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# Targeting Challenges to Manage the Fear of Public Speaking

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

**Introduction**: The fear of public speaking remains a pervasive issue for many individuals, particularly within the American context. This article explores how linguistic and cultural dynamics—specifically American dialectal intolerance—contribute to heightened speaker anxiety and reinforce social boundaries around "standard" and "substandard" forms of speech. **Methods**: This study employs a qualitative analysis of rhetorical and sociolinguistic literature, alongside observational insights, to examine the psychological and cultural factors that influence public speaking anxiety in American society. The role of dialect perception and audience-centered communication is critically assessed. **Results**: Findings suggest that fear of public speaking is exacerbated when individuals internalize negative attitudes toward non-standard dialects or feel pressure to conform to a perceived linguistic norm. However, shifting the speaker's focus from self-consciousness to audience engagement significantly reduces anxiety and enhances delivery effectiveness. **Discussion**: The study highlights the need to challenge dialectal prejudice and promote a more inclusive understanding of linguistic diversity in public discourse. Cultivating an audience-oriented mindset can empower speakers to communicate more confidently, regardless of their linguistic background. **Conclusion**: Managing the fear of public speaking is not only possible but sustainable when speakers transcend self-interest and prioritize meaningful audience connection. Addressing dialectal intolerance is essential to fostering equitable and empowering communication environments.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Research shows that speaker anxiety is a significant concern among professionals in both private and public environments (Francis & Miller, 2008). Lack of tactfulness, self-assurance, and calmness, as well as and anxiety-related perceptions, prevent numerous individuals from delivering effective presentations (Kemnitz, 2005). Evidence shows that the fear of public speaking ranks among the most common human fears (Dwyer & Davidson, 2012). Before speaking, individuals may experience speaker anxiety symptoms, such as loss of appetite, headaches, vomiting, wobbly knees, forgetfulness, trembling voice, inability to form sentences, and inadequate volume, among other traits associated with oral communication deficiencies (Brandrick et al., 2020; Fu, 2007). Individuals fear public speaking for diverse reasons, including dialectal insecurity. Dialectal prejudice contributes to public speaking anxiety among Americans whose speech patterns are classified as "substandard." Such fear associated with speaking publicly increases self-doubt and inadequacies related to social, academic, and emotional instability. The scope of dialectal insecurity

and its nexus to speaker anxiety remains underexplored within communications studies. This study seeks to answer the following research question: How have past events, cultural behavior, and the linguistic systemization of the American language preserved dialectal prejudice, contributing to speaker apprehension among Americans who speak "substandard English?" A speaker's frailties can negatively affect the communication process (Munz & Colvin, 2018). This paper addresses the need for speakers to manage their fear of public speaking by availing support that fosters a managed approach to speaking confidently despite challenges related to dialectal prejudices.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This study employs a qualitative conceptual literature approach, drawing from linguistic themes through texts, historical accounts, and social narratives. It explores how dialectal prejudices cause individuals to fear public speaking due to insecurities within the American context. The inability to meet the linguistic criteria due to dialectal variance causes them to be classified as unintelligent. However, authentic public speaking training courses can help speakers manage their fear of public speaking. Existing literature supports the belief that equipping individuals to speak effectively in public empowers them to accomplish their goals (Hindo & Gonzalez-Prendes, 2011). Persons enabled to publicly express their ideas benefit in their vocation and private lives (Larenas, 2011). A tactful speaker equips oneself to ensure an occupation, influence, discreetly impart information, and foster alliances (Tornabene, 2006). Despite the fear of speaking publicly, speaking more builds confidence (Palpandan et al., 2020).

### 2.1 Historical Roots of American Dialectal Prejudice: Approaching the Seventeenth Century

Before 1650, many English people immigrated from Britain to America, settling in New England colonies such as Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, and the Mid-Atlantic regions (Bailyn, 2011). Ironically, many British immigrants who geographically distanced themselves from their motherland strove to emulate British culture. This socio-mimicry included attempts to adopt the language of the British aristocracy. These settlers, steeped in British values, customs, and culture, did not escape discrimination. Leith (1947) points out that the trend in South-East England was to articulate the r-pronouncing, and those in American cities, such as New York, Jamestown, Charleston, and Boston, imitated this articulation. Anglophiles who favored British upper-class speech (the Queen's or King's English) viewed American English as offensive, barbarous, and lacking in refinement and correctness. Greet (1936) favored the Southern dialect while disparaging the New England dialect, referring to it as the language of untutored yokels (implying the language of Appalachian Hillmen). A Southern journalist echoed similar sentiments, describing the dialect of the natives in Maine, Vermont, and Massachusetts as a "… nasal bark" (Tunnell, 2006, p. 817). Krapp (1925) referred to the Puritan's (of New England) resonant characteristic as a "nasal twang" (pp. 23-24). Southern American English was heavily influenced by British immigrants who arrived in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607 (Nagle & Sanders, 2003). The influence of Anglomania prevented some individuals from relinquishing their sociolinguistic ties.

### 2.2 Historical Roots of American Dialectal Prejudice: During the Nineteenth Century

By the 1800s, the number of immigrants leaving England had not decreased. Gash (1979) notes that by the 1820s, approximately 27,000 immigrants, including about three thousand criminals, arrived in North America, Quebec, and New York each year between 1825 and 1841 (p. 13). Immigrants also came from Scotland, adding to Colonial America's mixture of divergent English dialects (Kurath, 1928). The 1800s marked a time when middle-class American industrialists accumulated significant wealth and sought to join genteel circles. To ensure this rite of passage, they began distinguishing themselves from the working class by adopting a cosmopolitan language. This distinction led to a predisposed systematization of speech known as the Doctrine of Correctness, initially devised for the rising middle class in England (Leonard, 1929). Americans discovered that acquiring literacy could free them from ignorance and help them acquire wealth, overcome injustice, and influence others. However, the Doctrine of Correctness appeared to propagate social and dialectal snobbery. Benjamin Franklin contributed to the Anglomania. He liberally borrowed distinct words and sounds from the British dialect and introduced them to the Philadelphians. One such utterance was the broad "a," which replaced the customary "a" sound, a change that native New Englander Noah Webster disdained (Mencken, 2010a, 1965b). Despite Philadelphia's receptivity to fashionable English, New Englanders became exasperated and disenchanted with British derision and non-acceptance. Pursuing independence from Britain, Webster struggled relentlessly to liberate Colonial America from the British mindset. He envisioned an America that could chart its destiny and dialect separate from England's. His convictions led him to compose a three-volume book comprising a speller, grammar, and reader titled The Grammatical Institute of English Language.

## 2.3 Contemporary American Dialectal Prejudice: Twenty to Twenty-First Century

The influence of dialectal prejudice followed Americans into the twentieth century. Those from northwestern and central Ohio believed they spoke high/standard English (Benson, 2003). Such perspectives increased the likelihood of individuals classifying others from Ohio as speakers of low or substandard English. Kinzler and DeJesus (2013) pointed out that Northern Americans regard Southern Americans as speakers of inferior English. Labeling any dialect as substandard is stigmatizing and implies negative judgments, including assumptions of low intelligence. McDavid (1965) asserts that speaking a nonstandard dialect does not reflect a lack of intelligence (p. 260).

Despite the American dialectal melee, General American English has been the dominant dialect spoken in the United States. Mayer (2012) points out that the major American dialects spoken in the United States are General American, Eastern, New England, and Southern. Around 155 million Americans speak General American, roughly 130 million speak Eastern, about 15 million speak New England, and close to 100 million speak the Southern dialect (pp. 7-8). Newscasters and television hosts speaking General American because it is associated with educated and upper-class society (Metzger, 2019). Companies hire employees who speak Standard English/ General American English to appeal to their target audience (Mai & Hoffman, 2011). The strong bias favoring American (GA)/Standard American English (SAE) makes it difficult for buyers to determine which region a seller originates from. Hence, employing GAE enables an individual to disguise or neutralize their marginalized dialect to conform to the dominant one.

## 3. DIALECTAL INSECURITY: RELEVANCE TO PUBLIC SPEAKING

Dialectal prejudice contributes to the fear of public speaking among some Americans, as linguicists criticize those who do not speak the endorsed American dialect. However, a distinction should be made between dialect and accent. A dialect is a version of a language characterized by a subgroup's use of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Accents, however, pertain to the influence of one's native language over a secondary spoken language, often through intonation, pitch, and word structure. Despite their differences, these terms are often used interchangeably (Huang, 2007). A common misunderstanding is that only people from overseas have accents when in fact "Every speaker has an accent," including native-born Americans (Grover et al., 2022, p. 640).

Nevertheless, individuals who do not meet the current standard of linguistic approval often lack the confidence to speak in public. Even an ardent speaker can succumb to insecurity, experiencing anxiety, nervousness, and timidity. The thought of potential failure can overwhelm a speaker to the point of debilitating fear (Agina, 2015). The regrettable legacy of American dialectal prejudice influences individuals to perceive themselves negatively when speaking to an audience. When audience members hear a speaker, they may judge the person, ascribing unfavorable attributes to the individual (Kutlu et al., 2021; Imhof, 2010; Anderson et al., 2007). Consequently, they may conclude that the speaker typifies a particular group, leading to stereotyping. A speaker's regional dialect may signal to a biased listener that they are from an Appalachian region of America, suggesting "backwardness, violence, poverty, and hopelessness" (Dunstan & Jaeger, 2015, p.778). Similarly, a speaker who uses African American Vernacular English (AAVE)— for example, dropping the -ing or /r/ in certain words, such as "Caolina" instead of "Carolina," or substituting /d/ for /th/, as in "dem" for them—is also perceived as uneducated or violent (Kurinec & Weaver, 2021).

The fear of being judged, criticized, or rejected by others leads to a negative self-perception, triggering social anxiety. Subsequently, individuals with such experiences tend to circumvent social situations that create anxiety (Avramchuk et al., 2022). Discriminating listeners overlook the advantages of a speaker's bi-dialecticism or bi-dialectism. They fail to recognize that a speaker of two languages has mastered code-switching. Earlier researchers believed that children code-switched because it demonstrated confusion and that children were unaware, they were using two languages, but this conclusion was incorrect (Hughes et al., 2006). Such a conclusion can suggest that, from childhood to adulthood, children were intellectually incapable of manipulating two languages. The sensitivity and awareness of language that bilingual speakers possess should encourage listeners to be receptive to what they can learn instead of passing prejudgment. A listener who prejudges a speaker based on their distinct way of speaking "sees a people [as they see their language]" (Wheeler, 2019, p. 2). Linguistic discrimination or glottophobia creates an environment that hinders speakers from managing their anxiety, but speaker empowerment is achievable.

## 4. A SPEAKER'S NEED FOR GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCY

The grammatical ability to articulate ideas intelligibly using English is essential for communicating effectively. Speakers of the English language who familiarize themselves with grammar development cultivate appreciable language sensitivity. Nearly globalized, the English language has become the lingua franca (Ament, 2021; Kaiper, 2018;

Poggensee, 2016; Sung, 2016; Wei, 2016; Alfehaid, 2014). Hence, educators agree that English is the language students should master because it is how individuals judge their speech mastery (Oysara, 2021). In their formative years, youths learn how to formulate sophisticated sentences. The ability to manipulate morphemes to construct sentences in the past tense and use action words and superlatives is crucial. The development of these written and oral skills carries over into adulthood. A speaker's grammatical skill enables them to chronicle information and complement the arrangement of ideas in their manuscript (Reinking & Von der Osten, 2013).

### 4.1 Grammatical Competence: Confidence for Public Speaking

The rules and principles governing how to speak a language reinforce many written practices. Considering the present topic that addresses managing the fear of public speaking, the writer argues that grammar encompasses a language's overall arrangement and design, comprising syntax, morphology, phonology, and semantics. Grammar rules govern language implemented by both the encoder and decoder as a vehicle to extract meaning. The depth of a speaker's grammatical proficiency indicates their intelligence and establishes credibility (Handayani, 2013). For instance, listeners do not anticipate that an invited speaker will be ill-proficient in utilizing morphemes (Benmamoun et al., 2013). They do not expect to hear statements such as, *"The dog is biggest than the cat," "He walk home,"* or *"The dog hidden the bone."* These misapplied utterances alter the established meaning, introducing internal interference for the listener. Ordinarily, listeners assume a speaker is familiar with basic word forms. Correctly employing inflectional affixes enables effective communication (Seifart, 2015). Appropriate morpheme usage is core for the speaker because even the slightest alteration of its word form changes its meaning (Hogan, 2012). The progression of skill in morpheme usage allows the user to construct sentences employing plural words, possessive language, action, and past tense. Grammatical competency enhances speaker confidence, making it easier to address an audience (Rinke & Kupisch, 2013). Moreover, managing the fear of public speaking requires the speaker to be audience-centered.

## 5. MANAGING THE FEAR OF SPEAKING TOWARDS AUDIENCE-CENTEREDNESS

To become audience-centered, a speaker must take decisive measures to manage public speaking anxiety. Consider some reasons individuals fear speaking in front of audiences: "Lack of vocabulary, nervousness, inability to answer a question, ...making mistakes, [fear

of] people laughing at me; [I] don't like people looking at me [or] standing in front of a large audience" (Humaera & Pramustiara, 2022, p. 142; Ibrahim et al., 2022, p. 140; Grieve et al., 2021, p.1285). The writer has worked with individuals who were adamant about not speaking in front of an audience because English was not their first language. Some offered unrelated excuses, such as unkempt hair or broken nails. Objections motivated by fear of speaking publicly redirect the speaker's focus from audience-centeredness to self-centeredness. Self-absorption overtakes the meaningful moment of idea-sharing due to because of a speaker's fear. Self-centeredness places one's welfare above all others (Dambrun & Ricard, 2011). De Tocqueville (1945) stated, "Selfishness is a passionate and exaggerated love of self, which leads [an individual] ... to prefer [oneself] to everything in the world" (p.98). Speakers who focus on their speech anxiety become engrossed in their desires and needs, overlooking the opportunity to empathize emotionally with the wants and needs of their audience.

### 5.1 Individualism: An Influence on Speaker Anxiety

The writer argues that a self-centered perspective partially prevails in American society to some extent because the culture promotes individualism, a philosophy that prioritizes personal interest over the interests of others. Individualism is associated with "independent ... self-interest ... and personal attitudes" (Bazzi et al., 2020, p.1). Although other countries are experiencing a rise in individualism, America remains "the most individualistic country" and "the Hallmark of American culture" (Santos et al., 2025; p.8; Stivers, 2003, p. 56). A self-serving mindset makes speaking in front of people problematic because the speaker places their concerns ahead of others. Negative imaginary thoughts trouble the speaker before or during the performance. Low self-esteem may precipitate speaker anxiety due to experiences with racism or sexism (Vevea et al., 2009). Some speakers allow their adverse experiences to influence and define their self-worth. Standing before a group, the speaker may experience a sense of inadequacy, inability, and inferiority. Anxiety associated with a self-evaluative sense of rejection from one's audience can overwhelm the speaker. Subsequently, negative thoughts catalyze "internal noise," preventing the speaker from effectively communicating with their audience (Beebe & Beebe, 2024, p.3).

### 5.2 Philanthropy: A Selfless Act Towards Audience-Centeredness

An audience-centered speaker is empowered to manage speaker anxiety because they present themselves as a philanthropist. Often, philanthropy is associated

with economics through funding, grantmaking, or some monetary expression of gifting (Ealy, 2014; Patton et al., 2015). Defining philanthropy merely as a humanitarian act that prompts individuals to donate funds to help others is incomplete. Its popular meaning should not obscure its true essence. Philanthropy is the outpouring of one's concern or care for humanity (Walton, 2017). It embodies selflessness, sacrificial giving, and generosity without expectation of reciprocity. Thus, the speaker must be willing to look beyond their self-interest and serve the interests of the audience members. The speaker should strive to empathize with the audience's pleasure, sadness, pain, anger, confusion, and excitement. When the speaker selflessly shares information with the audience, they operate at a high level of empathy rather than a low one (Cialdini et al., 1987). A speaker should endeavor to adapt to their audience, attempting to feel or experience what the audience feels. This is achieved by implementing emotional intelligence, which is gaining prominence in diverse areas (Clancy, 2014).

Unquestionably, one cannot distinctly feel or experience another's emotion; that experience is unique to the individual. However, the speaker can empathize with the audience (Nanay, 2018). One can engage in such an emotional process due to shared emotional neural activation when observing others display emotion (Vignemont & Singer, 2006). Hence, a speaker can demonstrate philanthropic concern for the audience by expressing feelings for their listeners. This selfless act of sacrificial giving fosters a person to feel good about themselves (Anik et al., 2009). Audience-centeredness is rooted in a philanthropic concern arising from the speaker's selflessness, which motivates both the audience and the speaker. Although speakers must be listener-focused, they will require further development and specialized communicators to hold them accountable. Speaker training hubs provide such empowerment.

## 6. PUBLIC SPEAKING TRAINING COURSES

### 6.1 Instructor's In-Class Course Training

Research indicates that students who rated public speaking among their fears after taking a public speaking course no longer experienced intense fear of speaking in public (Dwyer, 2021; Marinho, 2017). Students experienced speaker empowerment upon completing the researcher's fundamental speech course. Each student was expected to present a demonstration, an expository, and a persuasive speech during the semester. The intent of the first two informative speeches differed—the former required students to use a chronological pattern, while the latter required a topical sequence. The final speech involved a persuasive template for influencing

attitudes, beliefs, values, or behaviors. The class engaged in warm-up speaking drills, impromptu speaking, voice and diction exercises, grammar strengthening in written/oral tasks, and targeting oratorical competencies and weaknesses. The researcher emphasized intonation to make speakers sensitive to the appropriate time to express various emotions during delivery.

Concurrently, attention was given to body language to complement the speaker's voice. The instructor prompted students to exercise their imagination during performances to prevent distractions. They participated in warm-up exercises such as slow, deep breathing to increase oxygen flow into the bloodstream, vocal exercises to relax the vocal folds, and tongue twisters to improve awareness of word clarity. The instructor addressed students' objections regarding their fear of public speaking, informing them that their negative thoughts stemmed from self-centeredness. Some students offered counterclaims, attempting to justify their reasons for speaker apprehension. For example, audience members might think the speaker is boring, nervous, unkempt, or lacking sophistication. Nevertheless, the instructor countered each objection by explaining how their imaginary beliefs about their fear of public speaking exemplified self-absorption. Instead of focusing on themselves, they were instructed to concentrate on sharing information with their listeners for altruistic purposes. Focusing on the needs of others rather than on oneself connects the speaker with the feelings of others, thereby empowering them to empathize (Dambrun & Ricard, 2011). Following this preparation, students performed with confidence and managed their fear. Genuine instructional public speaking training hubs are invaluable.

### 6.2 Coursera

Coursera offers Dynamic Public Speaking Specialization, an online asynchronous instruction program through the University of Washington. The courses are sequenced and designed for beginners and professionals. Participants may enroll in public speaking courses and take one or more of them in any order. Coursera advises enrollees to take Introduction to Public Speaking first. Instruction lasts from 4 to 6 months. Students receive firsthand training in coursework activities that address various areas, including informative, persuasive, and ceremonial speaking, as well as strategies for reducing public speaking anxiety. Learners study at their own pace and participate in coursework by watching instructional videos, completing readings, taking quizzes, and submitting assignments. The instructors offer learners graded feedback on all assignments. Potential learners are

offered a limited free trial. Upon completion of training, learners earn a certificate.

### 6.3 Auburn University

Auburn University offers the Public Speaking Expert Certificate Program with an Externship. This six-month, fee-based course employs an academic approach to instruction, beginning with an introduction to public speaking and progressing to the delivery of informative, persuasive, and ceremonial speeches. The course teaches students how to effectively use PowerPoint as an electronic medium to clarify and enliven each presentation. Upon passing the Microsoft Office Specialist exam, students who complete the course are eligible for national certification.

### 6.4 Rhetoric: The Art of Persuasive Writing and Public Speaking

Rhetoric: The Art of Persuasive Writing and Public Speaking is an 8-week online course offered through Harvard University, focusing on writing and public speaking. The instructor provides students with background on the development of rhetoric, clarifies misconceptions about rhetoric, and illustrates its prominent role in society. Students learn the crucial components of an argument, how to identify fallacies, and how to evaluate the validity of an argument by investigating its premises to determine its logical connection to its conclusion. Students who pay for the course receive feedback on graded assignments and examinations. Upon course completion, recipients receive a certificate; however, students who opt to take the course for free do not. Although no claims of reducing public speaking anxiety are made, such instructional content is likely to increase a learner's confidence if they struggle with the fear of public speaking.

### 6.5 Ovation

Ovation is a 15-week certificate program that offers learners a 7-day free trial. This interactive, virtual reality software is tailored for individuals struggling with the fear of public speaking. The software provides various speaking environments where learners can practice. It allows students to upload their speeches and select a specific audience type, including the audience's attire. Learners can practice at home using their laptops, and the interactive system provides evaluative feedback, such as notifications of vocalized pauses and alerts that indicate when the speaker is speaking too slowly, too quickly, in a monotone, or verbalizing run-ons. For more immersive practice, learners can use virtual reality goggles that place them in a three-dimensional setting, enhancing the experience.

### 6.6 Dale Carnegie

Dale Carnegie offers a twelve-week course in speech instruction, available online or in person. This instruction is geared towards helping individuals manage their public speaking anxiety. Trainees progress through the curriculum to achieve speaker competence. Carnegie coaches work with trainees to assist them in mastering public speaking, coping with stress, adapting to changing job environments, and enhancing their skills (Dale Carnegie, 2014).

### 6.7 Toastmasters International

Toastmasters International offers a public speaking course that trainees can attend in person or online, and the fees are low. The organization is committed to improving individuals' public speaking skills. Toastmasters International publishes its course of study in its Competent Communication booklet. The ten speaking courses are scaffolded sequentially, building on the previous course. Additionally, fifteen accelerated courses target communication, emphasizing multimedia presentations, soft skills, and storytelling. Members participate regularly in public speaking assemblies, where each member presents a speech before the club members. At the end of each speech, the Toastmaster provides critiques (Toastmasters International, 2014).

## 7. DISCUSSION

### 7.1 Historical Perspectives

Dialectal prejudice was a British export to Colonial America. Since its introduction, Americans have continued to identify linguistic differences. These linguistic variances have served as a rubric by which Americans subjectively determine an individual's intelligence. Some individuals avoid public speaking because they fear others will conclude that their regional dialect or accent makes them less intelligent (Coppinger & Sheridan, 2022).

### 7.2 Sociolinguistic Perspectives

Evidence of an individual's ability to code-switch between two or more languages reveals mastery, sensitivity to language, and intelligence. The implications suggest that Standard American English is the preeminent mode of communicating and that employing any other American regional dialect is substandard or considered "broken" English (Wheeler & Thomas, 2013). The inferences in this study reinforce that an individual's regional dialect or accent does not define their self-worth. Linguistic differences should not deter a speaker.

### 7.3 Psychological Perspectives

Marks et al. (2018) emphasize that somatic symptoms emerge when an individual must speak in

public, resulting from imaginary or unpleasant thoughts. Irrational fears foster stress and anxiety, triggering the body to sweat, tremble, and produce a rapid heart rate, dry mouth, and other physical symptoms. However, empowerment through mental reconditioning is the determining factor for managing such fear. Any individual willing and disciplined enough to avail themselves of available adjuncts, such as grammatical development, audience-centeredness, and public speaking training courses, can make public speaking more manageable.

## 8. CONCLUSION

Public speaking is one of humanity's most common and intense fears. Before speaking, nervousness overtakes many presenters, leading to temporary physical setbacks, from headaches to vomiting, loss of appetite, wobbly knees, and other somatic deterrents. The fear of speaking is driven by an individual's self-focused, imaginary, or real shortcomings that obstruct effective communication. A speaker's anxiety may be heightened by the perception that the audience judges their intelligence based on linguistic bias. This fear of being judged triggers speaker insecurity—the fear of being labeled negatively. Listeners often attach negative characteristics to speakers upon recognizing their ethnic association (Brandt & Reyna, 2011). Speakers who fail to communicate effectively using the endorsed regional dialect may inadvertently signal their belonging to a sub-society (Dunstan & Jaeger, 2015; Kurinec & Weaver, 2021). Regarding the history of American English, linguistic discrimination has influenced how the American community evaluates an individual's level of intelligence (Orelus, 2020). Such historically negative influences falsely represent a speaker's ability to communicate effectively.

Most people will, at some point, need to speak publicly (Rahman, 2014). Whether at a wedding, funeral, professional setting, or as a student enrolled in a course, individuals are often called to present information through demonstration, explanation, or persuasion (McConnell, 2009). Fallacious reasoning would dictate that one must instinctively speak well if one is knowledgeable. However, speaking well encompasses effective communication. Learning to do so involves not just understanding the theory but also learning through practice.

## 9. Implications

### 9.1 Educators

The popularized belief by Sir Francis Bacon that knowledge is power is taught in the halls of academia in a way that reinforces this assertion. However, Dale Carnegie (2023) challenged this notion, restating that the application of knowledge is power. Educators are responsible for motivating students to do more than communicate; they must communicate effectively. Learning the art of public speaking allows students to apply what they have learned in theory. Hence, educators can require their students to deliver assignments orally. What they have learned in theory will be shared with the class while the information is delivered orally and in non-verbal delivery. Both avenues serve as conduits to increase retention, deepen the understanding of a topic, promote learning, increase communication skills, and boost student confidence. During the speech preparation process, students must determine whether their goal is to demonstrate, explain, or persuade. They will then learn to research and phrase the topic for their specific audience, arrange ideas logically, support their ideas with reliable data, rehearse the presentation, and execute the speech.

### 9.2 Policymakers

Sometimes, policymakers may become engrossed in establishing procedures and rules that govern education, and due to underfunding, programs such as public speaking may be eliminated. Policymakers are individuals who use the tools of persuasion to explain complex issues to laypeople in straightforward terms. They also speak at workshops, discussions, and debates at the national, state, and district levels of government. Considering the numerous speaking engagements, more internships should be extended to students, allowing them to participate in mock presentations and progress to real ones.

### 9.3 Public Speaking Coaches

Public speaking coaches target specific markets to remain current with industry trends. They understand the need to appeal to emerging markets, such as immigrants looking to improve their English. With this information, training coaches compete to offer non-native English speakers an inexpensive and straightforward method using artificial intelligence at home to reduce or modify their accent, as exemplified by the Elsa Speak application, which promises results and fun during the learning process (Becker & Edalatishams, 2019).

## 10. Recommendations

If "…one cannot not communicate," then human communication is essential (Watzlawick et al., 2017, p. 275). Given its necessity, policies supporting this need should be initiated at the federal and state levels. The influence of the president's appointment of the Secretary of Education can shape policy, whereby laws influence curriculum. If policymakers integrate public speaking into the curriculum, educators and speech training hubs will likely follow suit for favorable reasons. It may not suffice merely to argue that public speaking improves one's

ability to think clearly, enabling one to analyze arguments, become a better active listener, and be more sensitive to reading body language. Lawmakers must be convinced that integrating public speaking into the curriculum is an investment. Such a course grooms individuals for political, community, or social civic engagement. Incorporating public speaking into the curriculum can optimize instructional resources, as instructors specializing in the field would not need to be hired for rudimentary courses. Existing instructional staff would be capable of teaching students at the basic levels if they took an online certificate instructional speech training course. The speech course would be time and cost-effective compared to enforcing mandatory in-person classes.

For this reason, public speaking should be interdisciplinary and integrated into various disciplines such as education, business, and political science. If public speaking courses are integrated into instructor training, teachers can demonstrate to their students, through application, the importance of artful dialogue.

If policymakers initiate such an action, educators will likely follow suit for favorable reasons. Schools will ensure they are legally compliant to receive funding from federal, state, or local municipalities. Legal compliance will influence the overall quality of public speaking instruction, benefiting learners from elementary school through college.

## Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The author declares that there is no conflicting interest regarding this article.

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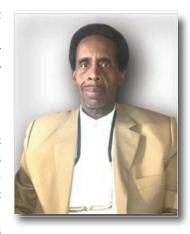
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