

Jamila Lyiscott's 3 Ways To Speak demonstrates a multitude of rhetorical strategies that are used to enrich and enforce the message that she drills into the listener's ear. The notion that she is "articulate" is not because she has the best diction or phrases, it's because she understands the rules of three different forms of English, and has the ability to code mesh as seen in the TED Talk.

A large part of Lyiscott's spoken word piece is repetition. Repetition can be used in a variety of ways, to emphasize and highlight a certain point of perspective the author has. It pounds it into the mind of the audience, and the piece comes off as very compact and thoughtful because all the threads are tied to one word, sound or phrase. Repetition is meant for one to take notice, to recognize the argument that the author is providing in the most glaring way possible. Repetition takes advantage of the philosophy of: the best way to say something is to just SAY it. It can often be harsh and irritating hearing the same thing over and over again, but when done right there is a certain proudness and charisma that it comes with. What I found interesting about Lyiscott's use of repetition is the phrase she uses is very controversial in the context of her poem. "Articulate". It means a lot of things through the lens of English. She says she is trilingual and that's the reason she's articulate, challenging the norm of what the word might mean to others. Her repetition cuts through her short tales of personal experiences which appeal to the audience's emotions. She was speaking to those who have a narrow minded view of what articulate means, reaching into their brains and ripping it out to replace it with a new word every time she said the word: articulate. As she repeats, the inflection in her voice is aggressive, full of personal emotion waiting to burst out and that's why I find this rhetorical strategy so effective.

Another strategy that Lyiscott employs is beginning her spoken word with something that was said to her. Her beginning is non-traditional. It does not start off with a thesis, or a question/statistic hook, it starts off with an anecdote that is turned to the key to unlocking the gateway that is Lyiscott's argument. An anecdote of sorts. Because spoken word is a very non-traditional medium to make an evidence based claim, Lyiscott starts this piece in a very non-traditional manner. I find this interesting because of Lyiscott's genius delivery. She asks that the audience be patient and wait for what she has in store for them at the end of her poem, telling them to essentially "hold on". Her use of the non-traditional beginning, saying her claim outright instead of having to introduce and hook the audience is what makes it easy to digest but compelling at the same time. It can also be argued that her ending is also non-traditional but fits more of the mold of what you expect the ending of an argument to be. Instead of blatantly rewording her claim and "thesis sentence" and leaving the audience with something to think about, she reiterates her point by using the example of her saying hello in three different languages. The languages that she has been meshing in and out of throughout the entire spoken word, and it works so well because she started off the poem by telling the audience that she is articulate. She is aiming directly at those who don't agree with that claim, and lets them know that by the ending she will make a monumental point about her experiences with language.

Lyiscott establishes that she is "trilingual" in her spoken word TED Talk. At first glance, this claim could be easily refuted by the realization that she is technically speaking one language from the beginning to the end of the poem: English. But Lyiscott uses a style of writing, speech and tone to get across that these three dialects are not the same language. A specific writing style and tone in a rhetorical sense can be used to establish a relationship with the author/speaker/. The style is also the speaker's voice, and the more of that the audience can pick up on, the more credible or (incredulous) the argument is. A sense of legitimacy is added when the tone is established, because tone and style are not crafted devices to give certain works a superficial aesthetic. It comes from the author's mind and their heart. Their style is theirs and the tone is the way they wish to tell it, no matter how much it can be copied it will never be accurately replicated. Lyiscott's style and tone are fluid and combative. She is trying to combat those who think that English can only be English, and all other derivatives are either just an off-shoot of Standard English or don't deserve to be called "English" at all. Lyiscott is legit because she establishes that she knows all these three languages. And not just the language, the culture that comes behind them. She knows the rules of Slang English, the history behind her Jamaican Patois and how to mesh into Standardized English when need be.