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SPC1016 – Fundamentals of Speech
Matt Stone
Persuasive Speech Outline

We Should All Drive Manual Transmissions

General purpose: To Persuade

Specific purpose: To persuade my audience that everyone should drive a car that has a manual transmission or should at least know how to drive a manual transmission.

Central Idea: To convince my audience that driving a manual transmission is the better choice as it is more affordable, more fuel efficient, and decreases maintenance costs.

Introduction

- I. **Opening attention getter:** Good afternoon my name is Andrew Bertino. Imagine the following scenario: You are at a party and you have designated driver. From the corner of the room comes a screaming loud person, playing beer pong. Your designated driver is wasted. All is well though, you were not feeling that well and came to the party anyway, but did not drink. You are willing to drive your designated driver home. However, you get to the car and you remember the designated driver has a car with a manual transmission. You totally have no idea what to do with a stick shift. Looks like you are walking home, or calling a cab. Now if you knew how to drive a manual transmission, you could get home in a jiffy. So with that said, how many of you drive or know how to drive a manual transmission?
- II. **Counter Argument 1:** Well you are probably saying, *“well if your designated driver just had an automatic this wouldn’t be a problem. So, everyone should have an automatic!”* That is a solid defense. However, there are certain cars that are only offered in manuals. Lower end, economy cars are sometimes only offered in manual transmissions. The 1.8 liter version of the Dodge Caliber is only offered in a manual transmission¹. Expensive sports cars are generally only offered with stick shifts. Imagine you get enough money one day to get the car of your dreams and they only offer it with a stick shift! If you learned earlier how to drive one, you could buy this car with confidence. Also, what if you are in Europe? The manual transmission is the standard over there.
- III. **Establish credibility:** With that said, today I am going to persuade you that manual transmissions are the better choice. **[Source 1]: According to American Demographics only 17 percent of U.S. adults own a car equipped with a standard transmission².** I am here to hopefully change that. I have driven a manual transmission for six years now, and the only car I have ever owned is a stick shift. I

love driving a stick shift I can't see myself every owning an automatic. I will discuss three main reasons for switching to a manual transmission. First, manual transmissions are more fuel efficient. We are college students. We cannot afford this high priced gas, so the less we have to spend on gas the better. Secondly, it is cheaper to maintain than the automatic and it costs less than an automatic, saving you money when you buy the car. Finally, a third reason is that it gives you better control and feel over your car, it makes you more focused on driving.

Transition 1 – Now that I have given you the three points, I will go ahead and move directly to my first point.

Body

- I. So it saves gas? Manual transmissions are more fuel efficient. **[Source 2]: According to Bill Koener of Slate.com the EPA says “that cars with manual transmissions get 8 percent better gas mileage than their automatic counterparts.”**³

Counter Argument 2: “8% that’s it?” Depending on where you are driving, and how efficiently you drive the car, you can increase that to as much as 15%. Now even that may not sound like much, but if you save 15% every time you fuel up, over the life time of the car, you can save a decent amount of money.

So, how does it get better gas mileage? There are several factors that contribute to better gas mileage.

- A. Mechanically the manual transmission is simply more efficient. It requires less power to operate than the automatic. Its gear train is more efficient than the automatic transmission.
1. Automatics require a torque-converter which brings power loss as it has to spread that power through many gear sets to find the good gear ratio. With a manual transmission, the human sets this and therefore no power is used.⁴
 2. The automatic uses higher pressure hydraulic pumps which use up more power.
- B. Since the driver has more control over the car, it has the ability to make more efficient decisions. An automatic is computer controlled and usually controls gears less efficiently.
1. With a manual transmission, you have control over what gear you are in. So, if you are in no need of extra power, you can quickly shift into higher gears to reduce RPMs and decrease the need for power. So if you were to floor the pedal then, you would accelerate but do so slowly, therefore saving power.
 2. If you floor the pedal in an automatic, the car thinks you are trying to speed up immediately and will drop to a lower gear (thus the whine of the automatic when you floor it) and it will cause the RPMs to spike and it will take far more power.⁴
- C. There are various other aspects that allow for better efficiency

1. Manual transmissions are lighter than their automatic counterparts and therefore require less power to pull the extra weight.
2. There is also a fuel cut off in manual transmissions. In automatics, during deceleration, if the torque converter drops below the stall speed, the momentum can no longer cause the engine to turn and therefore fuel is needed. If you clutch in a manual transmission and you release the accelerator, the momentum of the car can still turn the engine. With this it cuts off the fuel injectors and does not use any fuel to keep the engine turning.⁴

Transition 2 – That pretty much wraps up why manuals are more fuel efficient. Let me move on to my second point.

- II. The overall price of the car is cheaper if you get a manual transmission. When you go to buy the car, you will pay more for the automatic than you would for the manual transmission. Also, maintenance costs on the automatic generally cost more.
 - A. When you first purchase the car, the manual transmission makes the price of the car less. So if you have the same car, with all the same features next to each other at the dealership, but one is a manual and the other is an automatic, you will pay extra for the automatic. This is due to the fact that automatic is simply more complex to build and more complicated to operate. **[Source 3]: According to an article by U.S News and World Report “cost savings [on a manual] is \$1,000 or more.”**⁵ So you simply save at least a thousand dollars right off the bat by getting a manual transmission.
 - B. In the case of maintenance, it costs more to maintain an automatic. Since it is so complex any work that needs to be done with it, simply costs more.
 1. Since the automatic requires torque converters and far more parts, any work on them will cost more.
 2. Over the life cycle of the car the automatic may require more work. Since they are more complex, it is more likely for parts to fail over time. With regular oil changing and maintenance, the manual will last longer than the automatic. Since the manual lasts longer there is generally no need for a total overhaul of the transmission. That can happen more often with the automatic and is very costly.⁶ That is not to say an overhaul is not possible with the manual. For the most part though you only have to replace the clutch.⁷
 3. **Counter Argument 3:** *“Well if you drive the manual poorly you can damage the clutch and the transmission easier!”* While this is true, it is REALLY hard to mess up the clutch or shifter. The car I have is the car I learned on and I have grinded gears and popped clutches, drop gears from high to low, and the car works perfectly still, and it is six years old.

Transition 3 – Next I will move on to my third and final point. The manual transmission gives you more control over the car.

- III.** There is just something about being able to shift your car rather than have a machine do it. Not only do you feel like you have more control over your car, you actually do. You have the ability to control the speed better. By having more control of the car it makes you less distracted and you can have better focus on the road. Also, by knowing how to drive a manual, you can pretty much drive any body's car.
- A. There is a reason that most sports cars that you see people drive are manual transmissions. With automatics you have little control over the amount of RPMs used. In an in automatic if you floor it, the car may only go up to 6000/7500 RPMs (or even less) and then it will shift into the next higher gear. This is especially true in the lower gears. If you punch it off the line, the automatic will shift into higher gears quicker and not give you as good of a punch. In a manual you can control when to shift into the higher gear. You can get that extra burst of power out of those first and second gears. You can give each gear that extra 1000 RPMs. This is great for those looking to really enjoy their car. This is why most sports cars are manual transmissions.
 - B. It is just more engaging. Instead of just pushing the break and accelerator you are moving a third pedal and shifting the car. This gives you a feel that you are actually using more of the car. Also, it gives you a sense of accomplishment as you are kind of completing a task or goal.
 - 1. **Counter Argument 4:** *“Well if you are doing all that shifting you will get distracted.”* True it sometimes does distract you and it definitely sucks in bumper-to-bumper traffic, but with a stick shift you have no hands free almost all of the time, unless you are on the highway. You have one hand steering and the other one on the shifter. This means you can't be holding a cell phone or drinking coffee, shaving, putting on lipstick etc. So yes the shifting gears may be distracting but it lessens the use of other, more serious distractions. Now this does not mean you can't do these things. I have done them, but it just makes you less wanting to do so.
 - 2. **Counter Argument 5:** *“Well hills suck, you can stall on hills and then roll back and hit cars.”* It is very hard to roll back and hit anything. The moment you stall your first initial reaction is to brake anyway. It is true at first, hills can be very scary. But the more you do them, the better you are at them. I have found that when I get to a hill, I enjoy the challenge of it. Once I get the car going and get up that hill I feel like I accomplished something. Although it is still a small accomplishment, it makes the mundane daily drive that more interesting.

Transition 4 – That will pretty much wrap it up.

Conclusion - I have covered several reasons why it is a good idea to go with a manual transmission over an automatic. Some of the ideas were technical and there are many more highly technical reasons for the fuel efficiency and the maintenance costs that I left out. Hopefully with me telling you about how manual transmissions are more fuel efficient, how they are cheaper when you buy them and in maintenance costs, and that they allow you to have full control over the car, you may decide to learn how to drive a manual transmission and that you will prefer that over an automatic. To help you do this, I am going to email everyone after class

and send you a link to a video that will give you a quick over view on how to drive a manual transmission.

Link: http://www.ehow.com/how_3234_drive-car-with.html.

I suggest you watch this and then go find a friend or family member, someone who has a manual and ask them if you can go to a parking lot and just drive it around for a while. In the end even if you do not like the manual transmission enough to own one, it is a solid skill that everyone should have. If you know how to drive a manual you can drive other people's cars in emergencies, whether it be medical or just your designated driver getting completely trashed, you will be able to get around even if their car is a manual transmission.

Speech Reference List

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