

COMUNICAÇÃO ORAL EM CIÊNCIA

Helena Martins

ESCE-IPS / Nova SBE

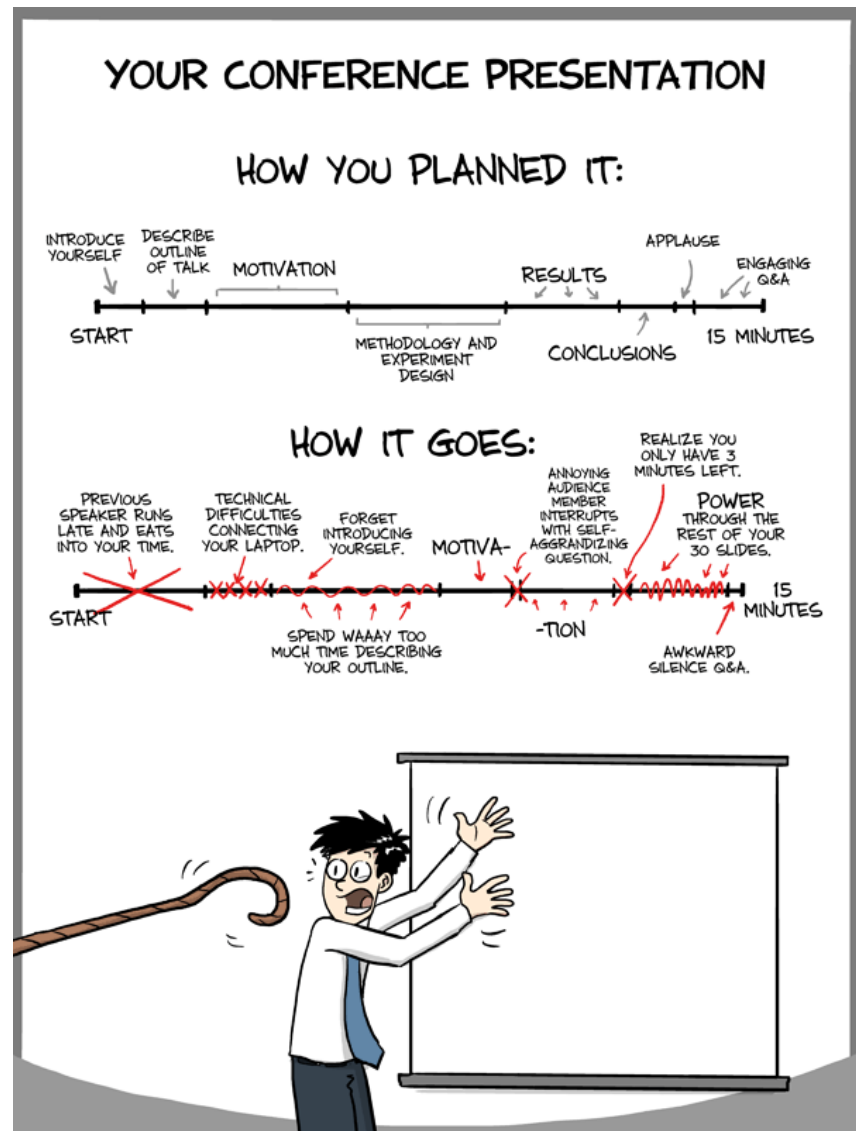
helena.martins@esce.ips.pt

Falar em público

- Como é que isso se faz?
- Algumas diretrizes?



COMUNICAÇÃO: APRESENTAÇÃO DE TRABALHOS/RELATÓRIOS/IDEIAS/INVESTIGAÇÕES



Ansiedade/Medo de Falar em Público

- A ansiedade de falar em público afeta até 75% dos estudantes de pós-graduação. Durante a defesa da dissertação, essa ansiedade é intensificada pela importância do momento e pela presença de especialistas acadêmicos a avaliar o teu trabalho.



"Vão achar que não sou suficientemente bom/boa"

O Medo

Many students worry the committee will judge them harshly, find major flaws in their research, or question their academic credibility.

A realidade

Committee members aren't there to fail you—they want to engage with your ideas and see you succeed. They understand dissertation defenses are learning experiences.

Uma estratégia

Remember you're the expert expert on your specific research. Practice positive self-talk: "I've done thorough research" and "I've earned my place here." Focus on sharing your knowledge rather than than being evaluated.

The Fear of Blanking Out: "What If I Forget Everything?"

Why It Happens

Stress triggers your body's fight-or-flight response, redirecting blood flow away from your prefrontal cortex (responsible for memory and higher thinking) to your muscles.

In-the-Moment Techniques

- Take a deep breath and pause—it seems longer to you than the audience
- Keep water nearby and take a sip to reset
- Have transition phrases prepared: "Let me approach this from another angle..."

Preventive Strategies

- Create a clear, logical structure for your presentation
- Practice until the content becomes second nature
- Prepare concise notes as safety nets

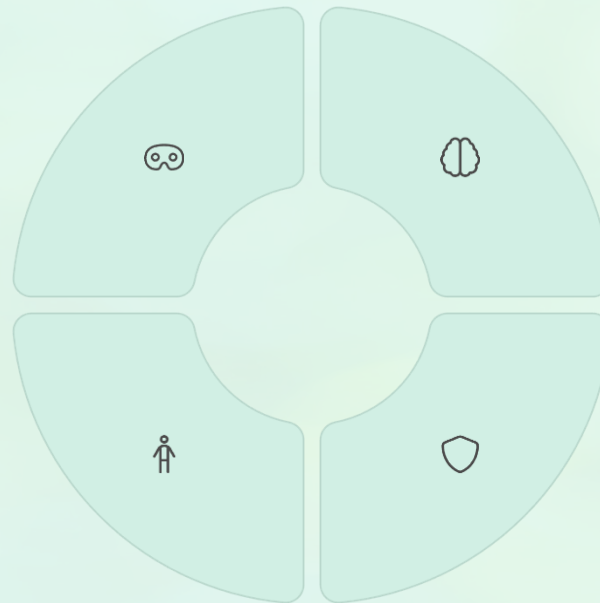
The Impostor Syndrome: "I Don't Deserve to Be Here"

The Feeling

Despite your achievements, you feel like a fraud who doesn't belong in academic circles and fear being "exposed" during your defense.

The Support

Share your feelings with trusted peers. You'll discover many successful academics have similar doubts—normalizing these feelings reduces their power.



The Psychology

Impostor syndrome affects 70% of academics at some point. It stems from perfectionism and difficulty internalizing accomplishments.

The Defense

Document your achievements. Create a "proof file" of your academic journey, positive feedback, and milestones reached during your research.



The Fear of Difficult Questions: "What If I Can't Answer?"

Reframe Questions as Opportunities

Questions aren't attacks but chances to clarify your thinking and demonstrate your expertise. They show engagement with your work.

Prepare for the Predictable

Anticipate likely questions by practicing with colleagues. Focus especially on methodology choices, limitations, and practical implications of your research.

Master the Art of Not Knowing

It's okay to say "That's an excellent question I haven't considered fully." Follow with "My initial thoughts are..." or "I'd approach this by..." Never fabricate answers.

Practical Strategies for Emotional Management

Before Your Defense

- Rehearse your presentation at least 5 times in similar conditions
- Record yourself to identify areas for improvement
- Practice with a friendly audience who can ask questions
- Visualize a successful defense daily for one week prior

The Day Before

- Get adequate sleep (7-8 hours minimum)
- Prepare your outfit and materials in advance
- Light exercise to reduce stress hormones
- Limit review to avoid last-minute anxiety

During Your Defense

- Start with a strong, memorized opening to build momentum
- Make eye contact with supportive faces in the room
- Speak deliberately, pausing between key points
- Use the "mental reset button" if you feel overwhelmed

The Fear of Physical Symptoms: "Everyone Will See I'm Nervous"

Common Physical Manifestations

- Shaking hands or voice tremors
- Rapid heartbeat and shallow breathing
- Facial flushing or excessive sweating
- Dry mouth and difficulty swallowing

These symptoms feel more noticeable to you than they actually appear to your audience.

Body-Mind Management Techniques

- Practice diaphragmatic breathing (4-7-8 technique)
- Progressive muscle relaxation before presenting
- Power posing for 2 minutes before your defense
- Stay hydrated and avoid excess caffeine



The Fear of Technology Failures: "What If Something Goes Wrong?"



Preparation is Key

Arrive early to test all equipment. Save your presentation in multiple formats and locations (USB drive, cloud, email to yourself).



Have Analog Backups

Bring printed copies of key slides and notes. Practice explaining concepts without visual aids so you can continue smoothly if technology fails.



Stay Calm Under Pressure

If problems occur, take a deep breath and address the issue calmly. The committee will appreciate your adaptability in handling unexpected challenges.

Remember: You've Already Done Done the Hard Part

"The dissertation defense is not an interrogation but a conversation about work you've become the expert in. Trust in your preparation and remember that nervousness and excitement share the same physiological response—it's all in how you frame it."

Your research journey has prepared you for this moment. The defense is your opportunity to share your valuable contribution with the academic community. Embrace it with confidence—confidence—you're ready!



Practical Tips for Your Master's Thesis Defense



What the Committee Is Evaluating

In today's academic landscape, especially with the increasing use of AI tools, your oral presentation carries more weight than ever before. The committee isn't just looking at your written work—they're evaluating:

- Your **mastery of the subject** and key concepts
- Your **understanding of research methodology** and why it was appropriate
- Your **personal growth and learning** throughout the research process
- Your ability to engage in **critical and scientific reflection**



Effective Preparation Strategies

Verify Formal Requirements

Check time limits, presentation format, and any required templates. This shows professionalism and attention to detail.

Emphasize Contributions

Highlight your main contributions and conclusions. The committee wants to know what you've added to the field.

Keep It Simple and Direct

Follow the guideline of **1 slide per minute**. Focus on clarity over complexity—your ability to simplify complex ideas demonstrates true understanding.

Practice Thoroughly

Rehearse multiple times with different audiences. Time yourself with a stopwatch. Prepare responses to difficult questions that might arise.

Defense Day Logistics

In-Person Defense Online Defense

- Arrive early to test equipment and settle nerves
- Bring multiple copies of your presentation (USB drive, PDF, email)
- Consider bringing your own laptop as a backup
- Dress professionally to match the formality of the occasion
- Ensure stable internet connection (consider a backup connection)
- Set up a neutral background free from distractions
- Test your camera, microphone, and lighting in advance
- Close unnecessary applications to prevent notifications

In both scenarios, bring water, paper, and pen for notes. Stay hydrated and capture important feedback during the discussion.





During Your Presentation



Start with confidence

Begin by clearly stating your name, thesis title, and the objectives of your study. A strong opening sets the tone for your entire presentation.



Speak clearly and at a measured pace

Nervousness often makes us speak faster. Consciously slow down and use deliberate pauses to emphasize important points.



Never read directly from your slides

Your slides should complement your speech, not substitute for it. Use them as visual cues that enhance your narrative.



Frame it as a scientific conversation

Approach the presentation as a scholarly discussion rather than a hostile interrogation. This mindset helps reduce anxiety.

Navigating the Discussion Phase

Strategic Response Techniques

The discussion phase is where your deep understanding truly shines. To navigate it effectively:

- Listen carefully and take notes on each question
- Start with questions you're most comfortable answering
- When uncertain, discuss how you'd explore that question in future research
- Express gratitude for insightful suggestions and feedback
- Maintain a balance between defending your work and acknowledging valid criticism

Remember: Thoughtful responses demonstrate intellectual maturity more than perfect answers.



Body Language and Attitude

Project Confidence

Maintain good posture and eye contact with committee members. Stand (or sit) straight with shoulders back. Channel nervousness into positive energy rather than trying to eliminate it entirely.

Mindful Gestures

Avoid repetitive or defensive movements like crossing arms, fidgeting with objects, or excessive hand motions. Use deliberate gestures to emphasize key points in your presentation.

Intellectual Honesty

Be clear in your justifications but remain open to critique. Never fabricate answers—it's far better to acknowledge limitations in your research than to present false information.

Classic Questions to Anticipate



What surprised you most about your research?

This question tests your reflection skills and your ability to acknowledge the exploratory nature of research.



What key lessons will you carry forward?

Demonstrates your personal growth and ability to extract meaningful insights beyond the formal findings.



What would you do differently?

Shows your capacity for self-critique and understanding of research limitations.



How would you continue this project?

Tests your vision for the research's future implications and your understanding of its place in the broader field.



Finish Strong

Your conclusion is your final opportunity to leave a lasting impression on the committee. A strong finish reinforces your competence and passion for your research.

- Thank the committee for their attention and valuable feedback
- Concisely summarize the impact and potential of your research
- Be respectful while showing appropriate pride in pride in your academic journey
- Frame this defense as the culmination of an important academic cycle

End with confidence and clarity—your final words words often resonate most strongly with the committee.



Final Recommendations



Avoid Reading Scripts

Reading from prepared text conveys insecurity. Know your material well enough to speak naturally about it, which demonstrates true mastery.



Invite Your Support System

Having supportive faces in the audience can boost your confidence. Invite people who believe in you and understand the significance of this milestone.



Trust Yourself

Your advisor believes in your work—now it's time to believe in yourself. This is a moment of celebration, not just evaluation. You've earned the right to be proud of your accomplishment.

Remember: Every successful researcher started where you are now. This defense is both an ending and a beginning.

Vídeos úteis

- Your body language may shape who you are (Amy Cuddy)
 - https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are
- How to speak so that people want to listen (Julian Treasure)
 - https://www.ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_how_to_speak_so_that_people_want_to_listen