

Role of Intrapersonal communication in Public Speaking

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to understand the importance of Intrapersonal communication for Public speakers. Speaking in front of larger public often brings lots of anxiety and fear due to which speakers face many problems such as disfluences, fumbling in speech, wrong pronunciation of words and unessential pauses in their communication. To overcome these problems, this study focuses on the role of intrapersonal communication and its many dimensions such as rehearsal, imagined interaction and self talk to motivate oneself. The results show that though unknown to the speakers but Intrapersonal communication had been the part of public speakers in many forms. New speakers have more chances to get indulged into the Intrapersonal communication than the experienced speakers. Research reveals that to mitigate their anxiety and fear of anticipated communication, public speakers talk to themselves regarding their performance. Many of the respondents admit that due to Intrapersonal communication, they could be able to perform better.

Keywords: *Public speaking, intrapersonal communication, speech, public speakers, communication apprehension*

Introduction

Communication is an essential part of human's lives. Mostly everyone communicates with each other which is also known as interpersonal communication but when they are asked to address an audience they feel many issues such as hesitation, lack of confidence, anxiety and excessive seating. (R. Farhan, 2017) People generally assess and appraise those negatively who are afraid of public speaking and not able to mark a strong and confident gestures. (Kant, 2000) Hence it becomes necessary for them to develop good public speaking skills to excel in private as well as professional life.

Public Speaking

Public speaking is an art as well as a science. Not every great public speakers is born rather some are made. Public speaking is a way to disseminate or share your ideas and views to public. (Do & Dang 2012) It is a process, an act of delivering speeches before an audience (Nikitina, 2011) usually in a planned and structured manner with an aim to persuade, educate, inform or entertain them. (Salim & Joy, 2016) Many people think that Public speaking merely involves formal situation and a speaker on stage in front of a large audience. However, it is also about the speaker's goals, make-up and size of the audience, environment in which the speaking occurs. The seven basic elements of Public speaking are – "Speaker, Message, channel, listener, feedback, interference and situation." (Lucas, 2007)

Intrapersonal Communication

Intrapersonal communication involves single person and takes place within a person. In This type of communication both sender and receiver are one self. Due to this reason it is also known as self talk or inner speech. (Shedletsky, 2009). Joseph Devito (1997) explained in his book intrapersonal communication as the communication one does within, with an aim of analyzing, reasoning, pondering and thinking. Rosmawaty (2010), says Intrapersonal communication occurs when a person has a dialogue with himself, he asks questions from himself and answer himself at the same time and one receives the message or signal which characterize one's own sensations and feelings.(Wenberg and Wilmot, 1973). Sometimes people imagine their conversation with others resulting into a phenomenon of Imagined interaction. This notion of Imagined Interaction is taken from the work of Intrapersonal communication. (Honeycutt, et.al. 1989) Roloff and Berger (1982) agree to the fact that Intrapersonal communication has great impact on behavior patterns as well.

Literature Review

Mead (1934) has briefly discussed about the individual's internal conversation. He described that before the completion of an actual activity, individuals can test out implicitly the various possible outcomes of an act and choose the one which is most relevant and suitable. During these internal dialogues, one also takes the place of the other person and tries to see himself from other's point of view. Mead considered these internal conversations important for individuals as these conversations prepare the person with the best response in the upcoming interaction and give them an opportunity to test or imagine the consequences before the conversation. Rosenblatt and Meyer (1986) have discussed about the benefits of imagining the conversation with other through which an individual can clarify one's thoughts and feelings.

Honeycutt, zagacky and Edwards (1989) revealed in their research that self talk and imagined interactions are the part of the intrapersonal communication and they play an important role in the development of self. Through the mechanism of good intrapersonal communication, individuals can plan and even measure the social action. As rehearsals are the part of intrapersonal communication, through this individuals can discover the situation dependent behaviors and they can practice the behaviors relevant or suitable for anticipated conversation. Mccroskey (1977b) has extensively discussed about the Communication apprehension as an anxiety or fear one faces during real or anticipated communication with one or another person. The word anticipated clearly defined the fact that the fear or anxiety for future conversation or interaction can be as powerful as the anxiety one faces for real interaction. To overcome this fear, Intrapersonal communication comes as a rescue where individual can rehearse for the future interaction and can also review the previous communication interactions. (Honeycutt, 2003, 2009)

Research Methodology

Objectives:

1. To know the impact of intrapersonal communication on the performance of public speakers.
2. To understand the importance intrapersonal communication in Public speaking.
3. To understand the effect of various dimensions of Intrapersonal communication such as rehearsal imagined interaction on the performance of public speakers.

4. To identify the various tactics used by public speakers for better performance.

Research Questions

1. What is the importance of intrapersonal communication for Public Speakers?
2. What is the effect of intrapersonal communication on the stage performance of the public speakers?

Sample size and Tool used

Data was collected from 60 respondents. All the respondents were public speakers. Purposive and snowball sampling were used. Respondents were asked to fill a questionnaire comprising of 20 questions to understand the importance of intrapersonal communication and its dimensions such as imagined interaction, self motivation and rehearsal on public speakers and their speaking.

Findings

1. All the respondents considered presence of mind, command over language, fluency and making relevance with the target audience are the important feature of a good public speaker.
2. 26.7 % and 6.7 % respondents had an experience of more than 6 years and 4 to 6 years in public speaking domain respectively whereas 36.7 % had an experience of 1 to 4 years and 30 % were new public speakers with an experience of 0-6 years.
3. 71.9 % respondents agreed pre planned script increases the fluency of public speaker on stage.
4. 48.5 % respondents claimed that well rehearsed performance is always better than a spontaneous one.
5. 97% respondents agreed that self communication helps in organizing a well planned and successful event.
6. 87.5 % respondents answered rehearsals make the performance better.
7. 68.8% people admitted that they motivate themselves before an event for their better performance.
8. 81.3 % public speakers said that they get indulged in the act of self talk (about what they will talk) before interacting with the audience.
9. 93.9 % respondents admitted that intrapersonal communication leads to good stage performance.
10. 68.8 % admitted that they practiced in front of mirror before their performance in order to get the better results.
11. 59.4 % respondents considered that intrapersonal communication before performance make them more confident whereas 21.9% considered it made their performance better.
12. 53.1 % respondents said that they imagine their interaction with their audience before an event and 28.1 % said they sometimes do this.

Analysis

Intrapersonal communication affects the performance of a speaker in a positive way. From the above findings, it has been analyzed that rehearsal, a form of intrapersonal communication, is an indispensable part of the performances of public speakers. The individuals who experience anxiety and lack of confidence often give more time in preparation or rehearsal to reduce their uneasiness. However, the speakers with the experience of more than 4 years feel that they can perform spontaneously even without rehearsal. This fact proves that rehearsal or intrapersonal communication is important for the new public speakers for a better performance.



Almost all public speakers also affirmed that they imagine their body language and dialogue delivery before the event for the better outcomes. Self talk about the performance often minimizes the chances of disfluences and improves the awareness of speaker about the correct body postures and language. Self motivation, also a form of intrapersonal communication, often boosts the confidence of speaker. It has been analyzed that new speakers have the highest tendency to get indulged in self motivation before performance and the tendency decreases as the experience increases. The respondents with an experience of more than 6 years in public speaking domain don't feel that self motivation is important to them and they don't get indulged in the practice of self motivation before their performance. This fact is partially true in case of the individuals who are not into Public speaking regularly. Few of the respondents who were into public speaking for more than 6 years accepted that they do rehearsal and motivate themselves before performance because the frequency of their public speaking is less than that of the speakers who are into regular business of public speaking. The respondents who also happen to be the public speakers also affirmed that they do imagine their interaction with the audience before their performance. Imagined interaction can be explained the way people prepare for upcoming conversations by creating cognitive scripts for behavioral enactment (Honeycutt, 2008). It has been analyzed from the data that intrapersonal communication minimizes the hesitation, disfluencies and communication apprehension.

Conclusion

This article investigated and discussed the benefits of intrapersonal communication and its effects on the speaking performance of the Public speakers and also described its role in public speaking. The research makes it clear that intrapersonal communication is very important for Public speakers. It minimizes the disfluences, anxiety and hesitations resulting into better performance, fluency and the increase of effectiveness and authority of message. (choi et.al. 2015) The results of this investigation explain that person faces many issues such as disfluences, anxiety, but strategic planning through intrapersonal communication can minimize these effects. Moreover, before the performance, it is common for the public speakers to get indulged into internalized conversation of gestures where they test their performance, gestures and speech through different methods and choose the one final method which is most desirable and appropriate to perform explicitly. (Mead, 1934)

Further suggestions and Recommendations

Further exploratory studies can be conducted to analyze the effect of intrapersonal communication on people who are afraid of public speaking. An observatory study can also be conducted where comparison between the two spontaneous performances of individuals, one with intrapersonal communication before performance and the other without intrapersonal communication, can be analyzed. These studies would be very helpful for the individuals to enhance their communication skills.

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