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**Sample Discussion Analysis**

*Directions*: Please complete the following questions to the best of your ability. Provide as much detail as possible when describing different speech (e.g., who speaks the most) and non-speech events (e.g., body language). Please write down the time stamp (e.g., at 12:15 Samantha raises her hand).

Discussion

**Does the facilitator begin with a brief background on topic? Does the facilitator end by highlighting key points of discussion?**

Yes.

Gaokao topic: The facilitator opens with context: *“Good morning, everyone. Today, we will talk about Gaokao and educational institutions in China. As we all know, Gaokao is of great importance for students in China. As we all know, Gaokao is of great important for students in China.”----*This is a brief background before moving into questions.

Social media topic: The facilitator similarly starts with framing---- “Today we’re going to talk about social media and its impact on our mental health. Based on the TikTok … I hope you all have watched the video and have some thoughts to share.”----- a short background to orient the group.

**Does everybody participate in the discussion? Do some people speak more than others? Overall, would you say that most of the group is participating or is the group being dominated by 2-3 speakers?**

Everyone participates in the discussion, but the is being dominated by 2-3 speakers. For example, in the Gaokao discussion, one student repeatedly jumps in first and gives detailed answers to many questions, while others only give shorter responses like “I agree” or add small points. In the social media discussion, a few students provide long, reflective answers (including personal experiences during COVID or comments on platform responsibility), while some others only contribute one or two sentences.

**Does each person offer opinions, without prompting, consistently during the discussion? Please explain.**

Some students did offer opinions freely. A few participants spoke at length, often adding examples, agreeing or disagreeing, and expanding on earlier points. For instance, during the Gaokao and social media discussions, several students jumped in with detailed answers and personal experiences without needing to be directly called on.

Others needed prompting. The facilitators often asked “Does anyone want to add something?” or called on quieter members to contribute. This indicates that not every person contributed spontaneously, and participation from some individuals came only after being invited

**Using the answer above, why do you think this is happening?**

This likely happens because participation styles vary: some students are naturally more outspoken and comfortable sharing their thoughts, while others may feel less confident in their language skills or need more time to organize their ideas before speaking. In addition, group discussions can be shaped by a few dominant voices, which unintentionally discourages quieter members from jumping in without being prompted. Finally, cultural differences and individual personality traits (e.g., introversion vs. extroversion) may also influence whether someone contributes consistently without prompting.

**What are 2-3 examples of phrases used in the discussion that you can incorporate into your own classroom discussions? Why/how are these phrases useful?**

“I agree, but I think it depends on …”

“Does anyone want to add something?”

These phrases are effective because they promote constructive dialogue (adding nuance), inclusion (inviting others), and positive reinforcement (acknowledging contributions). Together, they help create a supportive and collaborative classroom atmosphere.

What body language do the students use to help with speaking and/or listening? What do you think is the purpose of this body language?

Eye contact shows that students were expected to look directly at their discussion partner to support listening and engagement.

Nodding or leaning slightly forward shows attentiveness and encourages the speaker to continue.

Is there anything else you noticed that was interesting or notable that is not asked in a question above?

The class placed strong emphasis on peer feedback. Students were constantly paired with new partners, and feedback sheets or pictures of feedback were exchanged at the end.

Reflection

What can you do to best prepare BEFORE coming to class? In addition to what you do before class, what can you bring to class to best help you?

Review the assigned material (e.g., video, article, or case study) so you are ready to contribute ideas without hesitation.

Prepare 2–3 talking points or examples you can share. This makes it easier to jump into the discussion confidently.

Practice key vocabulary or phrases related to the topic, so you can express your ideas more clearly and fluently.

Think about possible opinions (for and against) so you’re ready to respond naturally in the discussion.

Bring notes or an outline of your ideas, including key words or transitions (e.g., “I agree, but…” or “From another perspective…”).

Practice useful discussion phrases you want to practice (like the ones we highlighted earlier: “That’s a good point,” “I think it depends,” etc.)

Openness to listen actively — maybe jotting down what others say so you can respond thoughtfully.

Overall, what takeaways/strategies will best help you with both the discussion project in our Oral Comm class and in your future studies/classes? **Please respond in 4-6 sentences, not bullet points.**

I have learned that preparing before class by reviewing materials and thinking of possible opinions makes it much easier to participate actively in discussion. Using clear phrases such as “I agree, but it depends…” or “That’s a good point” helps me connect to others’ ideas while also contributing my own perspective. I also see how body language, like eye contact and nodding, can strengthen both speaking and listening by showing engagement and confidence. Another important strategy is being open to feedback, since hearing what I do well and where I need to improve helps me grow as a communicator.

Avoid giving isolated opinions