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ABSTRACT

A study examined the effect of successful and unsuccessful video models on pre-performance public speaking anxiety of students enrolled in basic communication courses. Two hundred twenty-five students enrolled in the basic communication courses served as participants. Subjects were divided into four conditions according to how the instructions for their first in-class public speaking assignment were given: (1) subjects not confronted with video models; (2) subjects confronted with a successful video model; (3) subjects confronted with an unsuccessful video model; and (4) subjects confronted with both a successful and unsuccessful video model. Results revealed that video modeling as an instructional strategy does not significantly minimize student pre-performance apprehension and that there was no significant difference between the effects of the successful and unsuccessful video models in altering student anxiety. Results also revealed that the introduction of both successful and unsuccessful video models actually produced more anxiety as an outcome of specific prescriptions of appropriate behaviors. Findings suggest that the narrower range of acceptable behavior produced by the video versus the audio models (reported in earlier studies) may result in heightened student concerns about evaluation, performance, and self-related issues. (One table of data is included.) (KEH)

Video-Modeling and Pre-performance Apprehension: Ignorance is Bliss

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Abstract

Video-Modeling and Pre-performance Apprehension: Ignorance is Bliss

This paper examines the impact of video-modeling on basic communication course students' public speaking apprehension. Students were confronted with successful and unsuccessful video model presentations of their first public speaking assignment. The viewing of the video models preceded in-class live performances. Results indicated that students who were confronted with both of the video models experienced increases in their public speaking apprehension, while students who viewed neither video model did not.

Rationale

A recent report (Gibson, Hanna, and Lechty, 1990) indicated that the public speaking orientation to basic communication course instruction was the choice of 56% of 423 universities surveyed. Gibson et al. reported that the "Hybrid" orientation to basic course instruction appears to have been decreasing over the last five years with the more traditional public speaking emphasis maintaining its position of dominance.

The emphasis on public speaking instruction in the basic communication classroom "challenges the classroom teacher to discover and implement strategies that minimize anxiety associated with in-class public speaking performances" (Beatty, 1988b, p. 208).The experience of giving a speech before an audience for a grade is certainly a novelty for most basic communication course students. McCroskey (1984) addressed that "for most people, giving a speech is a novel experience, not something they do every day" (p. 25). "The uncertainty associated with novel situations presumably produces anxiety reactions" (Beatty, 1988a, p.28). Pre-performance concerns (i.e., evaluation, performance, and self-related issues) are regarded as sources of greater anxiety (Daly, Vangelisti, Neel, and Cavanaugh, 1989). Daly and Buss (1984, p. 67) found that uncertainty about the requirements of an upcoming assignment was one cause of anticipatory anxiety.

One strategy for reducing student pre-performance anxiety associated with uncertainty about performance expectations, involves confronting students with successful and unsuccessful public speaking models. Beatty (1988b) found that when confronted with either successful or unsuccessful

audio-taped models, successful models were ineffective in reducing anticipatory audience anxiety, while unsuccessful models were found to be potentially helpful for moderate to low apprehensives.

Gibson et al. (1990) indicated that 41% of the schools they surveyed used video-tape in some capacity in basic course instruction. Considering the number of schools employing the use of video tape it seems useful to determine the potential impact that successful and unsuccessful video model confrontation may have as an anxiety minimization instructional strategy.

Hypothesis: *Basic communication course students, when exposed to successful and unsuccessful video models prior to their first in-class speaking performance will experience a greater reduction in pre-performance public speaking anxiety than those students exposed to only a successful or unsuccessful video model.*

Method and Procedure

Participants and Video Models

Two hundred and twenty-five students enrolled in the basic communication course served as participants in the present study. Subjects were divided into four conditions varied by how the instructions for their first public speaking assignment were given: (1) subjects not confronted with video models, (2) subjects confronted with a successful video model, (3) subjects confronted with an unsuccessful video model, and (4) subjects confronted with both a successful and unsuccessful video model.

The video models featured a speaker successfully or unsuccessfully following seven criteria that students knew would be used to evaluate their in-class public speaking performances. The criteria were: (1) make the

purpose clear in the introduction, (2) use an appropriate organizational pattern, (3) include a variety of information during the speech, (4) use repetition to emphasize main points, (5) come to a definite stop, (6) maintain eye contact with the audience, and (7) use gestures and body movement that focus on the message.

Measurement and Treatment

The Personal Report of Public Speaking Apprehension (PRPSA) (McCroskey, 1970; McCroskey and Richmond, 1982) which measures public speaking anxiety exclusively was administered to subjects one week prior to their receiving instructions for their first in-class public speaking assignment (Cronbach's Alpha = .946) and one week after their receiving the instructions (Cronbach's Alpha = .942). The second administration of the instrument preceded in-class performances.

Results

Initial Measure of Apprehension

In order to establish that the subjects did not differ in their initial level of public speaking apprehension a one-way ANOVA was computed on the pretest scores across the four conditions. Subjects' initial apprehension scores did not differ significantly across the four conditions ($F = .55$, $df = 3, 173$, $p<.65$).

Validity of Video Manipulation

The validity of the manipulation of the video models was established by having subjects confronted with both successful and unsuccessful models (condition 4) rate the models on each of the seven evaluation criteria using five-point likert-type items. The successful video received a higher rating (x =

31.93) than the unsuccessful video (x = 15.55) suggesting a valid manipulation (t = 21.62, p < .001).

Change in Apprehension

A one-way ANOVA found a significant change in apprehension scores from pre to posttest across the four conditions (F = 3.06, df = 3, 129, p<.03). A Tukey's post-hoc analysis revealed that the No Video Model group differed significantly from the Successful and Unsuccessful Video Model group (p<.05). No other post-hoc comparisons were significant, although, subjects' apprehension levels increased steadily from condition one to condition four (see Table 1).

Table 1

Mean Change in Apprehension

Condition	Mean Change in Apprehension
1. No Video Model	0.00*
2. Successful Model	1.06
3. Unsuccessful Model	4.94
4. Successful and Unsuccessful Model	6.84*

* p < .05

Discussion

Although reducing uncertainty associated with assignment requirements and related performance expectations seems a likely source of anxiety minimization the results did not support that video modeling is a

useful instructional strategy for doing such. One explanation could be that the introduction of video modeling formalized the assignment to too great an extent. McCroskey (1984) suggested that "formal situations tend to be associated with highly prescribed appropriate behaviors" (p. 25). Beatty (1988a) added that "it is the narrow range of acceptable behavior which produces anxiety" (p. 29). The introduction of both successful and unsuccessful video models potentially produced anxiety as an outcome of such specific prescription of appropriate behaviors.

The aforementioned specific prescription of acceptable behaviors generated by the contrasting videos may explain the dissimilarity between the findings pertaining to the use of audio versus video modeling. The narrower range of acceptable behavior produced by the video (through the provision of both audio and visual sensory input) versus the audio models may result in heightened student concerns about evaluation, performance, and self-related issues.

Newburger, Brannon, and Daniel (1989) found that the introduction of self-confrontation (self-viewing of video-taped speeches) inhibited the reduction of public speaking apprehension, while public speaking alone acted as an intervening variable that reduced speaker anxiety. Perhaps the results of this study reinforce that "there is no substitute for the 'tried and true' notion that speaker confidence is enhanced from repeated public speaking experiences... or 'ignorance is bliss?'"

The lack of a significant difference between the effects of the successful and unsuccessful video models on altering student pre-performance apprehension is intriguing considering a significant difference between students viewing both video models and students viewing neither was found. The disparity may be attributable to the number of videos the subjects

viewed rather than to the quality of the model being portrayed. Future research should consider whether such an effect might dissipate with the viewing of a variety video models.

An additional concern for future research would involve the consideration of the impact of the use of video modeling beyond the first in-class performance. Increased speaker familiarity with the video modeling instructional strategy may make the experience less formal for student speakers, and could potentially influence the reduction of speaker pre-performance anxiety.

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