Speaking*

### Five types of speaking (for assessment)

- Imitative eg repeating, drilling
- Intensive eg reading aloud, picture description
- Responsive eg question and answer, interview
- Interactive eg discussion, role play
- Extensive (monologue) eg presentation, anecdote

*Brown, 2004, Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*