

**Title:** Confidence building speaking activities

**Time frame:** 1 hour

**Number of participants:** Ideally between 10 to 20 participants

**Learning outcomes:**

1. Understand what glossophobia is
2. Detect glossophobia symptoms
3. Know some exercises to cope with glossophobia

**Lesson structure:**

## Introduction

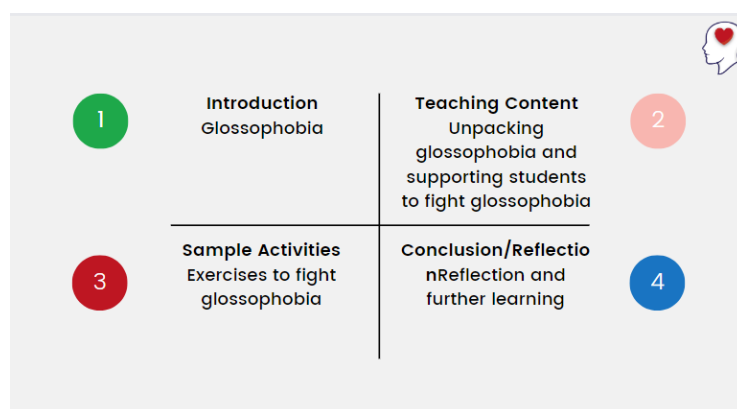
*Short introductory activity – for example, it can be reflection on a quotation, discussion of a question, or reaction to a thought-provoking statement.*

Start the session by welcoming the participants. Start displaying the associated PPT presentation. Then, as a facilitator, introduce yourself and ask each of the participants to introduce him/herself. Show slides 2 and 3. It displays the topic of the session “Confidence building and speaking exercises”.



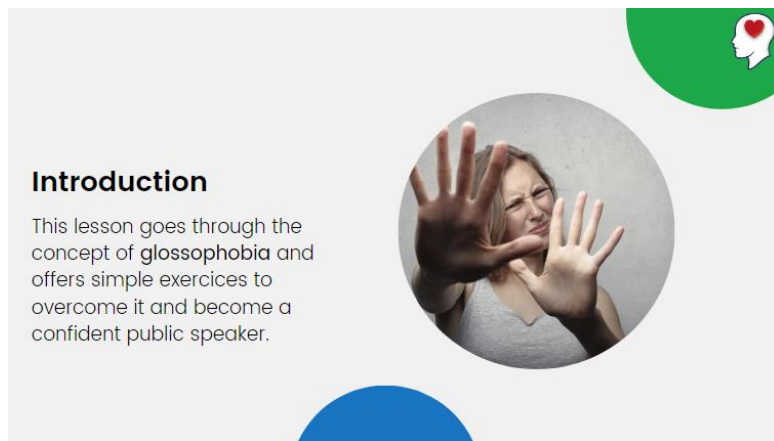
Slide 2

Then, slide 3 offers the table of contents of the session.



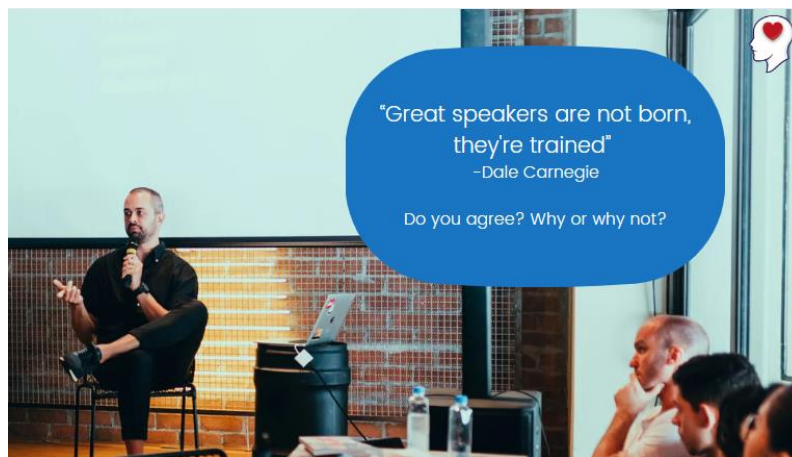
Slide 3

Read slide 4 to kick-off the session and read the quote slide 5.



Slide 4

Ask the participants what they think about it : Did they face/still are facing some issues to speak publicly? Have they witnessed, among their students, extreme fear of speaking publicly?



Slide 5

## Content

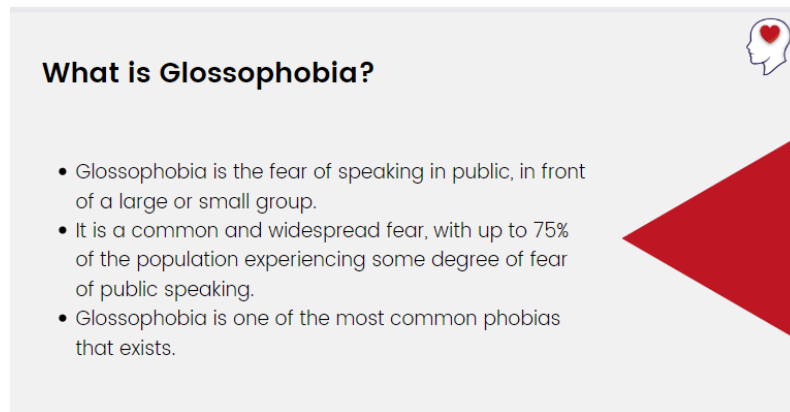
*This section should provide theoretical knowledge about the session topic. Which content will you present and how will you present it?*

*As facilitator, you must have read previously the PowerPoint presentation.*

This session focuses on glossophobia which is the fear of public speaking. Glossophobia is experienced by around 75% of the population, which makes it one of the most common phobias. Glossophobia is part of the social phobias. Social phobias are a group of disorders in which the person fears being exposed to certain social situations or being in front of others. Most of the time, the person will have a strong tendency to avoid these situations. If this is not possible, they will often be experienced with great anxiety. Glossophobia is rooted in fear and low self-esteem. Fear is one of our basic emotions. It is triggered by anything that our imagination sees as dangerous. The brain takes what we imagine as reality and triggers the sensations associated with fear in order to push us out of the dangerous situation.

Glossophobia may have several causes although none of them has been completely proved. It appears to be a natural response when being exposed; that is why getting used to the exposure is

actually a way to cope with it. Also, negative earlier experiences can trigger it. According to a study from the national institute of mental health, it would seem that people suffering from social anxiety are more affected than others when negative comments about them are read to them. Additionally, people who have been raised by shy parents would have more chances to suffer from it. Finally, low self-esteem is also a determinant factor.



### What is Glossophobia?

- Glossophobia is the fear of speaking in public, in front of a large or small group.
- It is a common and widespread fear, with up to 75% of the population experiencing some degree of fear of public speaking.
- Glossophobia is one of the most common phobias that exists.

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How to spot it (symptoms): Glossophobia causes a feeling of intense anxiety, including certain physical and verbal symptoms and signs.

- Physical symptoms: Among physical symptoms, we can list the following:
  - Increased heart rate
  - Raise in blood pressure
  - Dilation of pupils
  - Acute hearing loss
  - Intense dread and trembling
  - Sweating, particularly on the hands and forehead
  - Nausea or vomiting in extreme cases
  - Shortness of breath or hyperventilating
  - Dizziness
  - Muscle tension in the neck and upper back muscles
  - Feeling of nervousness or panic attack
  - Frequently needing the bathroom
- Verbal symptoms: Some of the verbal symptoms that develop from glossophobia can cause the person to struggle while trying to speak. The voice may start to tremble, the person may repeat hesitations such as 'umm' or 'ah', followed by vocal pausing. This reaction causes the person to feel uncomfortable and anxious, worsening the symptoms of glossophobia. These symptoms can appear with dryness in the mouth, shaking or tics.

## Symptoms



Glossophobia causes a variety of symptoms such as:

- Increased blood pressure
- Increased perspiration
- Dry mouth
- A stiffening of the upper back muscles
- Nausea and panic when having to speak in public



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## Causes of Glossophobia



A fear of public speaking often begins in adolescence. Social phobias like glossophobia can be caused by a range of factors such as:

- **Biological Factors** - Some people are born naturally shy
- **Learned Behaviours** - A fear of public speaking can develop after learning the fear from a role model. A child with parents who avoid speaking in public may be influenced to have the same fear.
- **Past Experiences** - A stressful experience can cause people to associate negative emotions with situations that involve public speaking or interacting with others.

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What are the treatments? Practice may help to reduce the stress level. If you witness in your classroom, behaviours that seem to be pathologic, the best is to offer professional help with psychotherapy and – if found necessary by a health professional – medication.

## Overcoming Glossophobia



01

Begin your speech or presentation with a discussion question: This gets the audience involved and talking and takes pressure off you for a while.

02

Recognize where your anxious feelings are coming from: Nervousness can be due to excitement. Remember that even if you feel nervous, you can still speak in public without failing.

03

If giving a presentation, remember it's about the topic: The people you are speaking to are focusing less on you personally and more on what you're saying.

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## Sample activities

*Provide short, engaging activities to demonstrate how your concept can be applied and duplicated in the classroom*

We offer 4 activities in this lesson. 2 of them are to be practiced by yourself so they can be offered as self learning:

- Tongue twisters (slides : Tongue twisters are a great way to practice and improve pronunciation and fluency. They can also help to improve accents by using alliteration, which is the repetition of one sound. They're not just for kids, but are also used by actors, politicians, and public speakers who want to sound clear when speaking.

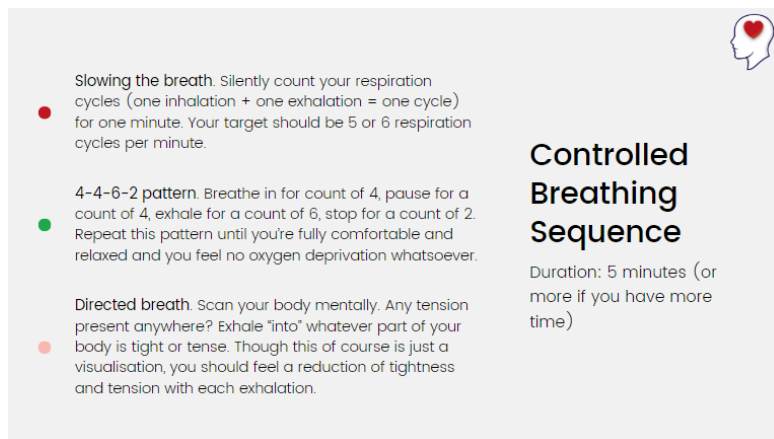


**Tongue Twisters**

- This activity can be recommended as homeworks for the students. It decreases the risk of stammering.
- Did you know that Tongue Twister Day exists? It will be on November 12 2023, November 10 2024 and November 9 2025!
- The following are some examples (and plenty more can be found online)

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- Breathing exercises: Breathing exercises will support the speaker to calm down before a talk. They are meant to be implemented before the talk in order to reduce stress.



**Controlled Breathing Sequence**

Duration: 5 minutes (or more if you have more time)

- **Slowing the breath.** Silently count your respiration cycles (one inhalation + one exhalation = one cycle) for one minute. Your target should be 5 or 6 respiration cycles per minute.
- **4-4-6-2 pattern.** Breathe in for count of 4, pause for a count of 4, exhale for a count of 6, stop for a count of 2. Repeat this pattern until you're fully comfortable and relaxed and you feel no oxygen deprivation whatsoever.
- **Directed breath.** Scan your body mentally. Any tension present anywhere? Exhale "into" whatever part of your body is tight or tense. Though this of course is just a visualisation, you should feel a reduction of tightness and tension with each exhalation.

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- Pick an object: This exercise will support students to pay attention to the way they speak without caring about the content. It is an improv exercise during which the facilitator assigns an object from the everyday life to a participant who will have to talk about it during 2 minutes.



## Pick Up an Object




Duration: 2 minutes per student


- Ask one student to talk about an object for 2 minutes. As facilitator you should choose the object.
- The object should change for each student so they can't prepare anything.
- It can be a pen, a poster that is displayed in the classroom, a watch etc. It is an improv exercise.

### Slide 17

- The perfect communicator: This exercise allows participants to identify what qualities are needed to be a good public speaker and therefore to work on them. As a facilitator, you should make sure that the participants mention the following: enunciation, rhythm, body language, smile, eye-contact, audience engagement, etc.



## The Ideal Communicator



Duration: 20 minutes

- Ask the participants to think about the perfect communicator.
- Ask them to describe him/her, both before and during his/her talk. What does he or she give off? Why does he/she manage to capture attention? What are his or her qualities?
- Give them 10 minutes to think about it and then share the results with the group.

## Conclusion


*This should be a wrap-up activity, ideally some reflection questions to make the teachers think about what they have learned and how it applies to their own teaching.*

To conclude (slide 25), remind the participants that all the material created in the framework of the EASE project can be used by them in their own classrooms.

Then, (slide 26), ask them the following self-reflective questions:

- What have they learnt today?
- Will they reuse it?
- What was the most/least useful?

Finally, at the end of the session, you can give a copy of the document available here below “Tips to manage public speaking anxiety” letting the participants know that they can use it with their own students (by providing them a copy, or sending it to them by email).



**Conclusion**

Glossophobia can be reduced by practising. As a teacher, if you witness this anxiety in your students, feel free to use the material we have developed.

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### **Bibliography and resources for further learning**

Here you should provide the sources where the information came from and, if applicable, resources for finding out more about the session's topic.

[Ajeng Intan Nur Rahmawati, Imam Ariffudin et Mulawarman Mulawarman, « Psychological Experience Dynamics of Students with Glossophobia through Narrative Counseling as seen from Gender: A Qualitative Study », Proceedings of the 3rd ASEAN Conference on Psychology, Counselling, and Humanities \(ACPCH 2017\), Atlantis Press, 2018](#)

[Ebrahimi OV, Pallesen S, Kenter RMF, Nordgreen T. Psychological Interventions for the Fear of Public Speaking: A Meta-Analysis. Front Psychol. 2019;10:488. Published 2019 Mar 15.](#)

[How to keep fear of public speaking at bay](#)

[30 ways to manage speaking anxiety](#)

#### **Notes for the facilitator:**

*These notes should address both online and face-to-face formats.*

#### **Printable materials:**

*For printable materials such as worksheets, please put them on a separate page after the facilitator notes so they are easily printable.*

## **Tips to manage public speaking anxiety**

### **1 – Be prepared**

- Choose the topic of your presentation according to your own interest
- Do some research
- Rehearse
- Expect positive feedback
- Sleep well

### **2 – Before the talk**

- Eat several hours before
- Do some breathing exercises
- Dress in a way you are comfortable with
- Go to the toilets
- Take a glass of water with you on the podium

### **3 – During the talk**

- A joke won't hurt: engage the audience
- Do some eye contact
- Have a typed version of your talk (just in case!)
- Use external tools to support you (PPT presentation for instance)
- Look at friendly faces in the audience

**YOU ARE GOING TO BE GREAT !**