



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI  
DI PADOVA

**Università degli Studi di Padova**  
Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Letterari

**Corso di Laurea Magistrale in**  
**Strategie di Comunicazione**

**Classe LM-92**

Tesi di Laurea

# **The Impact of Public Speaking on People's Life: a theoretical and empirical investigation**

Relatore  
Prof.ssa Maria Grazia Busà e  
Yolanda Ruiz de Zarobe

Laureando  
Andrea Liotto  
n° matr.1133970/ LMSGC



# CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b> .....	7
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	9
<b>CHAPTER I: The importance of Public Speaking in everyday life</b> .....	13
<b>1.1 Introduction</b> .....	13
<b>1.2 A little history</b> .....	14
<b>1.2.1 From oratory to public speaking</b> .....	17
<b>1.3 The current context of public speaking</b> .....	19
<b>1.3.1 The impact of English language on public speaking</b> .....	19
<b>1.3.2 Public speaking and debating program in the educational system</b> .....	25
<b>1.3.3 Rethinking education in the age of soft skills</b> .....	26
<b>1.3.4 Fun public speaking</b> .....	28
<b>1.4 How to become a great speaker</b> .....	32
<b>1.4.1 The basics</b> .....	33
<b>1.4.2 Trade secrets</b> .....	35
<b>1.4.3 Organizing the speech</b> .....	38
<b>1.4.4 “Bad enemies”</b> .....	41
<b>1.4.5 “Good friends”</b> .....	45
<b>1.5 The essential relationship between gesture and speaking</b> .....	50
<b>1.5.1 Cultural factors</b> .....	50

1.5.2	How non-verbal communication affects a good speech.....	52
1.5.3	Gesture and speech.....	57
1.5.4	Types of gestures.....	59
1.5.5	The fundamental role of gesture in public speaking.....	61

**CHAPTER II: The effectiveness of public speaking:  
A comparison of different proficiency levels and domains.....65**

2.1	Introduction.....	65
2.2	Research questions (RQs) and hypotheses.....	66
2.3	Participants.....	67
2.3.1	University students' group (USG).....	67
2.3.2	Toastmaster's group (TMG).....	70
2.4	Instruments and procedure.....	71
2.5	Results.....	73
2.5.1	Results with USG.....	73
2.5.2	Results with TMG.....	88
2.6	Discussion and conclusions.....	103

**CHAPTER III: The temporal alignment of speech and gesture: considerations for intelligibility in relation to public speaking.....107**

3.1	Introduction.....	107
-----	-------------------	-----

3.2 Research questions (RQS) and hypothesis.....	109
3.3 Participants.....	111
3.4 Instruments and procedure.....	111
3.5 Experimental conditions.....	115
3.6 Procedure.....	116
3.7 Results.....	117
3.8 Discussion and conclusions.....	119
3.9 Implications for public speaking.....	120
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b> .....	123
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	127
<b>Appendix</b> .....	137



## **Acknowledgments**

There are some moments during the path of every human being, in which there are no words to describe truly our feelings and our emotions.

Thanks to my mother and my father for helping me to reach this essential goal of my life. Thanks to Lorenzina, Margherita, Paola, Paolo, and Teresa, a part of this work has been possible because of them.

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Yolanda Ruiz de Zarobe of the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) who facilitated the researcher to conduct this study. The gratitude is also given to Professor Loreta de Stasio whose class was used to distribute a part of students' survey. A great appreciation is also given for all the students and all the Toastmaster's members of Vitoria-Gasteiz who became the participants of a section of this research.

Thanks to Professor Giovanni Gocci for his wise advice.

I am also very appreciative of Dr. Federica Cavicchio for her support and her help.

Last but not least, I am deeply indebted and sincerely grateful to Professor Maria Grazia Busà for her support, encouragement, patience, guidance and direction in the development of this thesis. Without her none of this work would indeed have been possible.

I took an oath seven years ago: facing any situations hand in hand. For this reason, above and beyond all, to my girlfriend, Federica, I owe my gratitude beyond words. Thank you for being the inspiration of everything I did, everything I do, and everything I will do.





## Introduction

Viganò (2003) observed that the English term “communication,” today used all over the world, at the beginning of its dissemination took the meaning from the Latin root “*communis*,” to imply that communication was intended as an act of sharing. As time passed, a new meaning was added during the revolution of the XX century with the introduction of the radio and the television.

However, the new era has seen other protagonists associated with the term communication: The Internet and the social networks. As Marshall McLuhan (1964) reported, it seems that: “*the medium is the message.*” Recently, Bauman (2006) observed that one of the main causes whereby a relationship can fail is due to the lack of good communication. This comment emphasizes the need to go back to that way of thinking that focused on the quality of communication not depending on the *medium* selected. That is, to restart from an art that has been teaching for hundreds of years: oratory.

Furthermore, today, with respect of the fundamental issues that scientific research has to deal with regarding socio-economic and ideological issues, communicating new knowledge, new skills, scientific findings, research, is essential. In fact, as Scientific Journal (Scientific Journal, 2018) reported, it is vital to communicate properly not only in scientific journals, but especially to become influencers for any type of person taking advantage of the power of this increasingly global and connected world. Public Speaking, as the art of effective communication, can be the solution to create new leaders, to communicate

science, and to improve the relationships between people in any type of context and situation.

Moreover, as Hargie (2016) observed, the quality of communication is essential in the business world and for organizational effectiveness.

One of the main factors that inspired this thesis is that there are materials on public speaking that is possible to find in every library or on the Internet. Companies, universities, schools, and experts are emphasizing the importance of knowing how to communicate properly (Harvard Extension School (2015), The Washington Post (2014), Il Corriere Della Sera (2016), The Guardian (2016)). However, even though it is possible to find many people that sustain the effectiveness of this discipline, little scientific evidence has been reported until now.

The present thesis aimed to explore an essential component of the large world of communication: public speaking. This work will review the evolution of public speaking from oratory to the current status, addressing specifically the impact of the use of English as a lingua franca, and the importance of teaching how to speak in public as a fundamental component of education programs.

Furthermore, this work will review the essential factors that contribute to distinguishing a great speaker. Particularly, it will present the trade secrets to creating an effective, inspiring, and memorable speech, by discussing the organization, the presentation, the things to do and the things to avoid.

After this overview to the public speaking world, this work will focus on one of the major aspects that are crucial to control in public speaking: the use of gesture.

Regarding this, the study will investigate the relationship between gesture and

speech including the difference concerning the cultural factors, the different types of gestures and their communicative role.

The second section of this thesis, the section of the research reported in the second and the third chapter will consist of verifying the scientific evidence of public speaking. One study will be reported aimed at showing the impact of public speaking on speech and comparing two different cohorts: a group of competent communicators, and another of callow communicators. Finally, the study will report an experiment aimed at showing the effects of the mismatch of gesture and speech in terms of communication.



# **CHAPTER ONE: The importance of public speaking in everyday life**

## **1.1 Introduction**

From the way we talk to the way we start to work, communication plays an essential role in our life. I would like to revise this portion of the paper to something along the lines of: how many times have we found ourselves in a situation where what we say gets misinterpreted, and the conversation becomes something different? How many times have we discovered fear while communicating in public, with our boss, in front of our friends or even in front of our significant other? How many times have we thought to ourselves, "If only could I have had a second chance to give my first impression."

This chapter has three aims: the first is to present the importance that public speaking has had in human history and the fundamental role that it represents especially nowadays. In order to do so, after a brief mention of the use of this art in the past and present, it will explain a new necessity that seems to have emerged in these last years: the rethinking of the current educational system. Secondly, this chapter will focus on those factors that constitute a great speaker. Specifically, it will present the secrets to organize every type of presentation in the way of making people feel comfortable and confident in front of any situation. Thirdly, the main point of this first chapter will be to shed the light on the fundamental relationship between gesture and speech. Especially, it will focus on the fact that a great speaker has to be congruent in managing what he/she says and how he/she controls gestures and movements, emphasizing the importance

of non-verbal communication and body language for taking care of the intelligibility of the listener/s.

## 1.2 A little history

In the West, the art of oratory was born in the V century B.C. in Magna Greece. In Greece, it was stabilized as the art of oratory and persuasion concurrently with the development of the Polis and the institution of democracy. The role of oratory, therefore, stood opposite to the authoritative use of power through the use of speech. Garavelli (2000) observed that from the Sophist oratory, to the Aristotelian, Platonic, until the Latin oratory used by Romans, it was established what nowadays we call public speaking.

Moreover, as Eire (2000) observed, during the Greek and Latin period great orators, great speakers, strove for the happiness of persons through an ethic, pedagogic and moral oratory. Oratory was viewed as a fundamental subject for human development.

If we continue to look back at history, Randy Fujishin (2016) reported that thousands of years ago the Greek philosopher Heraclitus observed: “ *You never step into the same river twice.*” Referring to this, Fujishin reports, “*The water clarity is different, the temperature is different, the current is different, the depth is different, and the width is different. In fact, you too have changed – the very cells of your body are different- since you last stepped into its waters. This same principle holds true for communication, because you cannot repeat any event in*

*exactly the same manner. Things have changed. Both participants have changed in countless subtle and not so subtle ways”* (pp. 4-5).

For this reason, the awareness of how we can conduct our speech becomes really interesting to assimilate.

As most people know, the process that governs oratory is communication, which is the basis of public speaking. Although a lot of definitions exist for communication, basically it is *“the process of sending and receiving messages,”* as reported in Fujishin (2016, p.2), through different channels and environments, and it can be divided into two types: verbal communication, which is written and spoken language; and non-verbal communication, which includes the use of body without talking and writing.

These issues are everyone’s knowledge. In fact, everyday we communicate with people for many reasons, because we need communication to put ourselves in contact with the world; but sometimes we do not consider that we tend to underestimate the power that our communication can create to us and to the people around us. After all, as Watzlawick *et al.* (1971) highlighted, communication is a *“condition sine qua non”* of human life (p.7). This is the moment in which public speaking can play a significant role in our life; as Cavazza (2009) observed, we tend to communicate automatically, without reflecting too much on what we want to communicate. For this reason, being aware of the rules that govern the act of communicate permits to take advantage from the different situations.

In most recent history, communication has been transmitted through exciting new means. In Nolen (2016) it is possible to see that the radio, for instance, gave the

opportunity to send voices and words over distances that were unthinkable before this incredible invention; and thanks to this, orators like Winston Churchill could spread their ideas. Moreover, the introduction of the Television and then the Internet promoted the rise of the need for perfect images of the individual in order to better influence and persuade the audience.

Basically, in history speech has often had an essential role in unifying people around common democratic goals. Speech has also been used as a powerful weapon by different dictators. As Professors Keith and Lundberg (2015) wrote: *“More important, your speech can change your world in big or small ways”* (p. 3). As reported in the lines above, the ancient Greeks already knew that and, in fact, in all of human history, talk and speech are two of the most powerful actions for humans.

Nowadays we are passing through a revolution that views, for example, the progress of AI-spy, better known as Artificial Intelligence. This great transition will probably change the way people live, do business and think; but there are some aspects of the human being that are strictly connected to feelings, emotions, ethics, charisma and empathy that constitute the basics of our human being. These aspects cannot be substituted in business and in relationships. Regarding this new way to imply communication issues, most people may be more comfortable communicating by Whatsapp or by social networks than in person. In fact, new technology allows us to communicate through a profile or a device that, often, is easier than a real conversation or debate. However, good communication skills are really important to be successful and this thesis will demonstrate it.



Related to this, a recent study by the Harvard Business Review confirms that the key for a durable business relationship, according to most of the professionals involved, is based on face-to-face communication (“Harvard Business Review”, 2016).

For this reason, independently of where all this will lead people’s lives, it can be useful to improve and develop those parts that will constitute our uniqueness, hopefully, forever.

The truth is that, in our society, being aware of how important it is to know how to give a great speech is really important.

### 1.2.1 From oratory to public speaking

In Neil (2010) it is reported how ancient orators like Homer, Plato, Virgil permeated life, politics, society, because they were able to induce changes through their humanity, their passion, and their words. The oratory of our time, certainly, has different connotations related to all the evolution occurred through history; but the aim that a correct knowledge of the art of Public Speaking has nowadays remains the same.

When people think about public speaking the first things that suddenly come to mind are a big stage, a microphone, the clapping before entering, a huge amount of people coming only to listen to what we want to communicate. But speaking in public does not mean only this.

When we are in front of our teacher, during an interview, in front of our husband or our wife or even in front of our best friend, it is all public speaking.

How many things have changed in these last decades in our west context, some events have deeply modified our lifestyle, our consumption habits and even the way in which we interpret the reality and the world we live in. That is why, nowadays, public speaking is emphasized not only for its importance in terms of business, but also for its impact in society.

The connection that produces this art, as Griffin (2012) observed, is able to generate a sharing of information, ideas, thoughts and suggestions to others, and in this way it is possible to create a community where we can recognize ourselves as members of something.

Therefore, why “is” public speaking so important in everyday life? Simply due to the fact that people do not know how to express themselves, their ideas, or their point of view. Once this field of study is approached, something changes in people’s behavior, in people’s attitude, and in people’s way of thinking. Suddenly, people become able to control their everyday circumstances being aware of how to approach life, and, especially, people become able to transform their thoughts into actions. We become aware that our communication can be one of the best “weapons” to take with us in the present and the future.

Related to this, a huge awareness of the importance of human interaction has appeared in the last years in both academic and extra academic contexts. This aspect, Van Eemeren and Garssen (2009) wrote, is related to the power of oratory and communication in every area of human activity.

The fact is that our relationships that determine who we are; no type of relationship can live without communication. That is why the intent of this chapter is twofold: on the one hand, to demonstrate a real scientificity in public speaking;

on the other hand, to research the world of public speaking in order to find the best way to make it effective, ethical and especially to give it as a skill for life.

### 1.3 The current context of public speaking

Consequently to the previous brief introduction to this discipline, the aim of the following section is to shed light on the current context that surrounds the world of public speaking. In order to do so, specifically, the next paragraphs will emphasize two fundamental aspects: firstly, the important role represented by the use of English as lingua franca, due to the fact that it represents the most common code to communicate all around the world. Secondly, the essential and strategic function that public speaking seems to have in correlation with the educational domain.

#### 1.3.1 The impact of the English language on public speaking

As Remillard and Williams (2016) observed: *“Even in daily usage, we use language to create amicability, emotions, beliefs, cooperation, violence, propositions, and personal and social goals, to name only a few usages. As we use language in these ways it reflects who we are (p.1).*

In Crystal (2004), it is underlined the fact that the need of a common language is something well-known through history, but the possibility to have a lingua franca for all the whole world is something that has appeared only during the XX century, particularly in the 50s.

Currently, especially in relation to jobs, to know how to give an English speech well becomes fundamental to live and manage job relationships, social relationships and even for all the young students who are required a high level of knowledge in English. Business requires people to express themselves clearly and confidently, and to be persuasive and comfortable communicating with a range of people, from top executives to assembly-line workers.

An entire book could be written about what concerns the capacity to speak in a foreign language, but this paragraph wants to focus on how much the fear to speak in public for L2 speakers can affect their performance in a negative sense. Focusing on the English language, there are no doubts that, nowadays, English is recognized as a world language. More than one billion people use it as the dominant language of business, science, and diplomacy for instance.

Again, in Remillard and Williams (2016) it is possible to note that English is recognized as the linguistic connection between people from different cultures and different countries, and, thanks to the Internet and mass media in general, it has spread to all remote corners of the planet.

For this reason, it becomes quite essential to focus on those aspects of English speech that can contribute to increasing and bettering the fluency and the confidence of the non-native speaker.

First of all, as Raja (2017) observed, it should be remembered that, in general, there are more nervous speakers than loosen and secured ones.

Regarding this aspect, the book written by Adrian Wallwork (2010), a specialist in services and writing materials for teachers of English and for non-native researchers, is really helpful to approach this theme. He writes about the

importance of being relaxed and then becoming more relaxed, and especially on not concentrating on the English language, but rather on the contents. The presentation that the speaker has to do is not a language exam, it is not so important that the English should be perfect; what is really important is to be realistic; otherwise, it will be about the use of English instead of the value of the speech.

Another important aspect is to try to think and write in English during the preparation of the speech, which consists only in preparing the main points of the topic. Successively, it is important to start to repeat the speech and record the entire part always imaging to be in front of best friends or a relative, because this permits speakers to feel confident, and a great speaker must feel confident.

Finally, in the last part it is important to listen to the recording and write in a paper the weak points of our performance; then, to try to expand the speech always in relation to the main key points.

Once these rules are followed, the speaker can start to concentrate on the organization process of introduction, body and conclusion and on preparing slides and notes that can help him/her and especially the audience; this part is explained in paragraph 1.4.3.

As Boonkit (2010) wrote: *“Speaking is one of the macro skills necessary for effective communication in any language, particularly when speakers are not using their mother tongue”* (p.1305). Indeed, in a study conducted on Thai undergraduate students, it is underlined the importance of giving a right educational method to the teachers in order to make the student confidence and competence in English grow. This research has highlighted how important could

be watching movies, listening to music, and the frequent practice of listening and speaking skills from multimedia websites. Especially, the use of creative topics, which have brought the student to assume different roles, is seen like a strength point for the student.

Furthermore, Boyd *et al.* (2015) emphasized the correlation between spoken communication and language acquisition in the following lines: *“Despite the inherent challenges, speaking is also one of the skills typically viewed as essential to acquire, as documented by a multitude of language courses targeting speaking or communicative skills. However, compared with other areas of learner language such as grammar, the pragmatics of spoken communication is still an under-researched area in second language acquisition”* (pp.613-637).

Another study, conducted by Savasçi (2014), among twenty-two young adults studying at an English-medium University in a Turkish EFL (English Foreign Language) setting is important in relation to this theme. It showed the difficulties of speaking English independently of the level and the knowledge of the students. Even though the desire to learn communicative skills is increasing, most of the students hesitate to use the second language learned and studied at school. Whereas in the written, reading works and other activities the students are engaged, in the oral tasks they do not participate, and they assume a passive behavior. Why? The results show that one reason is due to the lack of practice, not only in the school but also out of school where students, obviously, tend to speak in their native language. Indeed, whereas the students feel confident in terms of grammar and vocabulary, they say that there is a lack of communication

inside the class that leads them to feel a big stress and an anxiety sensation at the moment when they have to speak in front of others.

Briz *et al.* (2012) in a research at the University of Zaragoza confirmed that this general fear of speaking in public is very common in most students because of a lack of a learning method during the previous years. In relation to this, it shows how this anxiety can be overcome by practicing before presentations.

As Astutik (2017) wrote, there are several strategies that have to be applied by non-native speakers when they have to use English in a speech: *“A strategy that has direct impact, strategy as the sequences of process, strategies that provide task, and strategies that can be done outside the classroom or in the classroom”*.

This study shows that repetition is the strategy more used by speakers (p.65).

Considering these studies, why should it be so important to win this fear of speaking in public from the period of school? According to Raja (2017), due to the fact that *“Despite being competent in their field of work, professionals worldwide struggle due to lack of good public speaking skills. Their assessments and appraisals are often not depictive of their professional competitiveness; therefore, it is important for students to overcome public speaking anxiety before they transit from academic life to professional life”* (p. 94).

Connected to the anxiety in speaking in a foreign language, in terms of English, Santos (2017), in a research conducted a few months ago and writing about EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction), observed that, in Europe, Northern countries are more prepared than Southern. For instance, countries like Finland, Sweden and Netherlands have obtained the highest scores in English compared to countries like France, Italy and Spain where the scores are below the European

Union averages. Another fact observed by Santos, is that the attitude about communicating in English among students of Business is better than for Education students in the Basque country, in Spain. That is explained by the fact that Business students tend to regard English as an important skill for their personal career. Indeed, the study showed differences between the students' communicative competences; and that can be associated with a higher level of anxiety that caused lower level of their performance in general.

The fear of public speaking is something very well-known to everybody. It is felt by people who speak in their native language, imagine someone who has to speak in a foreign language. But realizing the importance of giving a speech in another language, in English in our case, is the first step to grow as a person and as a professional. This can be really effective for others because the audience knows that the speaker is not a native speaker: for this reason, they will appreciate more the speaker's speech and message because it is evidence of the capacity and the dedication of the speaker.

In Rosa (2013) it is possible to see that the secret is to change the way of thinking; how many people have you ever heard say "fantastic, it's my turn!" "I can finally show what I have learned" or "I really can't wait for this moment"? Probably, only one percent of the people who are called to speak has said something like that. It is all related to the attitude that people want to use to approach every single aspect of life. To know how to win the fear and the anxiety of speaking in public can really create a better behavior, a stronger attitude and especially can really transform people's life in order to discover another human being.



### 1.3.2 Public speaking and debating programs in the educational system

Could you imagine a school that, instead of teaching a second or a third language, gives the opportunity to follow a public speaking course? Could you think of a University's program that includes necessarily a course of how to speak in public? Imagine a communication program, where the only aim is developing communications skills of boys and girls in order to grow their confidence in approaching life. This program is not just a figment of imagination; it is a reality in some part of the world.

Saying Public Speaking in the educational system does not want to seem something only related to business. There is, of course, the awareness that in the current system, quite a few subjects should be introduced in the student's curriculum, from coding to many soft skills.

Nevertheless, the fact is that improving students' and young people's public speaking skills is not something related only to their future in professional terms, but it is more important: the individual growth. A Public Speaking class can make the difference in the student's development because, as an article published in Quartz (Quartz, 2016) on school 2.0 showed, it can be included in the skills for social progress that take advantage of the power of social and emotional skills.

### 1.3.3 Rethinking education in the age of soft skills

In Forbes, Jan Bruce wrote: *“A major coalition of businesses, policy experts, trade groups, and academics are demonstrating that soft skills—specifically communication skills, leadership, adaptability, and problem solving are critical (Forbes, 2017).”*

This section is designed to underline the need to rethink our educational system. Reporting a little history of the current situation in schools and universities, there will be a reflection on the importance of teaching Public Speaking as one of the newest skills that the working world, and the new era in general, are requiring.

In a fascinating article written in 2013, the entrepreneur Naveen Jain reflected on the necessity to rethink our educational system. Not because it seems broken, but because it is obsolete. In fact, the current system appears unable to intercept the new needs of the present and future generation. Moreover, he wrote: *“Our educational system was developed for an industrial era where we could teach certain skills to our children, and they were able to use these skills for the rest of their lives working productively in an industry.”*

Even if some sociologist, for example, Ivan Illich (2009), could not agree with this phrase, the educational sphere is one of the mainstays of every society. Of course, it depends on its use, like everything after all, but a high educational system can forge the future of a generation, the prospect of a country, and the people’s future regarding perspectives.

Talking about *one* type of educational context would be incorrect. Passing through different contexts and cultures, like for example Turkish, Russian,

American, and Chinese, but not so far from Italy, Spain, for instance, there are several types of educational approaches offered by schools and universities.

Of course, it is crucial to consider that the educational sphere is vast and complex. This section is not intended to report some comments on the educational system, and it would require an entire chapter dedicated only to pedagogy and learning styles. The real aim is to describe some aspects that will be useful to proceed in order to explain why, from the point of view of this thesis, it should be important to introduce Public Speaking in the learning process. The first thing to say is that there are several issues related to students' learning. For example, not every student learns all types of subjects in the same way or with the same rapidity.

In the educational system, theory is built from research. This would like to be the aim of the study reported in the second chapter, that is, to show evidence that teaching public speaking can contribute to helping students not only for what concerns education but mainly for what concern the improvement of their lives. Looking through history, several schools of thought have expressed different views about the learning sphere: Chomsky, for instance, is a principal member of Rationalism (or Idealism), a pole, or school, based on the theory that there is a biological basis in language development that gets realized in certain directions. Another example, followed by Pavlov and Skinner, is the Associationism, which supported the idea of associations between stimuli and responses. Indeed, as reported by Fry *et.al* (2009), recently, psychologists use Constructivist theories to illustrate individuals' learning; this means that people actively create their personal symbolization of the objective reality.

All these theories aim to emphasize how we, as individuals, learn and react to the different types of influences received during this entire long journey called education.

There are, indeed, lots of aspects to be taken into consideration when the goal is to describe this vital sphere. An example can be given by the studies related to the context where students are learning. In fact, often the traditional learning process used by teachers, professors, or trainers, does not create involvement. In these last years, a more effective form of learning is aimed at creating a meaningful learning experience. For instance, are there any places that help more than others in the learning process? Some studies, conducted in the Great Britain by Beard and Wilson (2013), show that a big part of the classroom in schools, colleges, and universities has remained pretty much the same over the past one hundred years. Moreover, they show how both indoor and outdoor learning can actively contribute to the pedagogy and personal development. Rethinking the learning environment creates a series of new challenges.

Why is it essential to dedicate a part of a communication thesis to the educational system? As Parejo (1995) observed, *“Education is a communication process. When we are educating we are communicating”* (p.36). Besides, it seems important to renew the old educational style and try to focus on those skills that this new globalized world most requires.

### 1.3.4 Fun Public Speaking

Learning and practicing how to become competent and confident in Public Speaking can be a creative and funny moment. Of course, a consistent part of

how much students and people in general appreciate the way in which they approach this discipline is conditioned, as in every subject, by the teacher, the professor, or the trainer.

The fundamental part is that participating in a Public Speaking class can be an inspiring, thrilling and motivational experience that can contribute to developing the character, the behavior, and the attitude of students.

Meany and Shuster (2015), in their recent book, have carefully described how both debate and public speaking programs can be convenient for students in the secondary and high school. First of all, it is essential to define the debate to clarify and not confuse what people generally are used to seeing in some TV show. They write that: *“It could be an argument—an oral disagreement you might have with a friend, or a discussion of opinions among your fellow students in a history class. These debates are likely to be informal, with few roles and structures. In contrast, a formal debate is an organized public argument on a specific topic. It is “organized” in that it follows the rules of debating”* (p.3).

These types of activities not only improve the critical thinking and the communication skills of students but also permit to simulate a real-life situation. Especially in the United States, but in general even in China and in Anglo-Saxon’s countries, schools and universities tend to give the opportunity to attend different types of classes or clubs like for instance: the club of comics, class of theater, club of reading, many kinds of sports and club of debating or public speaking. A student is free to choose to cultivate a passion or something where s/he feels good.

A critical guide written by the Oregon Education Teaching Association, and Learning Capacity Grant observed that, of course, not everyone can become a brilliant orator like Winston Churchill or Martin Luther King in terms of persuasive and assertiveness. Nevertheless, at the same time, it is possible to teach some rules and secrets to students in order to cultivate and to improve their effective communication. This guide wants to underline the importance of the teacher's skills concerning communication. The common aim that Oregon established in 1996 required students to "*Speak effectively for a variety of audiences and purposes.*" To do this, teachers built an incredibly useful program including evaluations, timing to respect, grades, and especially they touched several topics for many types of speeches: informative, persuasive, and project. Students from Oregon do not have any problem in the use of English, but this project increased their speaking skills. This was another goal of this course.

Learning how to speak in public, how to control fears, how to give a simple handshake or how to enter and stay during a job interview, are all circumstances that a young boy or girl will have to test in life. The problem is that in countries like Italy or Spain, this is not taught and in this way it is common to see that most of the students are unable to present, to control their body, to persuade or convince others, and to give a simple speech to motivate people around them.

In a recent report, published in 2014 by the Washington Post, conducted on some students coming from British private schools, they confirmed that students were self-confident and fluent public speakers. Students developed this competence thanks to the debate experience and the speeches given with the teachers. This research shows that teaching this skill increases the performance even in the

other subjects. They wrote: *“A grant form of assessing spoken language skills. Our toolkit is based on an Oracy Skills Framework that covers spoken language skills in four areas: physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social & emotional.”*

Another article by The Guardian in 2016 wrote: *“Pupils who learn to speak confidently do better in life.”* They report that pupils who participate in a Public Speaking class have a development in one year. In addition, these interventions are viewed as one of the best methods to improve teaching.

Why did international magazines like this start to underline the importance of Public Speaking in the educational system? Just because time has changed. Every period in history has been characterized by some competencies or qualities that were better to improve than others. Nowadays, communication skills are required more than ever. Business has focused for several years on how to communicate a product, and now it is the time to communicate the person, because only the person can make the difference in a moment where people are overloaded with products.

To do this, it is essential to prepare the future leaders in order to create a new attitude in our students.

To report a good example, that this thesis hopes could be the first of many, there is a new project started two years ago that wants to change things. And the good news is that it is entirely Italian. This project was done by a high-school in Bologna and TEDx. TED is a non-profit organization that saw its first edition in 1984, “Ideas Worth Spreading.” As the business magazine *The Economist* noted, it touched the most different themes uniting the great thinkers of the world to share different

ideas in various topics: technology, entertainment, science, design, humanistic disciplines, and business in more than one hundred languages.

This international and famous program has entered in our schools, in Italy.

Learning how to speak in public, knowing how to listen to others, being able to say something without wasting time and to be efficient. In the past was called Oratory, now it is called Public Speaking. As reported in the previous section, in the Anglo-Saxon world, it is just studying for years inside and outside schools. Italy, with Bologna, is the first to let TED enter schools; thanks to Elena Ugolini, the principal in Malpighi high school, the Italian Educational Ministry has signed the protocol to insert in the high school this possibility to teach Public Speaking - the journalist Claudia Voltattorni in *Corriere della Sera* reported (*Corriere della Sera*, 2016).

Finally, it seems that Public Speaking can be recognized as a fundamental capacity for all young people. This can be an incredible opportunity for creating a new attitude and a new way of thinking in the next generations. Probably, in the future years, it will be possible to see students that finish school or university and go on to control and manage communication skills and, especially, with a self-confidence that can help them to reach their goals and their dreams.

## 1.4 How to become a great speaker

In the previous sections, the goal was to introduce the reader to the world of public speaking and to analyze the current context where it contributes nowadays. The next section will present more specifically those aspects that are essential to go deeper into this discipline. In particular, the intention will be to



present the basics to start this journey and to convert a callow communicator into a great speaker emphasizing some important factors that are crucial to communicate properly.

### 1.4.1 The basics

Once again, Fujishin (2016) observed: *“Remember, we learn from our mistakes. That’s the beauty of this journey”* (p. 20).

Even if a speaker has several years of experience, the tension before speaking and even during speaking is something that will always accompany speech. But the fear of speaking, that sensation of tachycardia, the sweating hands, the butterfly in the stomach can be overcome, must be overcome; these emotions are all more than normal for anyone who approaches this field of study for the first time.

Even if there are some methods and techniques that are important to learn and especially to practice, that sensation of “butterfly in the stomach” is something that will happen forever; in every moment before going on stage. What people can learn is how to control this sensation, how to manage this nervousness in order to transform it in a helper and not to let it be an enemy.

To educate and to dominate this fear there are two main techniques, as Morales (2011) reported. First of all, really simple, is to prepare the speech very well and do not leave anything to improvisation. Secondly, to choose argumentations that really make the speakers feel passionate and convinced because this permits to forget the nervousness and communicate more efficiently.

A great speaker: natural skill or just practice? What everyone should do to answer this question is to imagine a situation in our life in which we have been absolutely inspired, fascinated and thrilled by a speaker who was simply communicating something. What happened, therefore, why could that person, those words change our human being and our way of thinking?

The starting point consists in preparation, the study of communication strategies, the passion for the topic and, especially, the capacity of touching people's heart directly. Secondly, to transform all these things in facts, it is really important to have a mentor to take inspiration from and try to learn the basics of their capacity and at the same time convert the basics of who we are, focus on our personal experience, our skills, our knowledge and our convictions. Therefore, the answer for the initial question is: practice.

We will turn back into this fundamental point of practice in a bit.

To become a great speaker, it is not possible to leave out an essential aspect that today is perhaps more important than ever: ethics. As Keith and Lundberg (2015) wrote: *"Ethics can be defined as the principles that govern people's actions, or as habitual moral behavior"* (p. 27).

Why is today perhaps more important than ever? Due to the fact that the social media, and generally the Internet, have exponentially increased the capacity to spread information. Whereas forty years ago people were not able to watch speeches whenever they wanted, nowadays our message through our speech can be heard after a few seconds by millions of listeners and viewed repeatedly several times a day.

Furthermore, for this reason, it becomes really important to understand how *“cultivating ethical public speaking as a skill can make a significant difference in your life, and perhaps even in the world. Maybe someday you will convince business colleagues to undertake a profitable change, or you will help your community overcome a pressing challenge. The key to making a difference, whether large or small, is to see each public speaking opportunity as a chance to build a relationship with an audience and to point the audience toward some greater good”* (p. 46).

## 1.4.2 Trade secrets

Here we can start to explain some good methods to become a great speaker.

First of all, this involves becoming a great observer, which consists in taking notes writing either positive observations or negative observations.

To have the possibility to seat on a chair and study how speakers enter, how they study the environment to give a more effective voice impact, how they change the pitch or control the tone of their voice to emphasize some phrases or words, how they use their body language, how they control the pauses and the eye gaze. When a person stays in front of a good speaker, it is like an opportunity to relax and just start to learn by seeing every little detail. It is actually wonderful to see super speakers on the stage who absolutely have the capacity to entertain lots of people only through “simple” words.

Secondly, an essential detail for being a good speaker is the construction of the vocabulary; this has to include humor, words of inclusion and linguistics strategies to amplify the message.

Another important aspect is the control of our non-verbal communication, the use of gaze, the use of hands and palms, the use of legs and how to dominate the stage, to sum up, the use of the entire body. These themes will be explained in detail in the next sections.

Finally, it is very useful to give our speech with the use of digital tools as video, graphics, images and gifs. Above all, it is well known that images have a fundamental impact in people's memory.

Everyone can certainly remember an event, a lesson or a meeting that was absolutely boring and sometimes even annoying due to the fact that the person who was speaking did not care about changing the voice volume, probably stayed seated on a chair all the time or, worse, reading the slides. These negative examples can create the knowledge of how it is essential to be aware of how to conduct every type of speech.

Donovan (2014) observed that an important aspect that has to be remembered is that this journey is about how to become a great speaker, is that the main aims for a person who gives a speech are: to inspire, to entertain and to educate.

One of the most common questions for a speaker, according to Mueck (2013), is: *“Why should people care about your message, about what you have to say? This question should always be in the forefront of your mind. Most public speakers write their content, present it, and hope somebody will care. That’s exactly backward! Instead, you should analyze your audience in advance, think about their needs, and adapt your speech content to those needs”* (p.36).

In every book that introduces public speaking, all the authors agree that, once the topic is well defined, it is essential to understand the audience and public

without underestimating the demographics and trying to figure out how to create engagement and identify common interests (Keith e Lundberg, 2015).

The concept that this section wants to explain is that trying to become a great speaker is difficult because it means to fight against our fears, our anxiety, it means to try to control our perspiration, our palpitations but especially, it means changing our attitude.

Everyone knows how hard it can be to change just one of our daily habits, for example by starting to run, controlling our diet or generally breaking away from the status quo.

But trying to become a good speaker is not only a huge satisfaction when a person realizes that it is done, but also when we grow up day-by-day training ourselves. Do you know when we start to realize that something has changed? When it is possible to see the light in the audience's gaze, when the audience varies from the colleagues to students, when a friend or a big or small public starts to look at the speaker directly in the eyes following their words.

That is why it is really important to get back to the concept of practice here. Randy Fujishin (2016) writes: *"No one is born with public speaking skills. The outstanding speakers are those individuals who invest countless hours of practice time improving their skills. Nothing comes without a price"* (p. 109).

Meany and Shuster (2015), in their study of public speaking, wrote that the secret between an ordinary speaker and a natural speaker is the preparation. In terms of debate, as we will see in the next paragraphs, it is not possible to win a tournament without adequate preparation and it means to begin long before the date of our speech.

In addition, Eire (2000) notes that the good orator is really linked to his/her speech and he/she knows perfectly what the audience has in common with him/her and with that he/she can choose how much he/she wants to specify, because the speaker has the self-confidence that the audience will complete the rest.

### 1.4.3 Organizing the speech

Once again, the considerations of Keith and Lundberg (2015) become very useful to understand this fundamental part, they underline the importance of organization as the first step for the public speaking process because *“organization allows your audience to follow the logical progression of your speech and helps both you and your audience to remember your ideas. It demonstrates that you are in control of your material, and it can also add persuasive force to your words”* (p. 129). In a sense, this part is necessary to always have the situation under control, but above all, it is the only way to be coherent and memorable.

After the organization, there are three basic parts of speech structure to consider:

- **THE INTRODUCTION:** although there are many theories relating to the time that is needed to create the famous first impression, it is possible to say, of course, that it probably represents the most important part of our speech due to the fact that the audience decides in the first minute if they are interested in what is being communicated. Furthermore, a good introduction lets the speaker grow the self-confidence and the energy necessary to conduct the whole speech.

The function of this part is to inform the listener of the important points that will be said. In addition, it needs to show why the audience should listen and develop a common ground. There are several ways to give an impactful introduction: it can be through a question, it can be telling a personal story or it can be showing a video; the only thing that all these types of beginnings have to have in common is summarized in one word: touch. And for touching people it is essential to choose a topic that makes the speaker feel passionate and proud, something that has been experienced or something that the speaker really believes. Usually, the introduction constitutes ten or fifteen percent of the entire speech.

- THE BODY: Francis (2009) reports one of the best quote left by one of the best speakers of the last century: *“If you have an important point to make, don’t try to be subtle or clever. Use a pile driver. Hit the point. Then come back and hit it again. Then hit a third time- a tremendous whack”* (p. 389).

This is what Winston Churchill said about how to give a speech.

After a great introduction, the audience cannot wait to hear what the central points of the speech are, for this reason this part has to be connoted by a real touching and passionate performance.

The body of the speech is the longest part because it is where the speaker presents arguments and evidence to the listeners. Considering that, it is highly recommended to present supporting materials such as examples, evidence, statistics and all parts can be shown in few slides prepared with any type of software like Power Point, Prezi or Keynote.

Certainly, it is really important to think about the relationship between information and arguments because they have to be coherent and they have to support our topic. During the speech, it is especially important to consider the pauses while presenting. Two- or three-second pauses are fundamental to let the audience think about our words and even for the speaker to avoid the dreaded filler words. What are filler words? They are every “mm”, “ee,” “uh” “er”. An interesting article published in Harvard Extension School helps to understand better these essential aspects of public speaking: they are words used normally in informal conversation, but they must be absolutely avoided in formal speeches because they do not help the listener to understand what the message is about. Therefore, pauses are really important to use for a great speech.

- **THE CONCLUSION:** and now, after a super introduction and the greatest body part ever seen, how should speakers leave the audience? First of all, the audience has to remember what has been said; for this reason, a rapid but clear summary of what our main argumentations are is really important. This part consists of ten percent of our speech. On account of this, the next step after a brief review has to leave the audience with the main message and, to do this, the most important thing is to inspire the audience. How? For instance, giving a vision for the future, making an appeal or a call to action. The conclusion is a big part of the reason why the speaker is there in front of a person or in front of several people to communicate. Try to think about why you have chosen to give your speech, why you have passed the last weeks to do research and to



practice your speech; the motivation that inspires you is the same principle that will inspire who is hearing your speech.

Further, Rosa (2013) explains that the real secret that every great speaker has to own when he/she gives a speech is only one: enthusiasm. It does not matter if there is one person, ten people or a hundred people. Speaking enthusiastically, speaking passionately can really be contagious for others and the first impression that the audience will have of the speaker will be excellent.

The main principle is that nobody of us considers that great speakers at the beginning of this journey were not like they have become. Indeed, most of them in several interviews have declared that they were terrified at the first approach with this field. Basically, a great speaker is someone who is able to change things. Someone who knows exactly what to say but especially how to say it. When a person starts to think about undertaking this incredible journey it means that there is a huge will to make the difference, to leave a sign in people's lives and to help him/herself and others to find a new better way of thinking and a new way of life.

#### 1.4.4 "Bad friends"

It is fascinating how the point of view slowly starts to change once public speaking is approached. It becomes quite impossible not to note that most people during conversations, meeting, or speeches do not know how to control their body in order to communicate efficiently. Nobody wants to say that people have to manage their body like Anthony Robbins, but they should not be rigid like a tree or locked like a door.

As Meany and Shuster (2015) wrote: *“Effective speakers establish a line-of-sight with the audience. They use their body position, stance, and movement to attract and hold the attention of their listeners”* (p.36). The importance of movement is essential in front of a group of people because it permits to break the attention of the listeners; in this way, moving back and forth, the speaker will be perceived with more efficacy.

To go deeper, there are some aspects which are really important to achieve the aim of this thesis.

Starting from the “bad enemies”, basically those are the things to avoid:

- Do you know that your body shapes who we are? As several people know but sometimes forget, every type of closure gestures with arms, legs, or foot, makes the speaker create a barrier with the listener. This barrier will produce a negative sense of closure and distance from the audience. Is it possible to imagine a great and inspiring speaker with the body crouched as a fearful pet? Is it better to go back to the initial question, do you know that your body shapes who we are? The social psychologist Amy Cuddy (2010) and colleagues, experts in body language, researched this topic and explained it in a TEDx conference in 2012.

They found that, as the animals do, when people feel anxiety, scared, or just have not a high level of self-confidence, they tend to make themselves smaller. This process can be viewed as something natural, which generally affects people in daily life, is something more.

It is related to two hormones: testosterone and cortisol. Summarizing, when people close their body in a defense or contrary position, cortisol,

the hormone related to stress, suddenly starts to increase. Instead, when people put themselves in an open position with both arms and legs wide open and take a dominant place, testosterone, the dominant hormone, starts to increase. The research shows that, when people assume a dominant position, their capacity to deal with problems and their propensity to take risks increase. This permits them to becoming braver to make decisions.

For this reason, the first thing to avoid, before a speech and during the speech, is to assume a close body position. Instead an open body should be used to be perceived more open, confident and dominant.

- Another aspect to avoid during a presentation, but in general in every speech, is to turn the back at the audience to look at the slides or to write something on the blackboard. Certainly, there are some situations in which turning the back to the audience is necessary, but the important thing is to do it rapidly, being aware that turning the back is not right to give a great and inspirational speech.
- Thirdly, as Rosa (2013) observed, do not focus the gaze only on a person or on the same group of persons. It is important to change the subject of the eye gaze in order to keep the attention of the listeners high. The first thing to do is to analyze the context for the speech. After that, counting how many people will constitute the audience and try to divide the space where they are sitting. The next step is to start the speech looking at one person and then, after no more than five or six seconds, change the subjects trying to include every person or group that is present in the room.

Although it is not a one-to-one speech, turning the gaze is useful not to be perceived as threatening or create an embracing with the listener.

Controlling the gaze is very important because it will make the difference of how the speaker will be perceived and remembered.

- Do not forget to consider the context. The context is fundamental when talking about body language. The arms crossed gesture, made by a speaker in a class during a cold winter day, probably does not mean that he/she is taking a close, contrary position, but perhaps it only means “It is too cold in this room.”
- Control your voice. An entire chapter could be written about the importance of voice control. Voice is the link between the speaker and the listener. Firstly, trying to control breathing is fundamental for several reasons: it permits to relax and oxygen the brain; breathing deeply, from the abdomen or lower chest, will provide better vocal quality; releasing the air slowly in order not to run out of air. Secondly, avoiding to use a monotone voice, listening to a speaker that does not change his/her pitch during the speech is something negative that will make the audience bored and sleepy. Thirdly, remember to change the volume to underline words, important moments of the story, or to make the speech more harmonious. Therefore, as reported in Goman (2011), speakers must keep in mind this important detail: “*Your voice is as distinctive as your fingerprint*” (p.109).
- Last, but not least, it is vital to avoid an uncontrolled use of gestures and body. Too many gestures are not favorable because the listener/s will be more confused than inspired by the speech. On the contrary, an absence

of gestures can transform the address in a substantial dull moment for the audience. Trying to take control of gestures means to associate some words with gestures, which are essential to emphasize a word or a phrase that the speaker is communicating.

Beginning with those things that a great speaker has to avoid, it can be useful for starters to create the right attitude to observe all those things that generally most of callow speakers do not take care of. It can seem incredible, but once a person knows which aspects can constitute an “enemy” for the speaker, suddenly, it is possible to note these details in everyday circumstances controlling our communication and the other’s communication.

It becomes easy to start to evaluate friends, professors, heads of a division, a boss, parents, or trainers. Especially, it is quite reasonable to understand why, in events or occasions where a person is involved, there is something wrong that can cause a misunderstanding or can make others perceive as not exiting something that it is, or just it becomes difficult to take advantage of a circumstance. This is all related to the power and the way of speaker’s communication.

#### 1.4.5 “Good friends”

Before starting with some practice parts, it is crucial to underline, once again, one aspect or secret that characterizes every speaker all the time that he/she has to go in front of a listener. Learn how to manage the stress level. This problematic process includes for example: looking straight ahead and relax the throat; doing

some vocalizations by keeping the lips together and making the sounds “Ummm, mmmmaaaaaa” in order to prepare the voice to reach its optimal pitch and make it warmer (a technique that I learned from an actor during the Public Speaking course at my University); trying to control your thoughts in order to keep the concentration on; but especially breathe, breathe and breathe. Breathing with the abdominal muscles allows one to take more oxygen in and to relax the entire body.

It is the time to list those aspects, which characterize the most significant speakers and the best leaders:

- The power is in your hands. It is a must, considering its importance, starting from one of the most used parts of our body: the hands. According to Donovan (2014), hands are one of the most powerful parts of our body, and they can improve the interest and the efficacy of the speech. Moreover, hands can serve as a receptor not to get the audience bored. There is a better way to use hands gestures, and it consists of moving them from the waistline to the neck, but, of course, the context of speech can always admit exceptions. It is important to keep the body open and smiling, this type of behavior transmits positivity, confidence, and tranquility for increasing the audience’s credibility.

Indeed, Goman (2011)’s book reports how our hands represent the best way to let our emotions and natural abilities come out. Her brilliant list is an incredibly and useful tool to understand the entire positions that include hands: *“Steepling signals confidence and expertise about the point you are making; arms held at waist height, and gestures within that horizontal*

*plane, help you (and the audience) feel centered and composed; open arms signal inclusion; hands touching the face, head, or hair make you look nervous or tentative - as does the "fig leaf" gesture in which hands are grasped together in front of the groin area; hidden hands make you look less trustworthy; gestures above your shoulders come across as erratic and overly emotional" (p. 86).*

- Making a powerful entrance. Once reached the right state of relaxing, the entrance has to be associated with a smile, with the eyebrow raise, and a subtle gaze around the room. The entrance is crucial since at this moment all the people present will create their first impression, their first state of emotions related to the speaker. For this reason, the entrance has to be confident and positive through our body because most of the times this moment is not sustained by a speaking part.
- Keeping eye contact. As just explained in all things to avoid, maintaining the eye contact is fundamental. It depends on the number of people that constitute the audience, but it is essential to control the gaze to maintain the people's attention and to create engagement.
- The use of space: moving on the stage consciously. As said, speaking behind a lecture, or a desk, produces a barrier that can create a negative perception of the speaker. It is important that all listeners can see the entire body of the speaker.

The use of space can be compelling especially if it accompanies the transition during speech, and it helps to keep the attention of the audience. As Pease and Pease (2006) observed, in years of studies researchers

have found that, like animals, each person has his/her personal space, which includes not only all aspects that people consider their own possessions, for example, home, parents, clothes, a vehicle, tools, or others things; but also aspects related to the body. In fact, everyone has their own personal “air bubble” that is strongly related to the different culture and the different density of the population where a person grows up. It is essential to understand this in order to learn how to respect and control the zone distances that are present in communication. Specifically, there are four zones to consider in most of the Western world: the intimate zone (between 15-45 centimeters), the personal zone (between 46-122 centimeters), the social zone (between 1.22-3.6 meters), and the public zone (over 3.6 meters) (Pease and Pease, 2006). This awareness of how to use the space, properly connected to a capacity to read people’s body language, can be a good fellow for the speaker owing to the fact that it gives the right knowledge to manage space invasions. Controlling people’s territory is necessary for transferring well our communication.

- Reading others’ body language. There is not only the speaker’s body language but also the signals that are given by the listener. In fact, trying to read the non-verbal messages of the audience can be like a “mirror” of the speaker’s performance. Often, the demonstration that the audience is appreciating the speech is given by one small nod that people produce quite unconsciously. A study conducted by Beukeboom (2009) at VU University of Amsterdam showed the power of smiling, nodding and maintaining open body position. One group of participants, after watching



a short film, were exposed to a listener who was often smiling, nodding, and that stayed open with the body while they had to resume the film. The other group, instead, was exposed to a negative listener that stayed close and unsmiling. The results showed that the participants who had the positive listener included more opinions about the film, described more motions and thoughts and were especially more positive during their speaking. On the contrary, the group exposed to the negative listener focused only on objective facts.

Can you remember a class where it was clear that no one of the present students was listening, but the teacher, unconcerned, continued to go on in the same way? This is another important difference between a talker and a communicator. Practicing how to monitor the audience's body language can really make the difference in the final result of the speech.

- Stay dominant. Being dominant is very different from being arrogant; a dominant stance shows leadership and charisma, an arrogant stance shows aggressiveness. Nolen (2016) observed that a dominant position is characterized by an open pose with the legs spread like the shoulder, the chin thrust forward, and the head raised high, a positive attitude underlined by a confident smile made him/herself bigger in order to increase self-confidence.

As reported in Gocci (2004), one of the best resources owned by communication is the constant possibility to develop and grow.

Like everything, used appropriately, body language can be used as a key for success in business, in personal relationships, in school, even during free

time. It has to be viewed as a “powerful arm” that great speakers and leaders have comprehended to use in the right way to improve their everyday life.

There is a fundamental rule that everyone should take in consideration before, during, and after a speech. People are always sending messages through their body either consciously or unconsciously. Moreover, the listener does not only continue to hear and judge the words that are said, but mainly analyzes what the speaker does. In fact, a great speaker has to control entirely the signals that she/he gives through the body.

## 1.5 The essential relationship between gesture and speaking

As we said in the introduction, and with reference to all the literature reported in the sections above, there is a general lack of scientific studies designed to prove the evidence of these theories. For this reason, in order to investigate the effectiveness of public speaking in different contexts and domains, the next section will lay the foundation for the experiment described in the third chapter. Particularly, despite all the essential factors that regard the world of public speaking, the next segment will focus on the crucial aspect that constitutes the congruent use of gestures in speech.

### 1.5.1 Cultural factors

First of all, it is essential to start with a fundamental consideration that concerns gestures and speaking. Cultural factors are really important in communication. In

Mancera (1998) we note that, if someone ignores them, there could be serious problems in terms of understanding.

As Yammiyavar *et al.* (2008) observed, in multicultural situations verbal communications and non-verbal communications are ruled by cultural factors. For this reason, in the case of Usability test, for example, they created an alternative test to take in consideration different aspects such as different backgrounds. This aspect underlines the importance that, in general, represents the different social context in people's development.

To better understand this concept, an example can be drawn from some of the most common gestures that are used everyday by everyone. For instance, with regard to the ring signal, it is very common in all English-speaking countries, and is used to mean OK; however, its meanings can vary from culture to culture. In Japan, it can mean "money", in some Mediterranean countries it can be interpreted as an offensive reference to homosexuality, like in Greece, or an insult like in Turkey. The V signal also has different meanings. If a speaker, after a presentation, makes the V-signal to symbolize "victory" or just because nowadays it seems cool, it could be misinterpreted. For example, depending on the audience, the V-sign will be interpreted as "two" by an American, "victory" by a German, and "up yours" in Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand.

Furthermore, another example of how cultural factors can contribute to vary the perception or the way people use gestures across cultures is represented by nods. As Kita (2009) reported, the nodding by the speaker is so common in the Japanese conversation that it is possible to argue that Japanese nod three times more often than American English speakers. Another study conducted by Efron

(1941), observed cultural differences in the use of gestures by Italian and Jewish immigrants in America where they used their native language.

These examples are very important to understand the potential of gestures and, more generally, non-verbal language. For this reason, as noted by Pease and Pease (2006), it is essential to familiarize oneself with the cultural conventions before giving any type of speech, in order to demonstrate interest, competence, and especially for avoiding potential uncomfortable situations.

Furthermore, in relation to these cultural differences, the expert in communication Carol Kinsey Goman (2011) worked and collaborated with several expert communicators from the entire world. Doing this, she reported on a variety of multicultural differences, ranging from eye contact, the use of space and touch, the different ways of seating, the use of timing and more.

To sum up, there are lots of different variations that should always be taken into consideration when we speak about gestures and non-verbal communication. Specifically, in relation to public speaking, the results obtained by Galvin and Power (1997) during a study aimed to compare university students from different countries showed the importance to teach it taking into consideration the cultural differences.

## 1.5.2 How non-verbal communication affects a good speech

Nolen (2016) observed that: *“You will never be able to communicate effectively if you do not use body language when you are talking to someone”* (p.11).

A person that does not combine well verbal and non-verbal communication will hardly manage people well, speak tremendously or sell well, and mainly, will be unlikely to communicate well. In Rosa (2013) we see that communicating does not mean only talking, but implies understanding too. The message is not what you are saying, but what others comprehend.

It is common nowadays to find books and manuals promising mastery of the secrets of non-verbal communication for a successful living and business. Besides, lots of people presenting themselves like super experts and use a book probably titled: "Body language mastery in one day." The fact is that there are studies related to the use and control of the body that show how there is a long history connected to the awareness of the communicative possibilities of the body, the face, the posture, and the eyes. As Cairns (2005) observed, the attention to them may be detected in the Roman epic or Greek society connected to the abilities of the orator. In addition, he wrote: *"Increasingly, classical scholars are devoting explicit and systematic attention to issues of non-verbal communication in the ancient world"* (p.11). This part wants to highlight that the art of controlling the body well, as explained at the beginning of this chapter, is a discipline that founds its roots in the ancient world. For this reason, people should analyze cautiously all advertising and courses that it is possible to find, especially online.

The body is an incredible source of messages; connecting to this thought, there are other areas that are really important in terms of non-verbal communication reported by Parejo (1995): *"The body movement, known like Kinesics; the physical characteristics; the objects that we can use in the space as a barrier; the*

*context; and the paralanguage, such as prosody, pitch, volume, and intonation”* (p.43).

As we have seen in the previous sections, even if the ability of a speaker is firmly connected with her/his capacity on the stage, there are several aspects to consider for preparing any type of speech. In fact, from the organization of the address to the ability to control the voice, most parts are related to the capacity and the attitude of the speaker in front of the listener.

As researchers Bambaeroo and Shokrpour (2017) observed in an article related to the impact of non-verbal communication on success in teaching, *“Non-verbal communication is often more subtle and more effective than verbal communication and can convey meaning better than words. For example, perhaps a smile conveys our feeling much easier than words. Silent speech is of great importance in human’s daily interactions and it influences one’s chances of failure or success in personal and professional social encounters”* (p.51).

Non-verbal language means talking about language, and language means talking about communication, and talking about communication means talking about their relationship. That is why it is essential to be aware of what the body can communicate to others; a wink, a glance, a handshake, a crouched position, it is constantly communicating something about us.

There are several studies related to the importance of non-verbal communication. One of these, for instance, was reported by Allan and Barbara Pease (2006) in their guide to reading body language: *“The total impact of a message is about 7% verbal (words only) and 38% vocal (including tone of voice, inflections and other sound) and 55% non-verbal”* (p.9).

Considering all these aspects, why can the non-verbal language have such a fundamental role in speech? Because it is essential to create emotions in other people. When a speaker becomes able to connect and to control the eye gaze, smiles, nods, hands movements, and gestures, he/she can touch the listener and give the right enthusiasm to his/her speech.

Lots of times, people think that they have a spontaneous way to give a speech and, for this reason, they tend to resist and not open their mind to another form of conducting the lecture. The point of the spontaneity is correct because a speaker that is too “constructed” seems more an actor than someone who believes in what is saying; moreover, without spontaneity the speaker will think more about controlling his body than the rest of his/her presentation.

However, basic knowledge about the importance of some aspects is essential to create an exciting and inspiring speech. As explained at the beginning of this section, without gestures, the power of lecture inevitably loses the significant part of its efficacy. Try to imagine a TEDx performance with a speaker who always stands straight looking for fifteen minutes in the same direction, or thinking about a Professor who explains his/her most interesting subject sitting in his/her seat, with a monotonic voice, or reading from the slides. Can a boss of a company give a motivational and inspirational speech without taking care of his/her non-verbal language? The answer is: absolutely not. The difference between a talker and a communicator is related to the awareness of the importance of body language.

For this reason, it is essential to learn how to control it in every type of situation. Because, as we have seen, our body, consciously or unconsciously, communicates something to others. This makes the difference for those people

that have studied how to control these aspects, and that is why for giving great speeches as great speakers, it becomes fundamental to learn how to coordinate and use non-verbal messages to be incisive and pragmatic. As Goman (2011) wrote:” *Body language is the management of time, space, appearance, posture, gesture, vocal prosody, touch, smell, facial expression, and eye contact*” (p.3).

To conclude this part, if someone were wondering if a difference exists between women and men at reading the body, the answer, as often happens, is: yes; women are better than men. In fact, research conducted at Harvard University, reported by Pease and Pease (2006), showed this interesting particular: during a short film with the sound turned off, women were able to decode the situation correctly 87% of the time while men marked only 42% correctly.

Writing about gender differences between females and males is not something related to who is better or smarter. It is a matter of disagreement that has been explained by neuroscience. In fact, there are different neurons and parts of the brain that can be activated depending on the situation; this is related to the evolution of humans. That is why, nowadays, it is possible to say that women and men react differently to stress, emotional processing, and body language. In addition, as Goman (2011) described, there are some differences connected to visible physical aspects, for instance, usually men tend to be taller and larger than women that generally tend to compensate by standing straight with the hands on the hips in order to use more space and appear more dominant; a smile given by a woman can be misunderstood. Differences apart, being aware of the personal body control and other aspects of body language can really help people to read the circumstances and to reach the particular aims that each of us has in life.



### 1.5.3 Gestures and speech

It is normal to take for granted our act of communication. That is because we consider our capacity to produce and understand gesture and speech as an automatic process that occurs normally everyday. In reality, as Yang and Narayanan (2014) observed, they represent our verbal and non-verbal behavior forms. This signifies that learning how to control them properly can be advantageous to understand the others and ourselves.

First of all, Denes and Pinson (1993) described properly the reason why speech is so important: *“One reason is that the development of human culture is made possible – to a great extent – by our ability to share experiences, to exchange ideas and to transmit knowledge from one generation to another; in other words, our ability to communicate with others”* (p.1). The authors also observed that the process of speech is far more complex than only moving lips and tongue. The reason is that this activity is associated with the speaker brain that sends several impulses that activate the vocal organs.

David McNeill (2005) has long argued that it is important to start from the issue that gestures are part of language, and that speech and gesture cannot be separated. To support this theory, nowadays it is possible to say that the evolution of language during history has happened thanks to its integration with gesture. Some parts of the human brain would not be as we know them today without these abilities that define their structure.

Following from this, in Campbell and Messing (1999) it is possible to observe that it is well known that *“human communication relies on visual and auditory signals that are produced by movements of various organs. Gesturing, signing, and speaking involve a precise motor coordinator of multiple parts forming the musculature of the hands, the face, and the vocal apparatus”* (p.5).

In addition, according to Alibali *et al.* (2017), the use of gestures not only facilitates the process of making speech, but it also simplifies the function of memory. In fact, it seems that when a speaker is giving a speech he/she tends to use more gestures when needing to describe pictures from memory than when he/she has to speak on a topic more readily at hand; when the gesture is associated with the information, if it is congruent, it can help memory recall.

It is nearly impossible to be notable and memorable without effectively coordinating the control of the body. Gestures are part of language. Thanks to this knowledge, to be aware and study how to coordinate gestures and words, to understand which gestures are more useful in different situations, and to improve the capacity to read the meaning of gestures can really make the difference in how people are perceived from the listener.

Furthermore, Meadow and Iverson (1997) emphasized the importance of the connection between gesture and speech reporting a study conducted in blind children from birth. This study showed that people, who have had no first-hand experience with communication signals given by gesture, systematically produced gesture --even if they did not gesture in all contexts. From this observation, the authors concluded that gestures have a fundamental role in communication not only for the listener, but also for the speaker.

In addition, gestures play a really key role not only for speaking but also for the memory, as Alibali *et al.* (2013) confirmed, and for this reason they can contribute in a positive way to channeling the attention of the listener and in terms of education.

To sustain this importance in the educational sphere, Meadow and Novack (2015) reported some arguments to emphasize the essential use of gesture in speech. They observed that our hands don't only reflect what we think, but can also change what is in our mind. Indeed, they found that if there is the same information, but part of this is accompanied by gesture in speech, children have a consistent improvement in their learning process.

As we reported in the lines above, the use of gestures is fundamental during a speech. It helps speakers in their descriptions, it helps avoiding to make the listener bored, and to underline parts of the speech that have to be emphasized.

#### 1.5.4 Types of gestures

Observing speakers more or less competent can lead to a clear common conclusion: they gesture.

In Alibali and Meadow (2013) we see that gestures are a human component that can be used in the right way to communicate with knowledge and awareness ideas, guidelines, stories and emotions.

There are different types of non-verbal factors that is possible to categorize in: personal space, eye gaze, facial expressions, and body language. Nevertheless, this section wants to focus on the role played by gesture in order to introduce the experiment reported in the third chapter.

Studies conducted in past have revealed the existence of several types of gestures; in fact, they are not all the same. For this reason, is important to recognize the difference present in every types of gesture because the mechanism for their production and intelligibility can change. The following description, that categorizes the different types of gestures, is mainly based on the classification scheme proposed by David McNeill (2005). In this scheme, it is possible to find four categories of gestures:

- Iconic: Studies sustained that this type of gesture should help speakers to produce words. Iconic gestures represent *“images of concrete entities and/o actions. They are gestures in which the form of gesture and/or its manner of execution embodies picturable aspects of semantic content”* (McNeill, 2005, p.39). Krauss (1998), for instance, sustained that to help the speaker to produce the word “carousel,” drawing a circle in the air could help to find the word. Furthermore, in Poggi (2008) it is possible to find the distinction between directly and indirectly iconic gestures. The researcher argued that: *“The iconicity of a gesture may be more or less direct depending on how many cognitive steps it takes to go from its meaning to its physical appearance”* (p.59).
- Metaphoric: In Lakoff and Johnson (1980) is possible to see that metaphor is not only something concerning the poetic imagination, but it is disseminated in everyday life through language, action, and thought. These gestures represent *“images of abstract”* (McNeill, 2005, p.39); they are used many times when the speaker presents an idea or some other

abstract concept of something in the hand. Basically, this type of gesture represents the abstract instead of the concrete.

- Deictic: the hand with an extended index finger represents the main deictic gesture. Nevertheless, it is possible to point with other parts of our body, such as: head, noses, feet etc.
- Beats: As Lucero *et al.* (2014) reported, "*Beat gestures are simple, stereotyped, and repetitive movements*" (p.898). The authors underlined as these gestures are different from the iconic due to the fact that the iconic are elaborated and complex. McNeill (2005) added that they are movements of the hand/s back and forth or up and down; they seem to create a rhythm during speech.

To reach the aim of this thesis regarding the demonstration of the effectiveness of public speaking, we will focus on the iconic gesture.

The study conducted by Beattie *et al.* (2009) investigated the relationship between iconic gestures and speech. They emphasized the fact that the interaction between them is multifaceted, but they seem to be fundamental for a representation of meaning.

### 1.5.5 The fundamental role of gesture in public speaking

Even if the relationship between gesture and speech has been explained in the previous sections, it is crucial to understand which is the role of these in relation to public speaking. So, why do gestures, and more in general body language, play such an important role in Public Speaking?

In a TEDx Talk, Vanessa Van Edwards (2017) reported an experiment conducted to demonstrate how people are contagious through the emotions and behavior. Specifically, she concentrated a section of her research to study several TED talkers. She compared a group composed of the most popular speakers and another group composed of the least popular speakers investigating their use of hands gestures. What she found is that the most popular TED talkers used an average of 465 gestures, instead of the least popular TED talkers that used almost the half numbers of gestures, only 272.

As reported in the previous sections, combining words and gestures is fundamental for an effective communication.

Another study conducted by Kleidon *et al.* (2008), on how listeners perceived sentence focus in relation to the use of beat gestures, showed that communication is more effective when the speaker matches the word emphasized with gestures. Moreover, they reported another study in the same article, conducted on car driving, that revealed that talking with a front-seat passenger and talking at the phone changes the comprehension of speech. This is the effect of a simply issue, when the driver is at the phone he/she cannot see non-verbal messages like head nods, hands motion and eye gaze. Instead, the driver speaking at the passengers can laterally see it. As Kendon (1997) observed, co-speech gestures simplify and give more effect to communication because of their semantic content.

This issue of the importance of gestures during speech is essential for the speaker due to the fact that it can really make the difference between a competent communicator and a common talker. That is why, according to McNeill (2005), it

is not sufficient to know the importance that gestures have during communication, but it becomes fundamental to coordinate the gesture with the word in order to avoid the mismatch: *"A mismatch occurs when speech conveys one version of a situation and gestures a different version. Mismatch is to be distinguished from speech-gesture co-expressiveness. In co-expressiveness, speech and gesture jointly present the same idea unit; in a mismatch, there are two ideas that may be incompatible"* (p.136).

Furthermore, McCullough and McNeill (1994) distinguished three different types of mismatch:

- Manner mismatches, *"these provide additional or different information about the manner of motion that in speech is conveyed with an unmarked motion of verb"* (p.227).
- Perspective mismatches, *"a story character is presented from a different spatial perspective without a corresponding new theme in speech"* (p.228).
- Anaphor mismatches, *"these are shifts in space over time without an accompanying linguistic shift or discontinuity. The narrator sets up contrasting referents in the space, one to the left and one to the right and then violates this positioning by carrying out an action by one of the referents in the other referent's space"* (pp.228-229).

Moreover, in Goman (2011) it is possible to note that non-verbal communication can help or hurt how people lead. She also reported a perfect example connected with what will be studied in the last chapter of this thesis. Using an electroencephalograph, neuroscientists from the University of Colgate have studied the effects of gestures during speech. *"They found that when words say*

*something and the gestures do not say the same thing, the effect is the same that occurs when some listeners hear nonsensical language” (p.32).*

Furthermore, Schneider *et al.* (2015) conducted an interesting research related to this. They created the “Presentation Trainer (PT)”, a tool designed to practice some basics non-verbal skills in public speaking. Particularly, in a section of their study, they emphasized how hand gestures help the audience’s understanding the verbal messages, creating images in the listener’s mind, reinforcing audience attention, and communicating the speaker’s emotions and attitudes.

Basically, knowing how to communicate efficiently involves knowing both gestures and words. How to combine and to control these aspects is not something that people can learn easily, but they are the result of knowledge and practice.



## **CHAPTER TWO:** The effectiveness of public speaking: A comparison of different proficiency levels and domains

### 2.1 Introduction

As Fujishin (2016) observed: *“Becoming a speaker can be a lifelong journey to discover greater self-expression, gain increased personal power, and achieve a more intimate sense of who you are and where you’re going”* (p.159).

The aim of this study is to analyze the importance of public speaking nowadays. In order to do so, we will compare two different contexts to measure some of the pivotal issues related to public speaking; these include motivation and attitudes toward public speaking and the professional world. Specifically, we will compare two cohorts: a group of university students with previous little contact with public speaking, and another cohort that belongs to a public speaking group called Toastmasters.

Several studies have proved that some professional problems arise because of lack of good public speaking skills. Moreover, it seems essential for students to overcome fears related to public speaking before their transition from the academic context to professional life (Raja, 2017).

The study presented here has been undertaken in Vitoria-Gasteiz in the Basque Country in Spain. There are two main reasons for this choice: above all, Spain provides a comparable context to Italy due to the fact that in both contexts there

is a scarcity of public speaking courses. Furthermore, we could take advantage of the fact that the researcher was following an Erasmus program there. This study seeks to compare two different contexts: one group with little experience in public speaking and another group who is part of a speaking club called Toastmasters International (TM International) as mentioned above.

We believe that this study can help us to understand the role that public speaking with all entire aspects that we will analyze in the following sections, can have nowadays in our challenging economic and social context.

With this objective in mind we present the following research questions:

## 2.2 Research questions (RQs) and hypotheses

This study sets out to define the effectiveness of public speaking in two different contexts. In order to investigate this, two research questions are addressed.

*RQs 1: What is the effect of public speaking on the domains of education, motivation and attitudes towards communication?*

The assumption for this question is that public speaking is something that can actually work on people's attitudes and motivation (International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature, 2014). This aspect, as this thesis entertains, can make the difference between success and failure in several contexts.

RQs 2: *Are there any differences between more and less competent communicators in relation to these domains?*

The aim of this RQ is to analyze and to compare different approaches to public speaking on the part of more and less competent communicators. As Sherwin observed, there has been very limited research comparing more and less proficient communicators (2009). Therefore, this research will aim to shed light on differences between them in the domains mentioned above.

This parallelism is essential to confirm that public speaking is something more than a professional skill; it can make the difference in terms of self-confidence to improve relationships, the emotional sphere, and the attitude to life.

## 2.3 Participants

Participants in our study were divided in two cohorts. On the one hand, students at the university of the Basque Country and, on the other hand, members from TM International from all over Spain.

### 2.3.1 University Students Group (USG)

The USG consisted of a hundred students, 82% were female and 18% were male. This difference in number reflects the difference in student population in the study degree course (see 2.5.1 below). Most of the students, 76%, were attending the

second year of their university degree, Figure 1 provides the percentages per year.

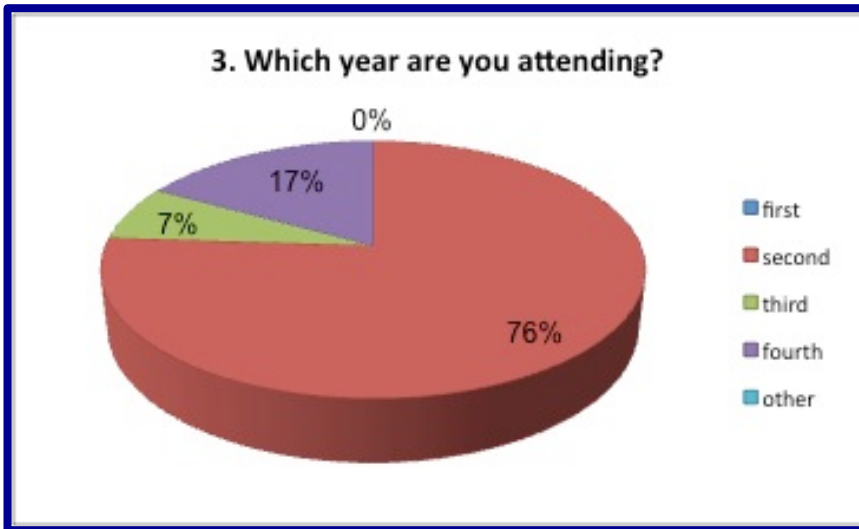


Figure 1 – Academic year of participants

In Spain, students end their bachelor degree one year before Italy. For this reason, age ranges between 20 and 23 (Figure 2).

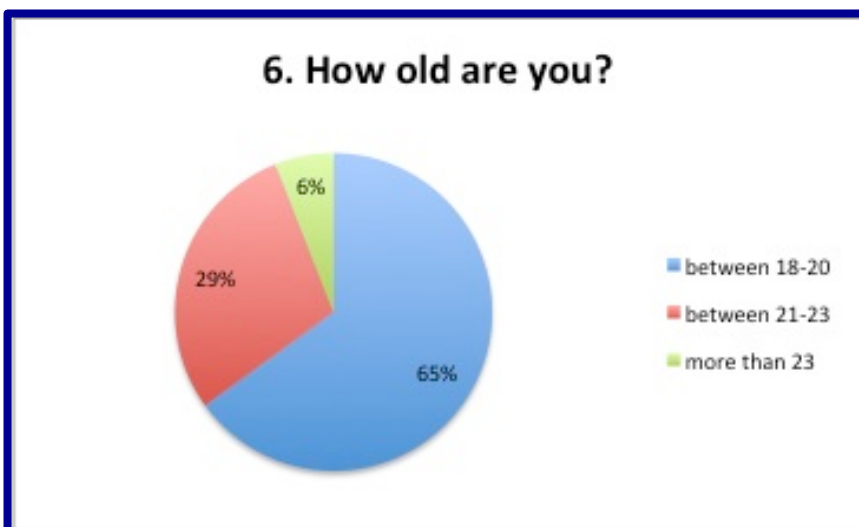


Figure 2 – Age of participants

Furthermore, in Spain, like in Italy, most exams from secondary education to university are written assignments. As Brantley *et al.* argued, the exams can have a positive effect on the written competence of the students (Wiley Online Library, 2014). However, focusing too much on writing can constitute a problem regarding oral ability.

As shown in Figure 3, only 11% of participants in our study declared to have attended a public speaking class.

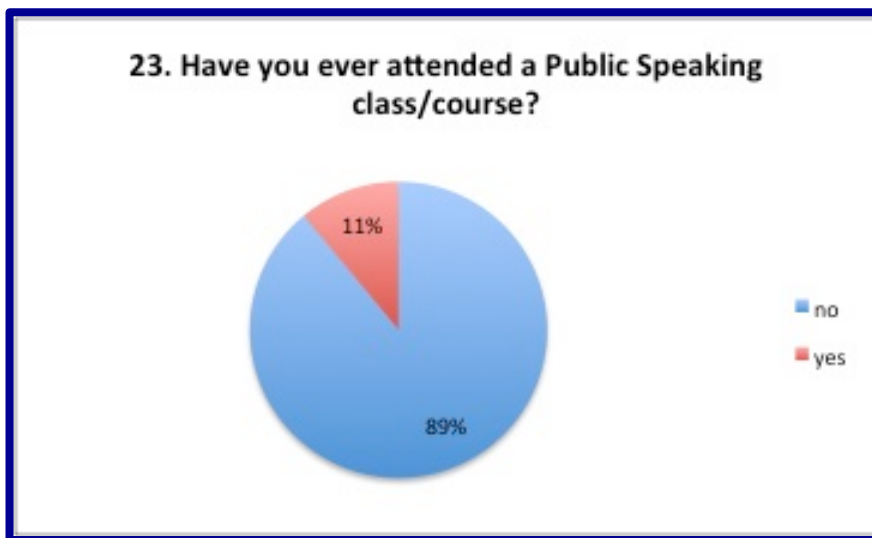


Figure 3 – Knowledge of public speaking

The direct observation of students' behavior during various presentations at the University of Padua in Italy, after a public speaking course in my degree and especially the period spent at the University of the Basque Country in Vitoria-Gasteiz has shown that university students have difficulties to express themselves in front of the class. Specifically, it was clear that they felt uncomfortable, anxious when presenting in front of their classmates.

That is why our second cohort already knows some of the communication techniques, as will be explained in the next section.

### 2.3.2 Toastmasters group (TMG)

Our second group consisted of twenty-seven adults from the TM International in Spain (59,3 female and 40,7 male). Half of the participants were between 30 and 50 years of age, [Figure 4](#) provides the age of all the members of the club.

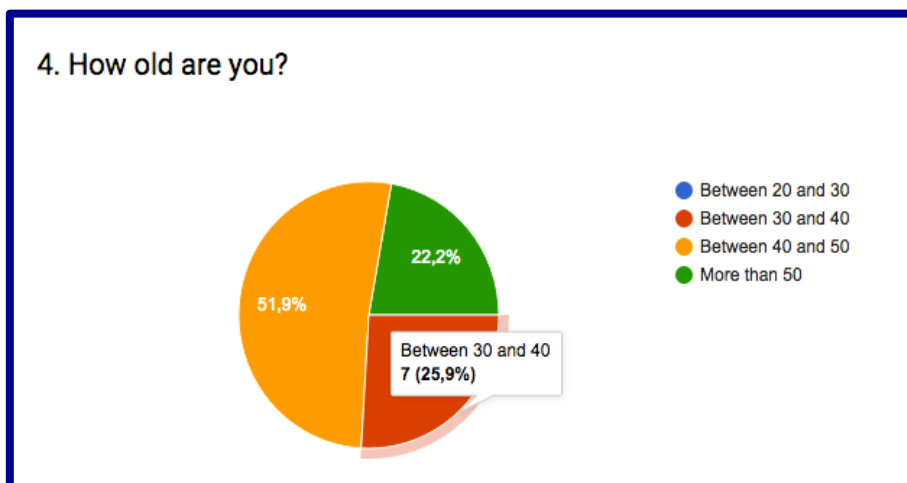


Figure 4 – Age of TMG

In this study, we did not focus on gender in particular because it was not considered an essential factor for this study. However, the members' age may have influenced some of the results obtained.

## 2.4 Instruments and procedure

For our research two different surveys were used: on the one hand a written questionnaire used with the USG, and on the other, an online questionnaire with the TMG. The TMG survey was sent online because it was the best way to reach the majority of the participants who came from different parts of Spain. The president of the club in Vitoria-Gasteiz sent this survey to all members of TMI, more than one-hundred members, and at the end of the deadline, twenty-seven of them completed it.

Surveys were divided into three different sections:

- Biographical domain: This domain in TMG regards some biographical information about members, that was necessary in order to understand their background and other information related to their choice to become a member. For what concerns USG it regards some biographical information about the students to understand their background and other information related to their habits in giving oral or written exams in school and university.
- Educational domain: The second range of questions in TMG, were needed for analyzing which were the abilities, the fears and the approach that the participants had before becoming members. Instead in USG, these questions were needed to analyze which type of exams, whether oral or written, make the students feel more comfortable and what are the reasons for these answers.

- Motivation and Attitude domain: This domain in TMG wanted to research the opinion and the relations that members had with public speaking as expert communicators. This was done to understand their approach to this discipline and to compare their results with the USG. In USG, this domain wanted to research the opinions and the relations that students had with public speaking in order to understand their approach to this discipline and to gather some information for studying students' job potential for future research.

In the case of TMG, we used the free online survey creator of Google, the investigation was sent by email to all members of Toastmasters in Spain. The written questionnaire used with TMG consisted of twenty-six different closed-ended questions and one final open-ended question where the participants could write any observation, opinion or ideas connected to the study. The survey was distributed in April 2018 (April 12<sup>th</sup> 2018 – May 7<sup>th</sup> 2018).

For what concerned the USG, a survey was distributed with the contribution of two professors from the University of the Basque Country in Vitoria-Gasteiz. The surveys were distributed before the beginning of a regular lesson in April 2018 (April 12<sup>th</sup> 2018 – April 19<sup>th</sup> 2018). It was a written questionnaire and consisted of twenty-eight closed-ended questions and one optional open-ended question. This was done to obtain some observations related to the survey.

All participants were asked to answer the survey after filling in the consent form (see Appendix 3).



## 2.5 Results

In order to answer our two research questions, in the following section we will present the results for both cohorts, following the two domains: education and attitude and motivation. Information about the first domain has already been used in the description of the participants.

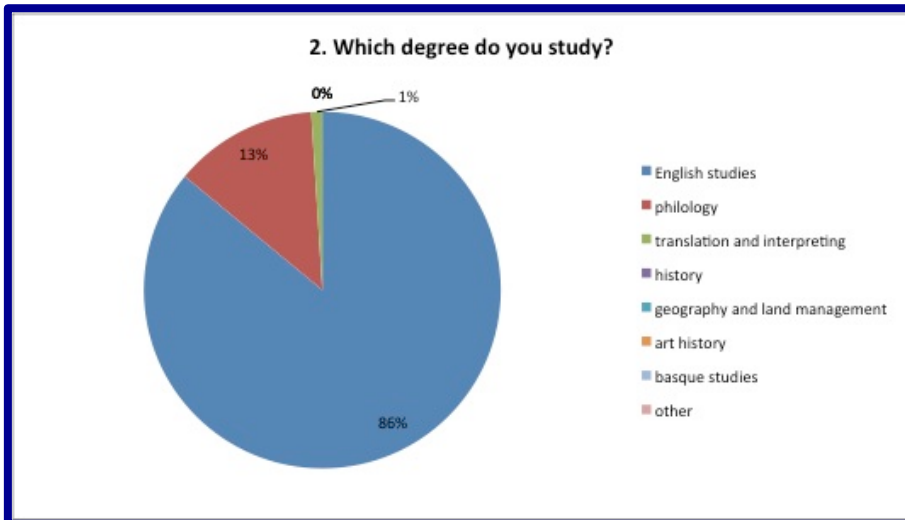
### 2.5.1 Results with USG

In this first part, we analyze the educational domain, where the questions were used to gather personal information of students related to their educational background. Moreover, the second part showed the motivation and attitude section where we analyzed the students' ideas and beliefs connected to public speaking. The entire student survey is shown in appendix 2.

- Educational domain

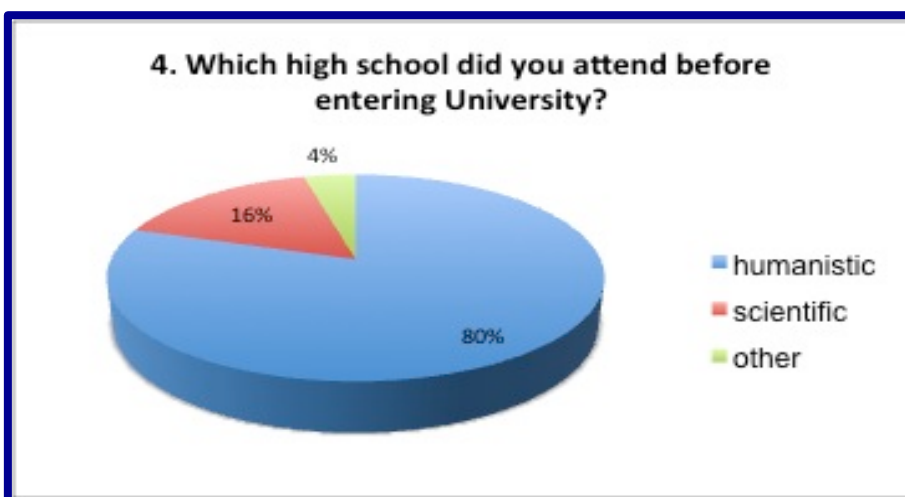
In this section we will present the most interesting results in relation to the research questions outlined above.

As shown in [Figure 5](#), the majority of the students, 86%, were attending the course of English Studies. This is an important aspect related to the thesis because several classes of this course were given in English; therefore, students could compare the importance of public speaking using English as a lingua franca. A small part of them, 13%, attended the class of Philology, and only one student attended the degree of Translation and Interpreting.



**Figure 5 – Degree of participants**

Related to the students' background, as it was concerned with the students' degree being part of our investigation, 80% of them, as shown in [Figure 6](#), had attended a humanistic high school.



**Figure 6 – High school of USG**

Independently from this aspect, most of the students declared that exams, at high school and university, were mainly written exams, as shown in [Figure 7](#) and [Figure 8](#). Concerning what we wanted to prove, in the Spanish context of

humanism, in case of university, the percentage slightly increased indicating that the curriculum included some presentations and oral exams.

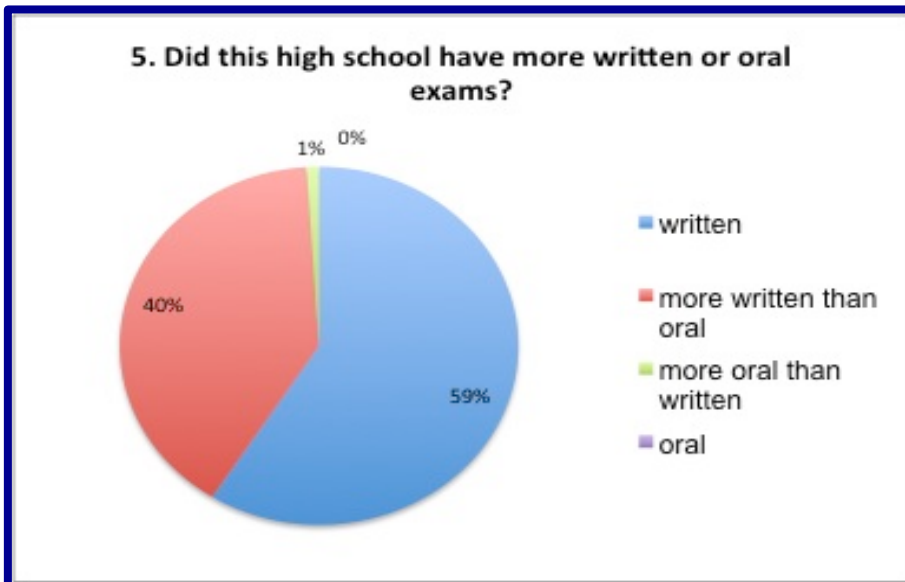


Figure 7 – Types of exams at high school

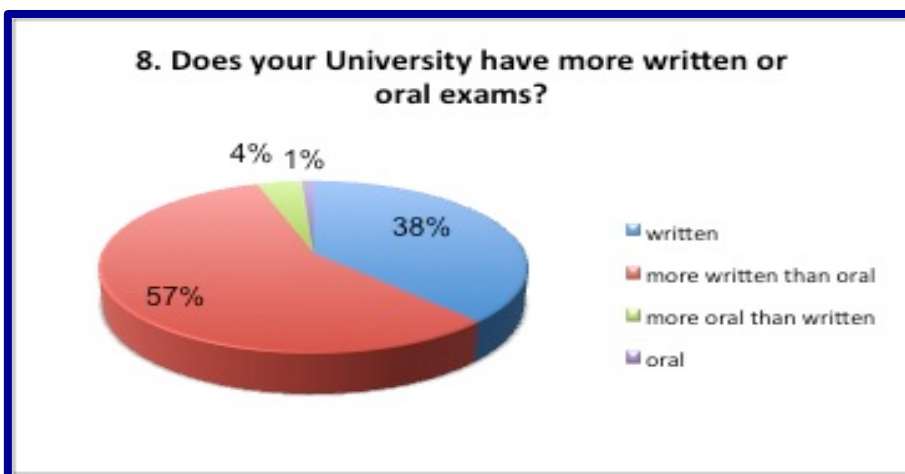


Figure 8 – Types of exams at university

Several times, most people discover only when they start to work how many situations require a good command of how to speak correctly in front of others: as Meany and Shuster (2015) emphasized, a business interview, a project

presentation, the final part of an assignment; it is essential to understand how important it can be to overcome, or to control, our fear of public speaking.

Related to this and probably because of the methodology used, 88% of the participants confirmed that written exams made them feel more comfortable. The results can be seen in [Figure 9](#).

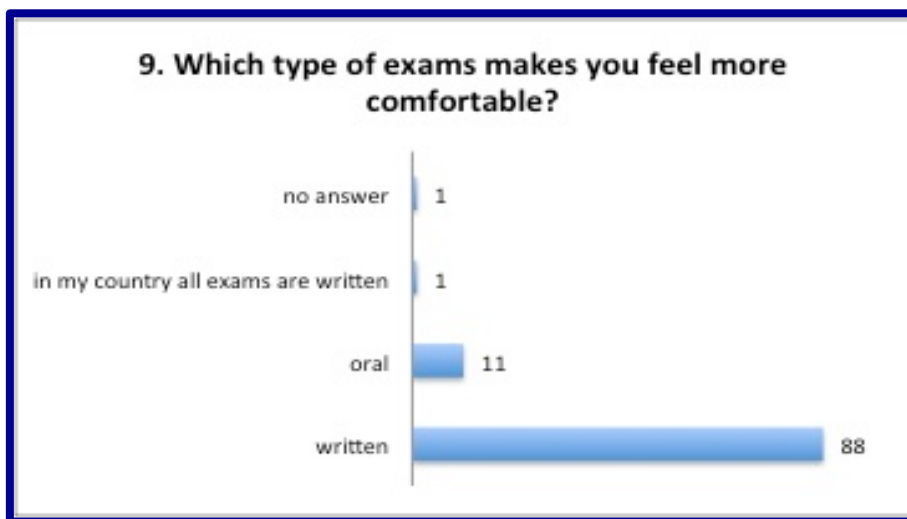


Figure 9 – Relationships with exams

The following two questions were related to the previous one. For this reason, the participants who had chosen the answer “written” had to respond question number ten; on the contrary, those who had chosen the answer “oral”, had to respond why they preferred oral exams ([Figure 10](#)). Consistently, the majority of the students, 87%, answered question number ten: written exams.

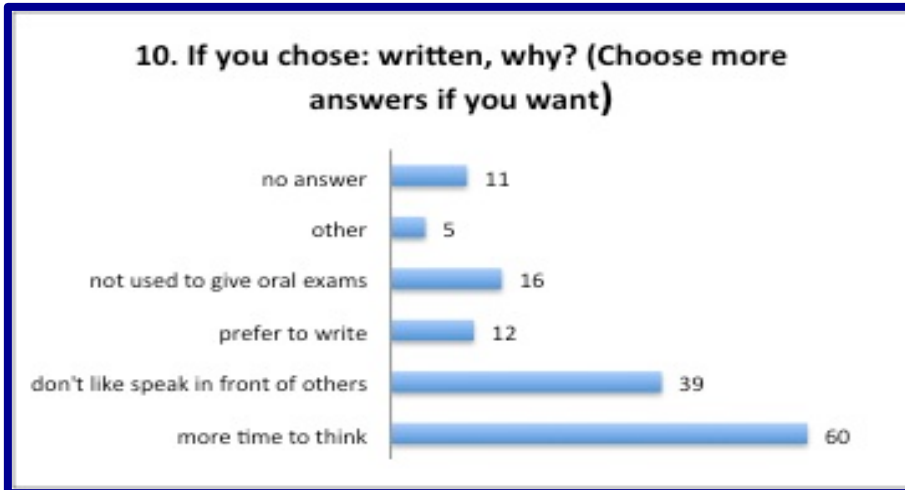
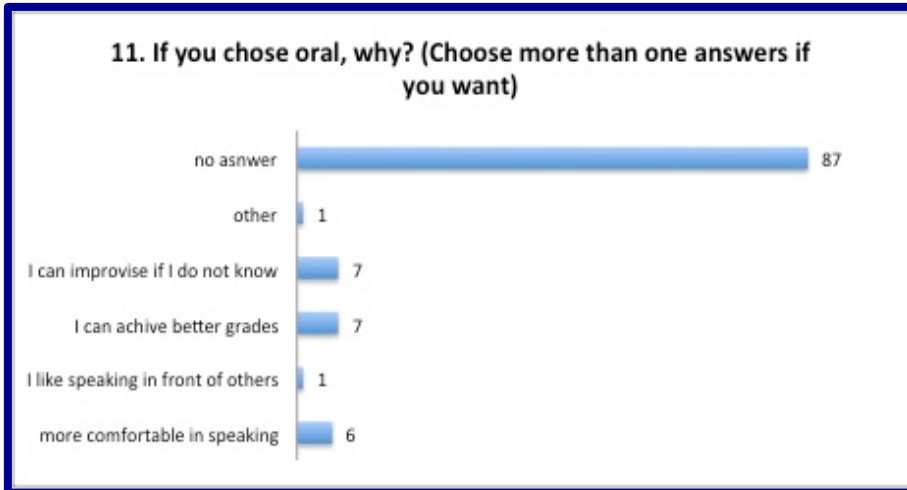


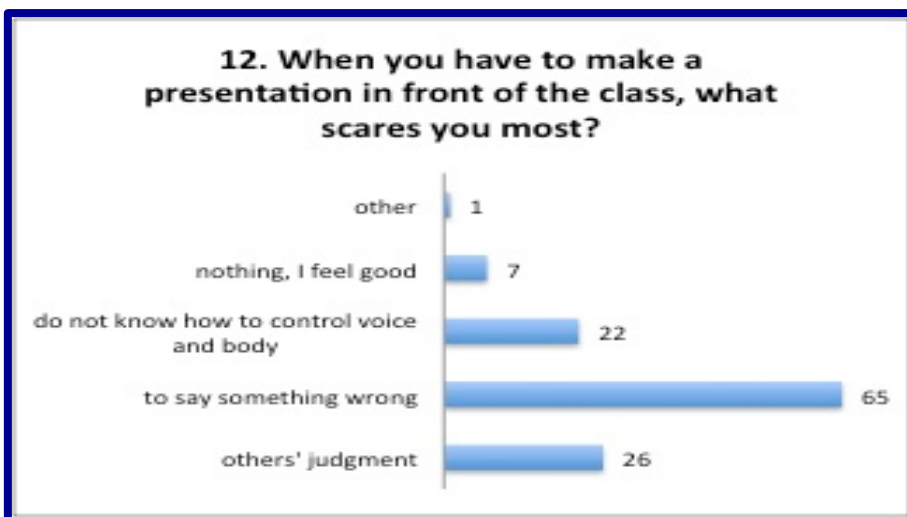
Figure 10 – Exams preference: written

This question was important to understand the reason why most of the students declared that they preferred written exams instead of oral exams. “Having time to think about the right answer,” seemed to be the main reason for this choice. At the same time, a high proportion of students declared that “speaking in front of others” was another essential aspect. From this point, it was possible to proceed investigating the main fears, beliefs, and relationship related to public speaking. Out of all of them, a few participants (13%) felt more comfortable with oral exams, most of them connected their answers to the possibility to have a better mark. Only one student, out of one hundred, answered that she/he preferred speaking in front of others ([Figure 11](#)).



**Figure 11 – Exams preference: oral**

Once this critical point is reached, the question is quite spontaneous, but the answer, that can seem obvious, is actually not so. Why did most of the USG, that are not teenagers, admit not to feel comfortable speaking in front of others? Which are those aspects of speaking in public that make them feel more scared? The next figure ([Figure 12](#)) can help us understand this essential point.



**Figure 12 – Fears of public speaking**

The majority of the students, 65%, declared that “the fear to say something wrong” is what scared them the most. It was followed by answer “others’ judgment” that could be connected to the first answer, and then “do not know how to control voice and body.” Certainly, these three answers could be connected to the young age of students even if we all know that, in some cases, the others’ judgment can represent a threat during our entire lives. At the same time, it was possible to say that these aspects were related to the awareness and the capacity to approach public speaking. As maintained by Keith and Lundberg (2015), this discipline can not only help people to improve their communicative skills, but also help them to grow up as a person, building more ethical relationships with an audience and with colleagues in general.

- **Motivation and Attitude domain**

In the following section our first interest was to investigate the real relationship that students felt towards public speaking. This section includes those questions related to the attitude and motivation in order to see how students saw the possibility of overcoming shyness and anxiety.

As figure 13 shows, 89% thought that it was possible to overcome fears and shyness in public speaking. This percentage represents an excellent beginning in order to analyze the importance of this discipline for students and people in general.

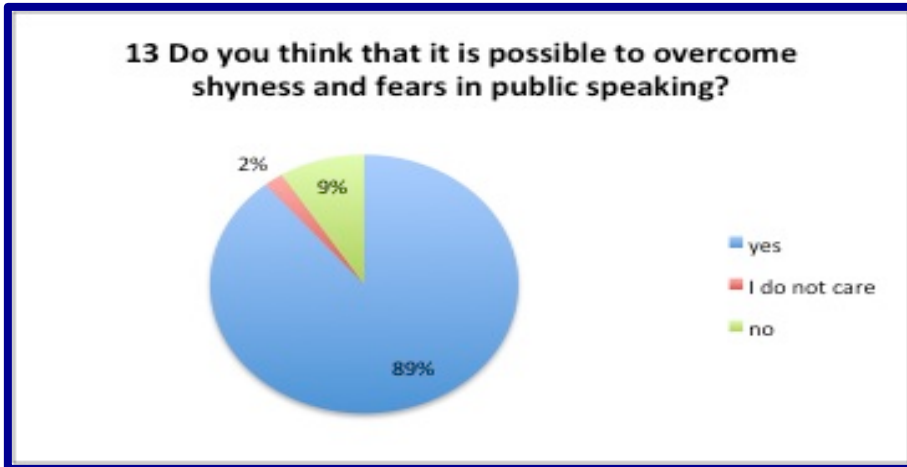


Figure 13 – Overcome fears and shyness

We also found that the main thing that they thought could help to overcome fear was taking part in “public speaking/debating course.” [Figure 14](#) provides all the answers about the negative aspects about speaking in public.

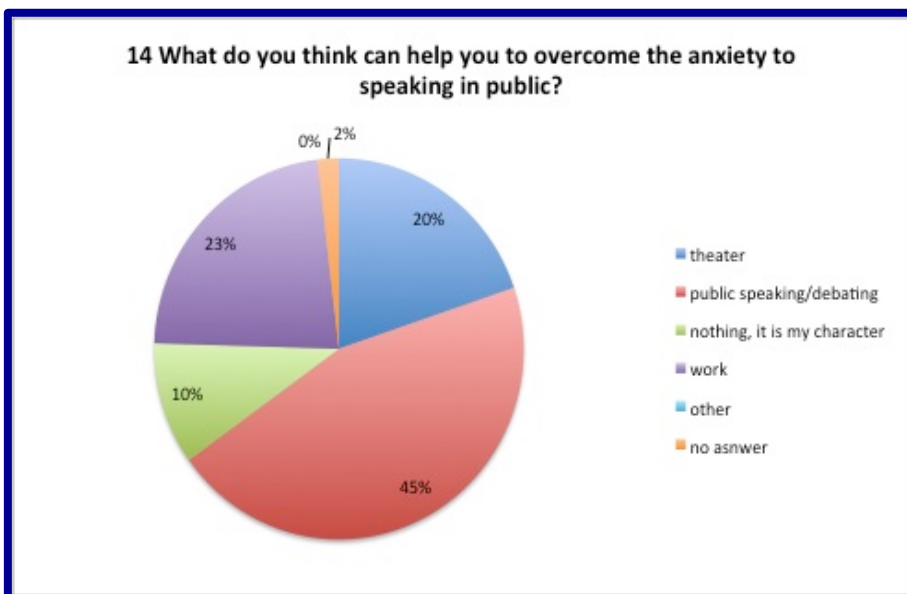


Figure 14 – Opinion of participants about overcoming anxiety

The next three questions are related to the possibility that public speaking provides an aid to participants to improve. As we can see, in both questions the percentage was very high, with 93% of the participants thinking that in everyday



life, public speaking can contribute to improving self-confidence (Figure 15); and 95% of them that thought that it was something important in the professional world (Figure 16).



Figure 15 – Opinion in improving self-confidence

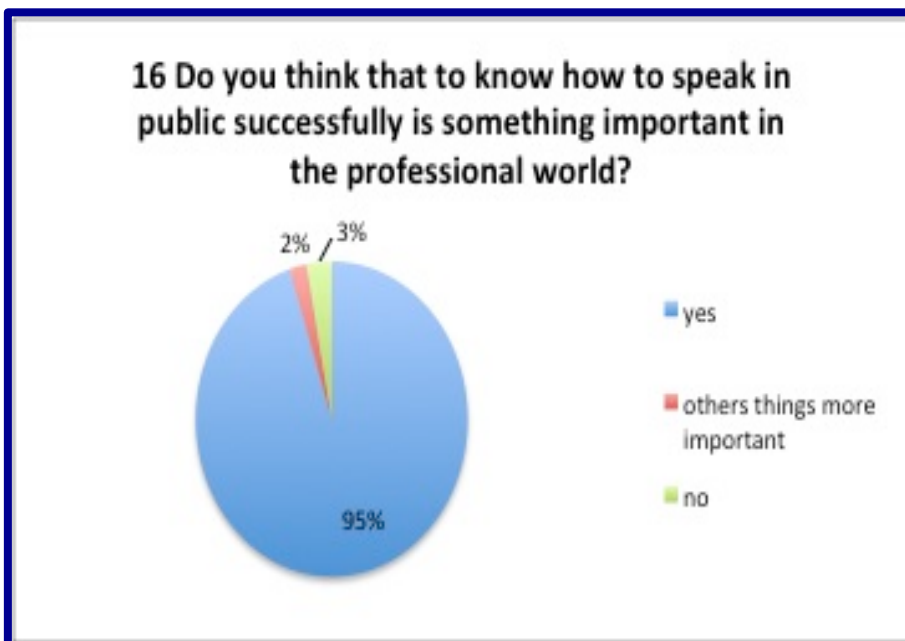


Figure 16 – Opinion in relation to professional world

This result suggests that almost every participant recognized the fact that, in order to increase the chance of success in their future work, public speaking can be an essential skill connected to work performance. Moreover, as [Figure 17](#) shows, a good percentage of students, 58%, believed that public speaking could help them in their affective life.

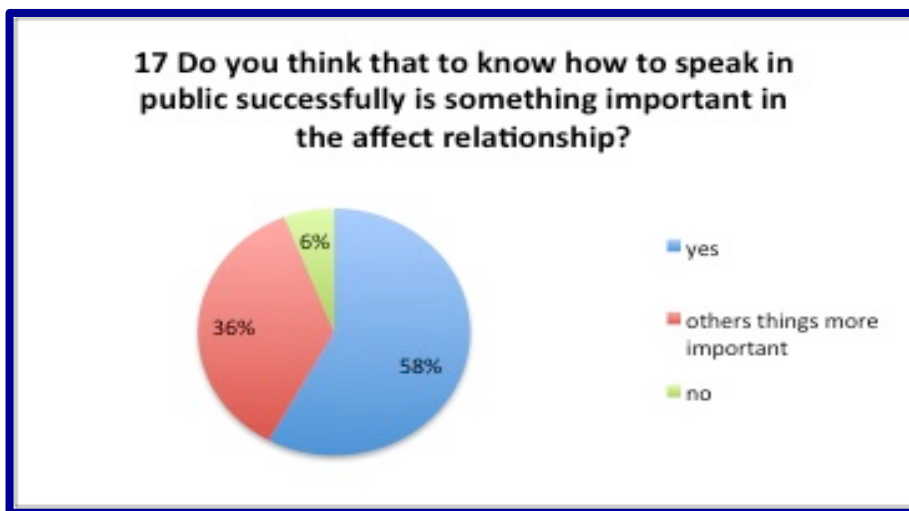


Figure 17 – Opinion in relation to affect relationship

[Figure 18](#) gives another essential result. It shows that 88% of students thought that speaking in public could help them to live better the university context. This question aimed to understand if there could be a correlation between public speaking and the way students live university. Furthermore, [Figure 19](#) represents the desire to have attended a public speaking course during high school. 40% confirmed that a public speaking course could have helped them overcome their fears.

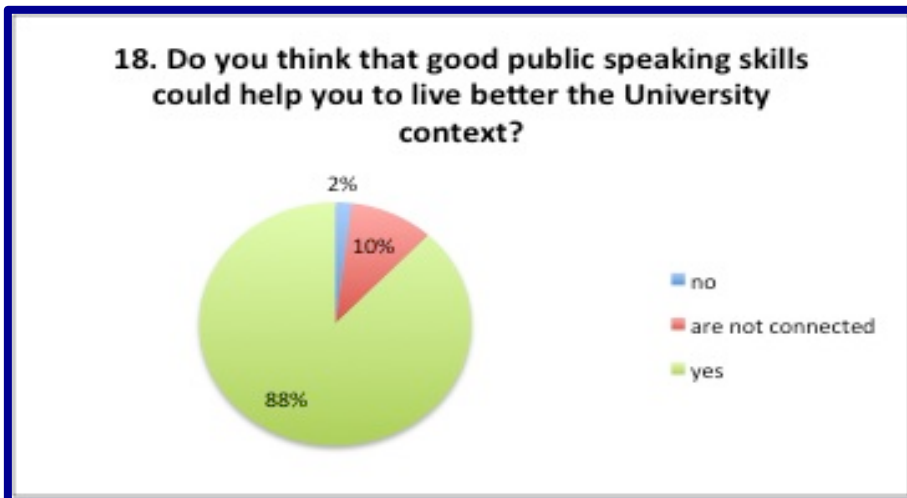


Figure 18 - Opinion related to university context

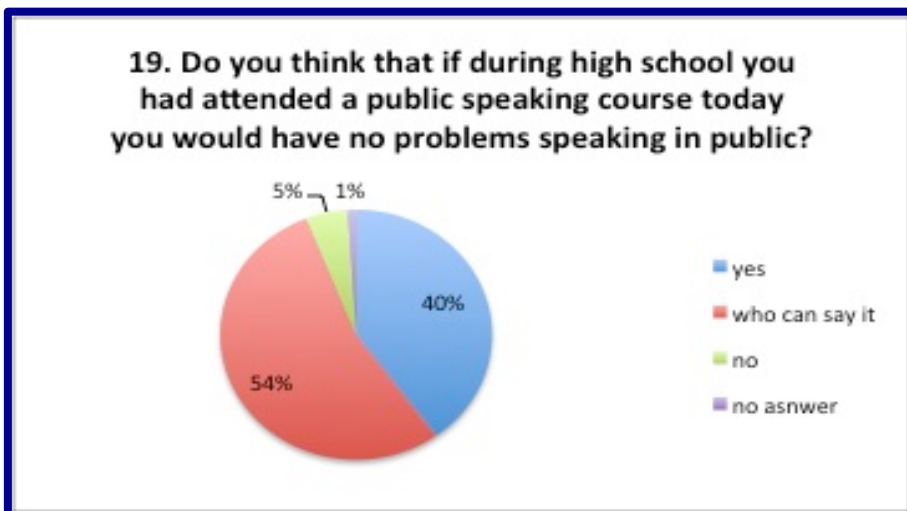


Figure 19 – Opinion about public speaking course in the past

Following the previous questions, Figure 20 gives us an optimistic result. 70% of the participants declared that they would like to attend a public speaking course if they could go back to the high school.

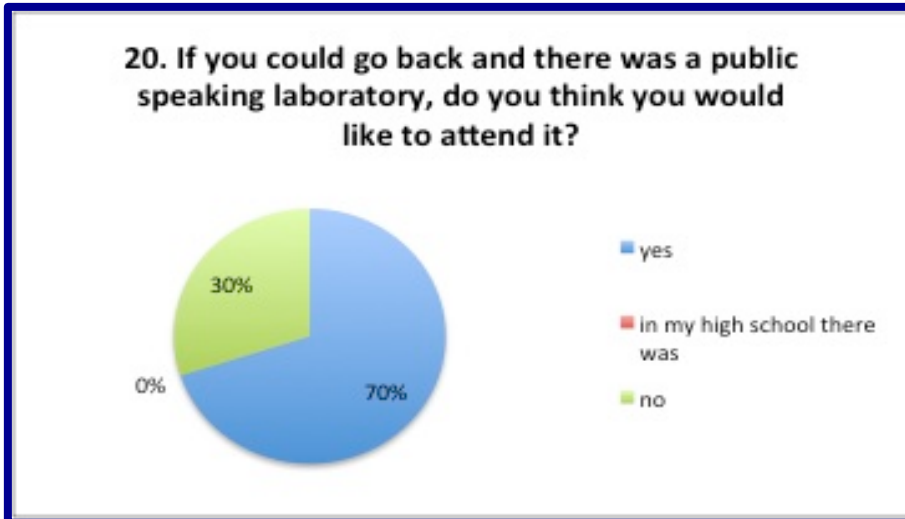


Figure 20 - Desire to attend a public speaking laboratory

Corresponding with the results obtained in [Figure 21](#), participants declared that attending this course could help them to improve their self-confidence, to overcome their fears and it would be important for the professional world.

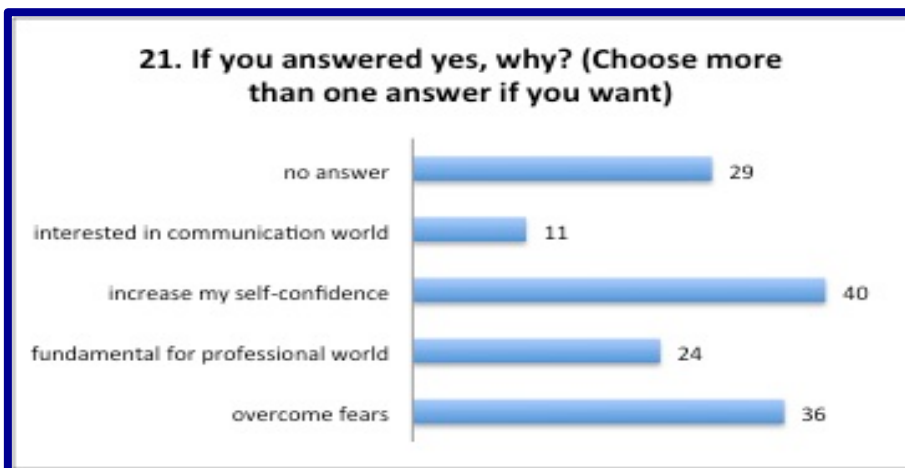


Figure 21 – Answer: yes

In contrast, there was an interest in understanding which were those aspects that participants considered relevant for not following a course like this. [Figure 22](#) shows that if they were not interested it was because they thought that some

other laboratories could be more important and because they still improved their communicative skills when they started to work.

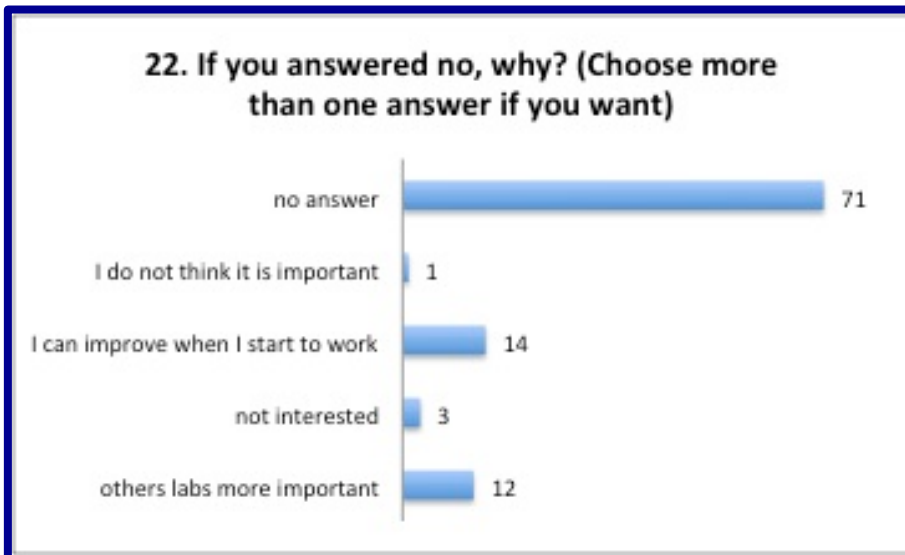


Figure 22 – Answer: no

The following four questions are related to the importance of public speaking not only for students but also for professors. The assumption for this question was to analyze if the ability to speak in public can make a difference concerning how much a student can learn during a lesson. For this reason, the way in which professors, or teachers, and trainers in general, conduct their lesson is essential to keep the audience's attention, and to increase their participation and their curiosity.

Concerning the relationship between public speaking and the educational context, 92% of the participants declared that this skill should be something important for professors ([Figure 23](#)). Connected to this, [Figure 24](#) shows that 66% of the students thought that public speaking could be a decisive factor on how much they learn during a lesson.

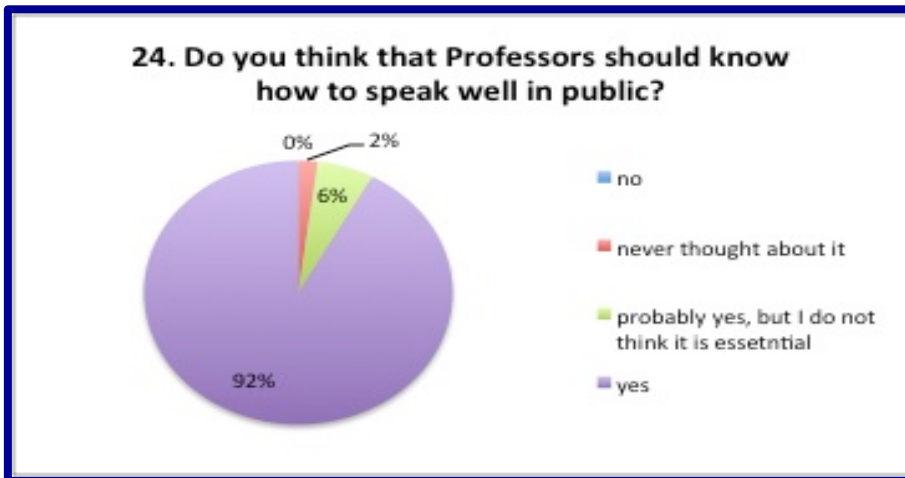


Figure 23 – Professors’ communication skills

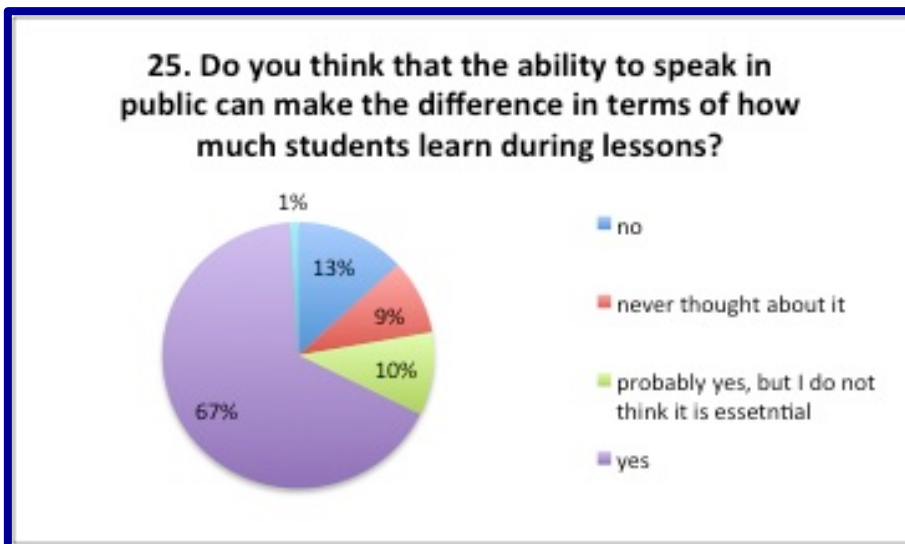


Figure 24 – The importance for students learn

At this point, even if it could be somehow expected that a professor should be a good speaker, a consistent range of answers, 87%, indicated that university should teach how to speak in public even to professors. Once again, the results show the significant influence that a good communicator can have on the listeners (Figure 25). Specifically, as shown in Figure 26, most participants thought that the communication abilities of their professor in general were good. We understand that these two questions seem too vague, but their aim was to

check if a public speaking course, within a university program, could be a relevant aspect not only for students but also for professors.

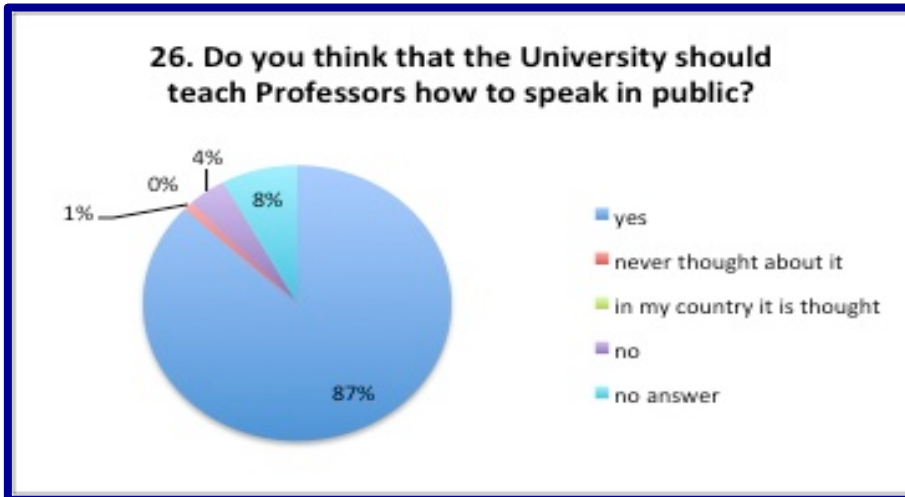


Figure 25 – Public speaking for improving professors’ communicative skills



Figure 26 – Professors’ skills in public speaking

The last close-ended question was thought with a specific aim: to understand what students thought about public speaking in relation to “a way of life.” Unfortunately, some of them, 11%, noted that the question was not clear enough. On the other hand, more than the half of the participants, 60%, reported that they

agreed with the phrase: “*better public speaking means better life.*” The results are shown in [Figure 27](#).



Figure 27 - Saying

To conclude, the last open-ended question gave the students the opportunity to express whatever opinions, ideas, and suggestions they had in relation to this survey. Only four people answered this question, but the answers were positive and encouraging for future research.

## 2.5.2 Results with TMG

This section is divided in three parts and our questions were somehow different because the context was different.

The first part consisted of the biographical domain whose aim was to analyze gender, age and the experience that members had as Toastmasters. Furthermore, the educational domain compared the different approaches to



public speaking before and after becoming members. To conclude, we analyzed the Motivation and Attitude domain where participants gave their opinions related to the impact that public speaking has had in their life. It is possible to see the entire Toastmaster survey in appendix 1.

- Biographical domain

First of all, more than half of the TMG members, 63%, who participated in this survey had been members of this club for more than two years. This can be considered a significant result related to the fact that those who answered these questions had full awareness of what being a Toastmaster involves. The results can be seen in [Figure 28](#). To understand the reasons to become a member, [Figure 29](#) shows that there were several motives related to their decision. These included answers related to the passion for public speaking, to the professional world, and to the increase in self-confidence. At the same time, most of the members indicated that it was a hobby. More information related to the biographical domain is provided in section 3.3.2.

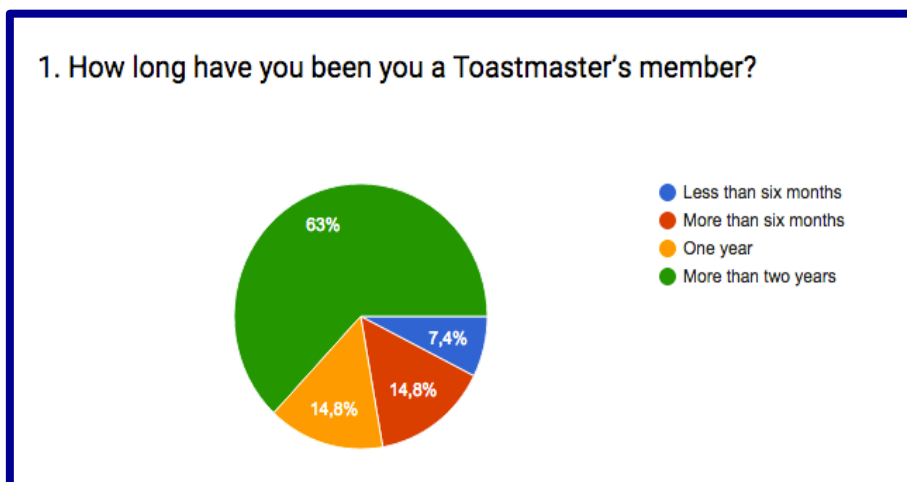


Figure 28 – Members' participations in TMI

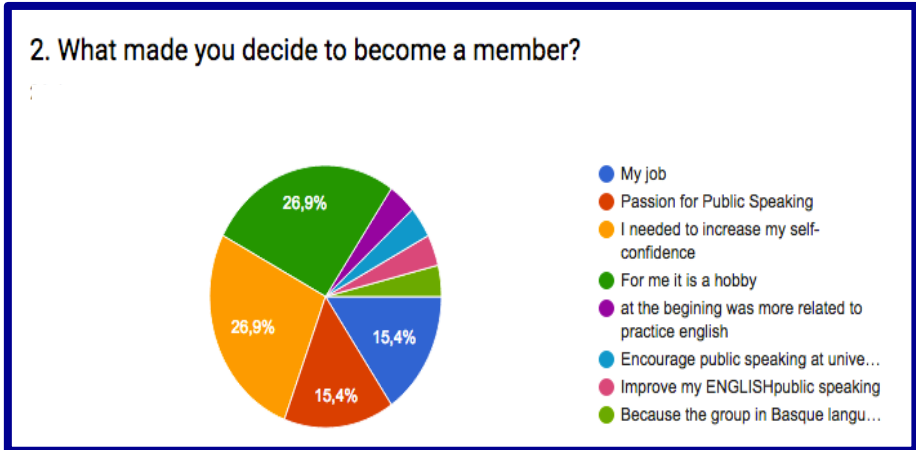


Figure 29 – Members’ motivation

- Educational domain

To analyze the relationship between the participants’ attitudes before becoming a member of the club and once they approached this reality, the following figures represent the results connected to the educational section. This part is essential to show the real change that a club like Toastmasters, mainly focused on public speaking, can cause in people’s life.

Firstly, Figure 30 shows that, before becoming a member, only a small percentage, 18,5%, considered his/her ability as a communicator “good”.

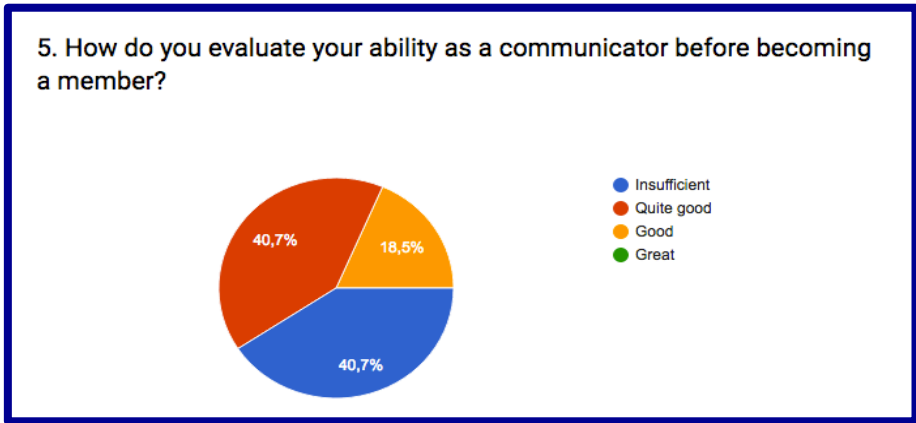


Figure 30 – Ability before becoming a member

No one thought they had “great” ability in public speaking. At this point, the question related to the main fears was necessary. The results showed that the main fears connected to public speaking before becoming a member were to “communicate an idea,” “the other’s judgment” and “speaking in front of a lot of people” (Figure 31). These answers were considered significant in order to understand which areas were necessary to be investigated to control and manage the fears related to public speaking.

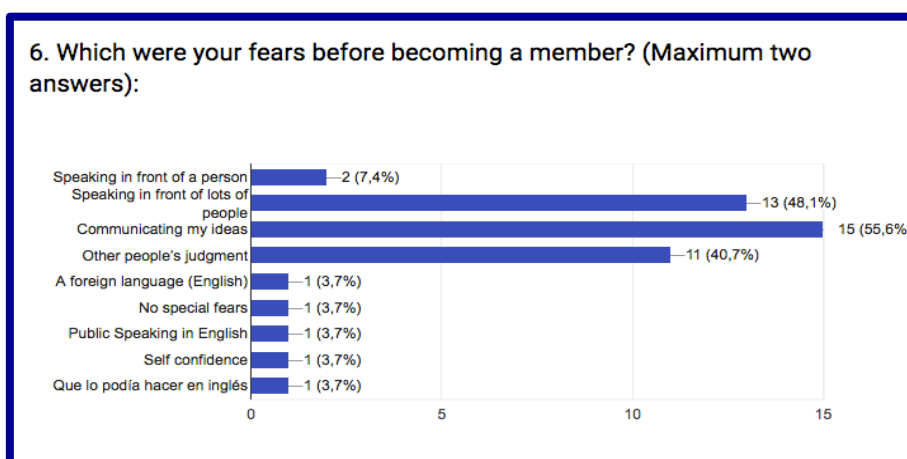


Figure 31 – Fears before becoming member

The results shown in Figure 32 were useful to understand the main domains where participants wanted to improve before becoming a member. Developing “self-confidence” seemed to be one of the main aspects connected to public speaking. Another important result that came to light was “language skills;” indeed, as observed by Boonkit (2010), speaking is viewed as an essential skill fundamental for an effective communication in any language.

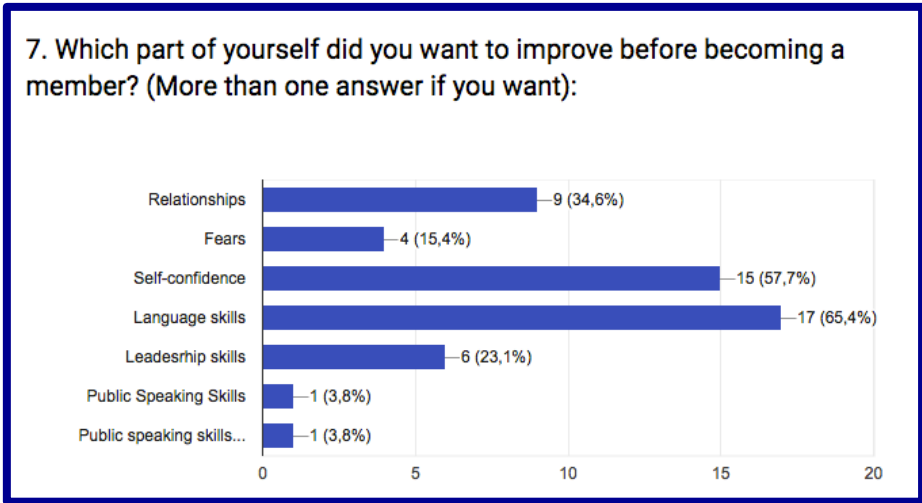


Figure 32 – Part to improve before becoming member

Connected with this question [Figure 33](#) reports that, concerning self-confidence, the participants were divided into two groups. A group of them confirmed that before becoming a member, they felt scared and shy, whereas another part of them answered that they felt confident even before becoming a TM member.

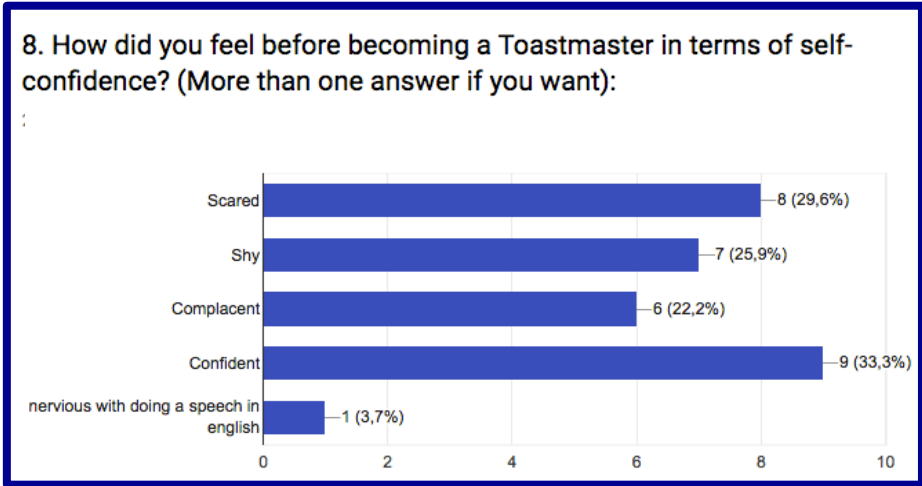
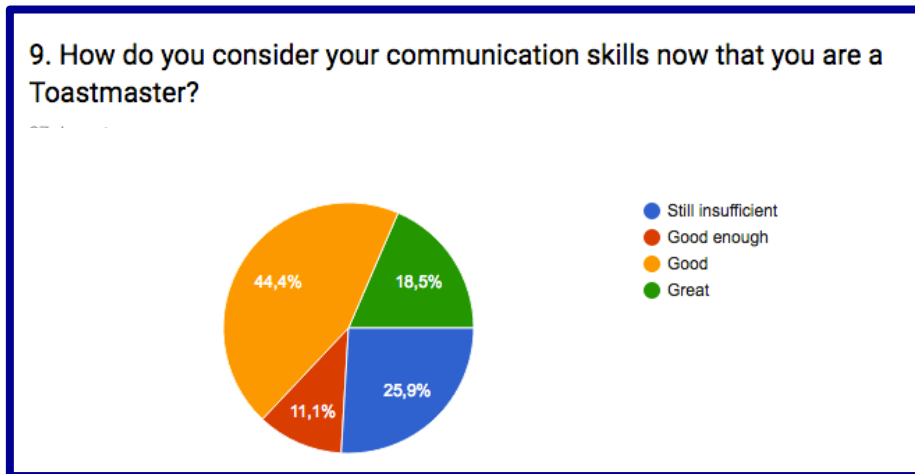


Figure 33 – Self-confidence before becoming a member

Included in this domain, we have reported even those questions that represent the improvement that this study wants to investigate in relation to public speaking.

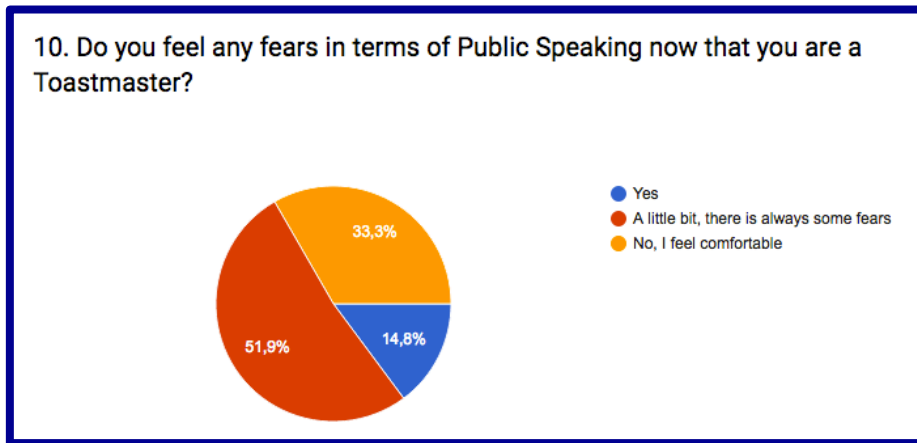
Specifically, we have compared the next issue, Figure 34, with the previous one: Figure 30.



**Figure 34 – Ability after becoming a member**

It seems that people that felt “quite good” before becoming a member, after their subscription in Toastmaster considered their communication skills to be “great.” Moreover, whereas anyone declared that he/she felt “great” before becoming a member, it was possible to think that 19,2% that answered “good” in Figure 30, answered “great” in Figure 34. Even if there was a part that considered “still insufficient” their communications skills, there is an important change in how participants consider their communication after becoming members of the club. As Rosa (2014) observed, overcoming fears and anxiety in public speaking is possible, with the right methods. The results confirmed this critical point connected to public speaking. In fact, the majority of the members said that there was always some fear related to speaking in public. Despite this, there was an entirely consistent part that considered themselves completely comfortable with it. Furthermore, it was possible to believe that those members who declared that

they still felt afraid probably were the participants that had become members from less than six months (Figure 35).



**Figure 35 – Fears after becoming member**

Furthermore, even if someone could consider him/herself to be a great speaker, there is always something new that we can learn (Morales, 2011). Specifically, this discipline delves into some aspects that are essential to improve.

Connected to this, participants expressed which types of skills they had to develop to continue enhancing themselves as expert communicators, as shown in Figure 36.

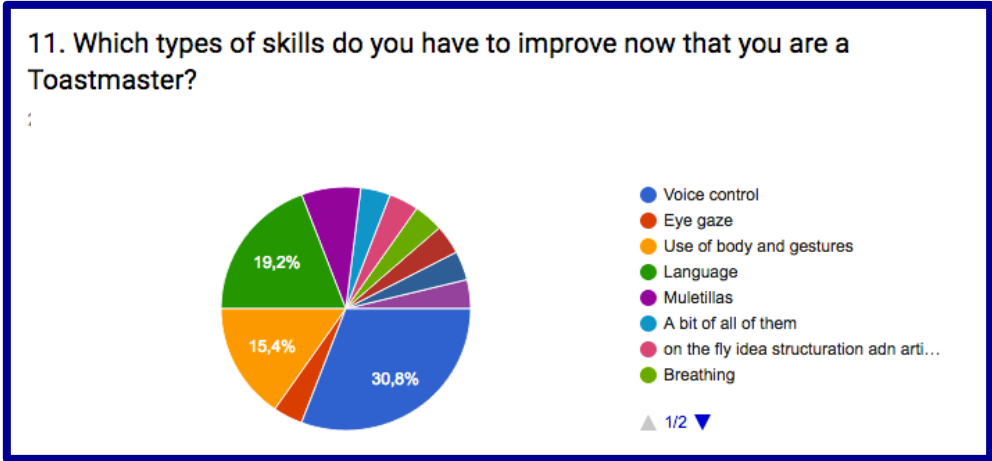


Figure 36 – Skills to improve

The next figure is a perfect example that represents one of the main aims of this study. Whereas in [Figure 33](#), as we have seen, a high percentage of participants exposed their fears related to public speaking in terms of self-confidence before becoming a member, [Figure 37](#) shows the positive change after taking part in this course. In fact, almost the entire answers given by the members converged in a remarkable improvement concerning self-confidence.

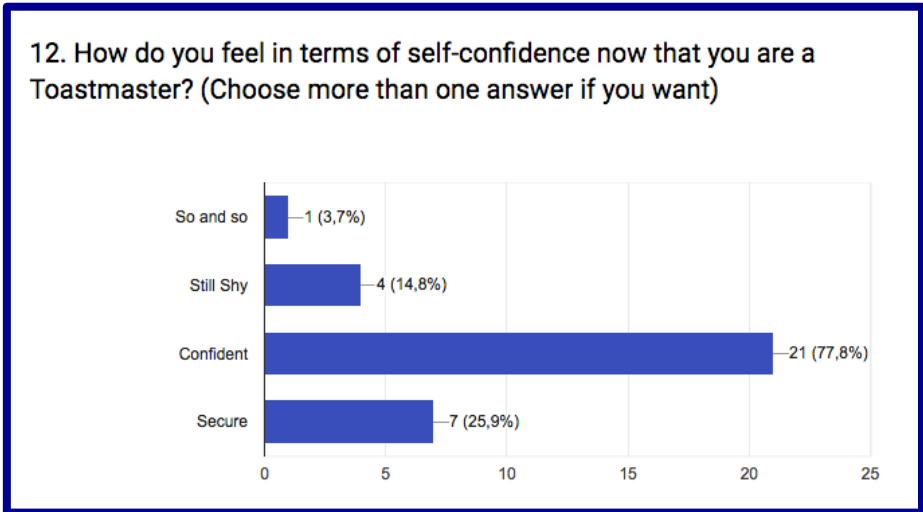


Figure 37 – Self-confidence after becoming a member

How people perceive themselves in a lot of daily life situations can make the difference between success and failure. Several times, the difference is given by how much we believe in ourselves or how we deal with the different environments and contexts. Public speaking is not something related only to how people control consciously and correctly their communication; it is also something that can contribute to changing people's attitude.

- **Motivation and Attitude domain**

This section includes the motivation and attitude that participants expressed regarding fear and self-confidence. Furthermore, questions included in this domain were fundamental in order to investigate the impact that public speaking has had in terms of life and to understand their opinion as expert communicators. First of all, our thought was that public speaking can make the difference not only in relation to professional life but especially in several others aspects of our daily life. Connected to this, the results have shown that almost all participants, 88,9%, considered that improving their knowledge concerning public speaking affected positively their emotional life. Only three members, out of twenty-seven, answered "no" ([Figure 38](#)).



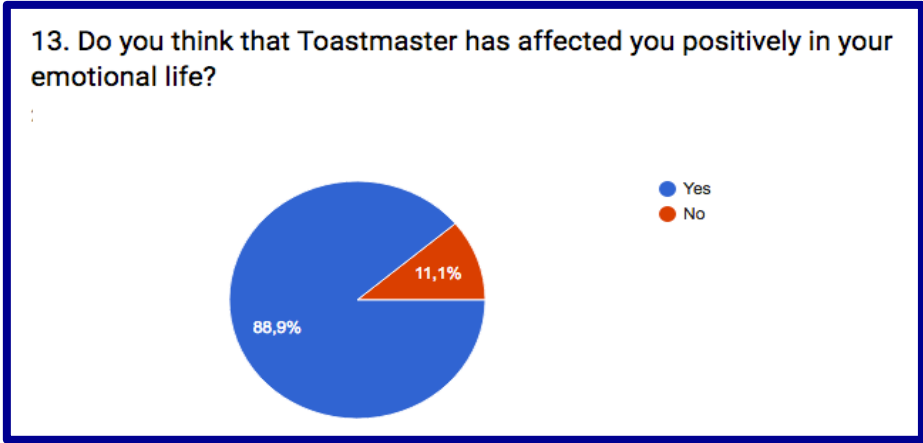


Figure 38 – Impact in emotional life

This is significant data for the aim of this study because it can constitute a base to demonstrate the impact that this discipline can have in people’s attitude. Specifically, participants who answered “yes” in this question indicated that this course made them feel safer, they learnt “what to say and how to say it” and especially they “improved their communication skills.” The results are shown in Figure 39. Participants that answered “no” to this question specified that nothing had changed in her/his emotional life.

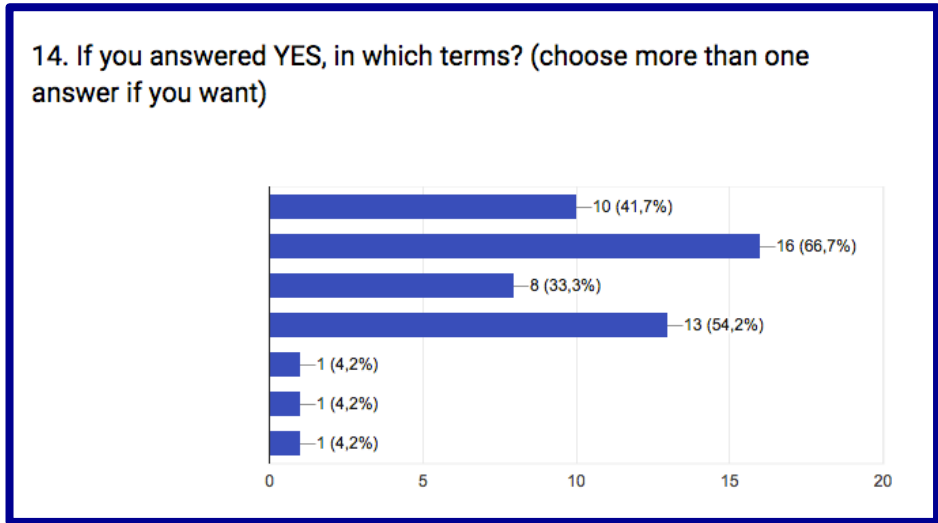
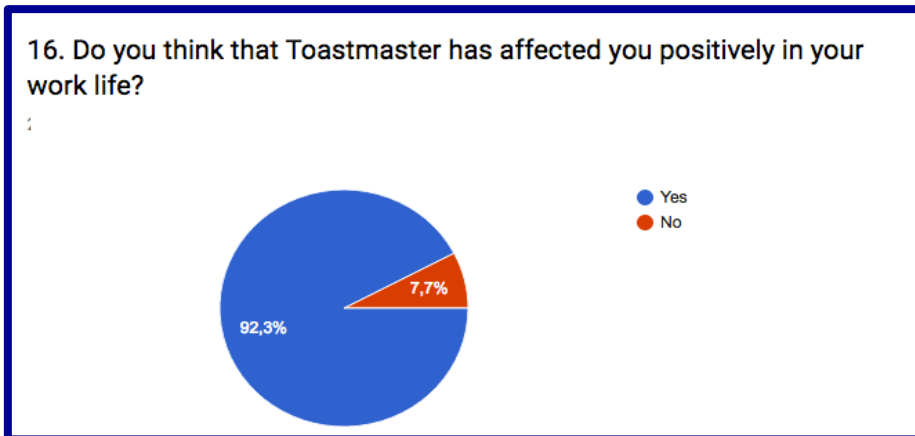


Figure 39 – Answer: yes

Figure 40 confirms the belief that being aware and expert communicators can make the difference in one's professional world. Once more, the majority of the participants, 92,3%, answered successfully to the aim of this study.



**Figure 40 – Impact in professional life**

The reasons, as for the previous question, are connected to the fact that in order to improve the knowledge of this discipline, the participants not only developed their communication skills, but also learned how to manage their self-confidence and their ability to do what? (Figure 41). Two members, who answered “no” to this question, commented that nothing had changed and that they had never had problems with communication at work.

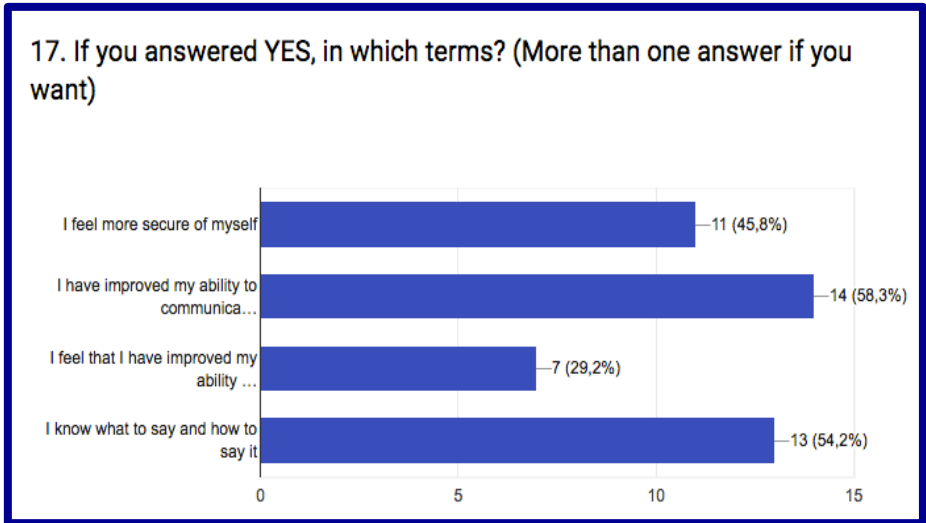


Figure 41 – Answer: yes

The results that we collected in the following questions are connected to the desire to investigate the correlation between public speaking and educational system. The aim is to gather the opinion of a public speaking club, to understand if it could be possible to conceive public speaking as an essential part of student's background in their very near future.

The results absolutely confirmed it could be useful for students to learn how to speak in public. As it was possible to see in [Figure 42](#), all participants shared this idea.

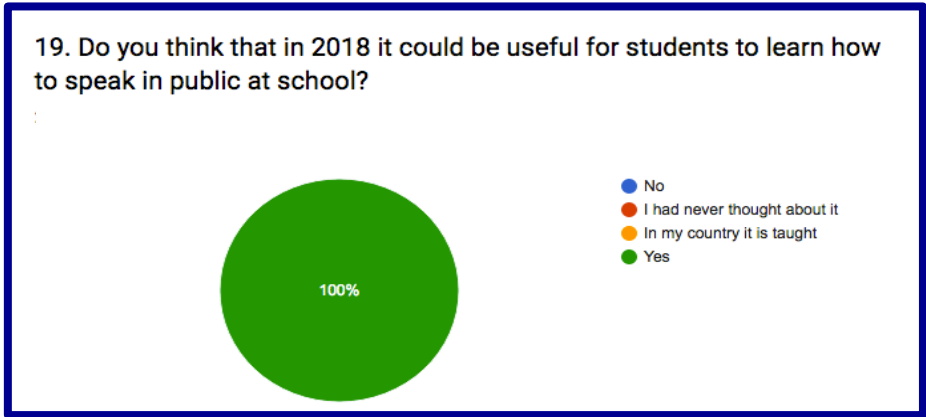


Figure 42 – Opinions about learning public speaking at school

All participants also declared that they would recommend a public speaking course to people close to them, for instance, sons or daughters, brothers or sisters, since school (Figure 43).

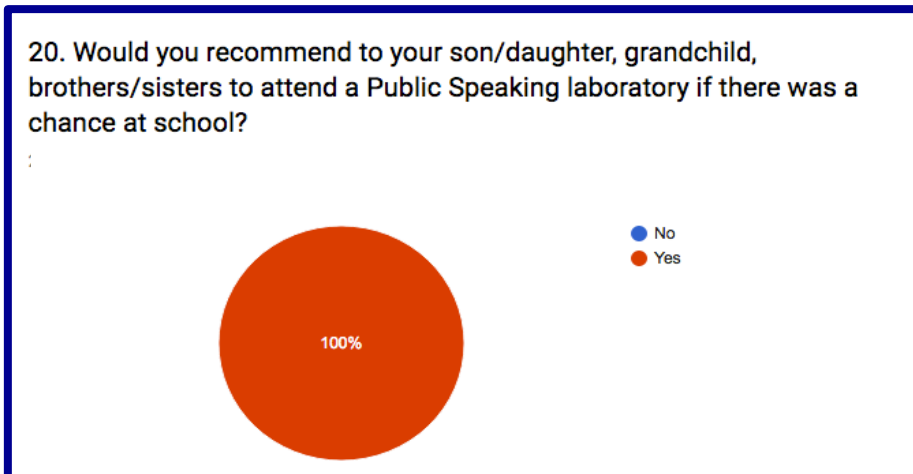


Figure 43 – Recommendation to attend a public speaking laboratory

The reasons why they would take this decision can be explained in Figure 44, where we see that the participants agreed with the fact that nowadays communication awareness is fundamental.

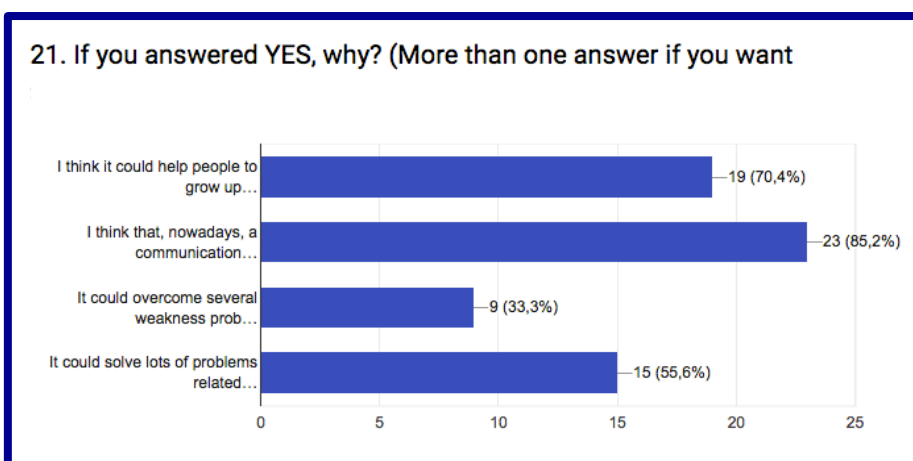


Figure 44 – Answer: yes

The results shown in [Figure 45](#) confirm the theory already proposed in [Figure 42](#). All members answered that a public speaking course should be offered in every university.

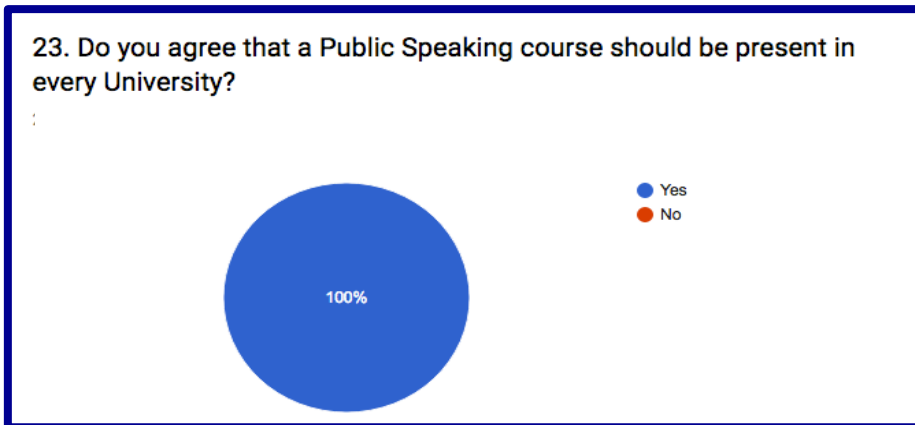


Figure 45 – Opinion in learning public speaking at university

Furthermore, [Figure 46](#) shows how participants were convinced that all the themes related to public speaking would be fundamental to take advantage of all the opportunities in life.

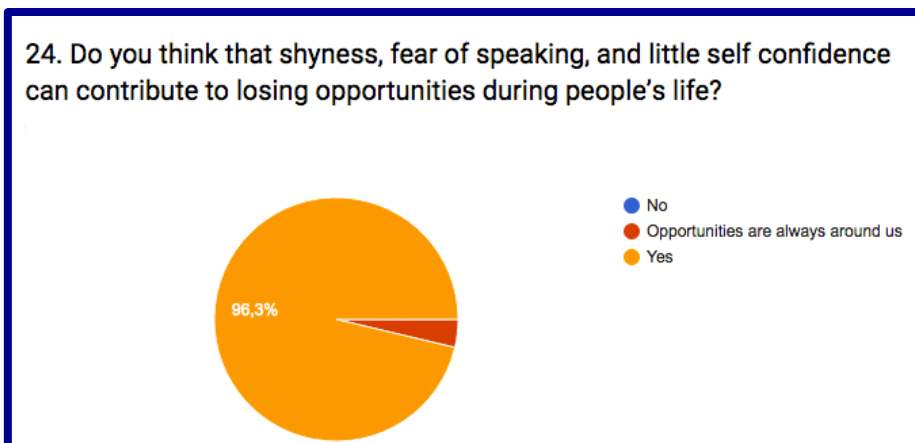


Figure 46 – Losing opportunities

We believe that every university should offer a course connected to the importance of communicating consciously. Because communication surrounds people's life. Besides, in favor of the aims of this study, a high percentage of participants, 65,4%, said that if they could have attended a public speaking course, they would probably have had more opportunities in life (Figure 47).

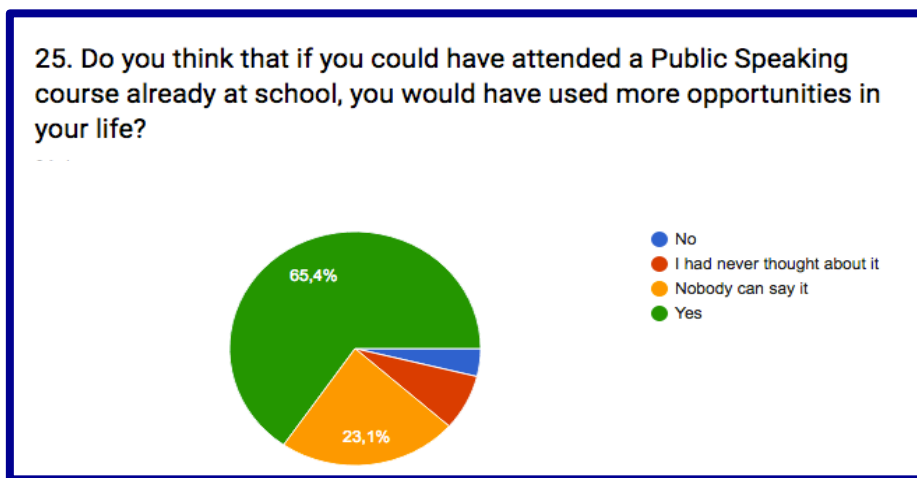


Figure 47 – Attending a public speaking course at school

Related to the last close-ended question, a small group of participants, four out twenty-seven, answered that the issue was unclear and only two members declared their disagreement with the saying: “Better public speaking means better life.” Despite of this, most of them, as for the USG group, answered positively. In this case, we claimed that participants that were very familiar with public speaking might have implemented a more significant identification? to better understand this question. The results are represented in Figure 48.

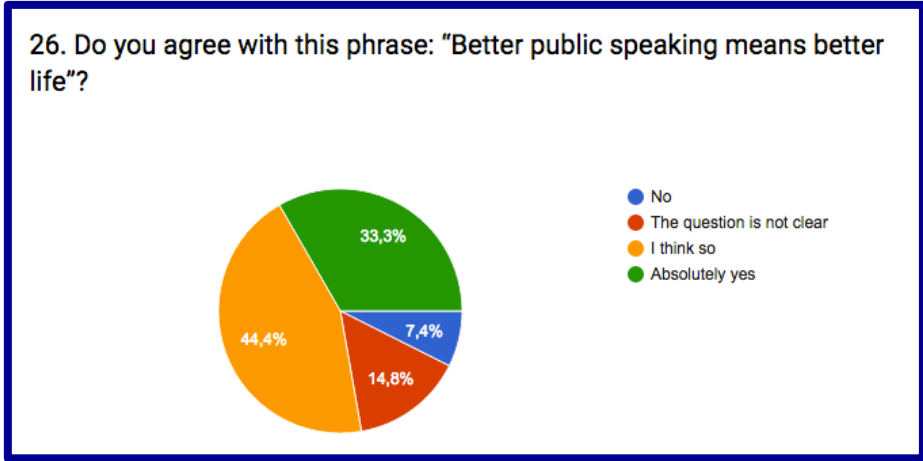


Figure 48 – Saying

Concerning the only open-ended question present in this survey, we received four answers. Firstly, they focused on the importance to create a powerful message that is an aspect strictly connected with communication skills. Moreover, the answers emphasized the importance that public speaking, and a course like TM International, could signify in everyday life, creating a network of people where it was possible to form a powerful group. Secondly, they highlighted the importance of the feedback that every member received during a meeting, which constitutes an essential part of the interest to grow as a speaker. Finally, they suggested, for future studies, to focus more on other important aspects related to public speaking, such as the capacity to listen.

## 2.6 Discussion and conclusions

In the previous sections we have described the results of our research regarding our two RQs. There are some interesting conclusions that can be drawn from these.

Concerning our first RQ, an aspect worth mentioning is that public speaking can have a fundamental role in both groups in order to improve an essential aspect of life: self-confidence. The TMG observed that confidence was the one thing that they wanted to improve before becoming a member. Consequently, more than half of the participants said that they felt scared and shy in relation to self-confidence before becoming a member. As we saw in the results above, almost all of the USG thought that improving their communication ability in front of others could help them to improve their self-confidence in everyday life, and we discovered that they were right. Indeed, the results in TMG showed how they improved their self-confidence after becoming members: from being scared and shy to feeling confident and sure.

Focusing on our second RQ, we can see that there are some commonalities in both contexts before being exposed to public speaking courses. Both groups had the same fears before undertaking a public speaking course. Some of these included: communicating ideas with the fear to say something wrong and other people's judgment. Furthermore, the results show that independently of age, gender, and the different background, there are several considerations related to the fear of not knowing how to control our voice and body and the fear to speak in front of an audience. This allows us to focus our attention on those features that make people feel uncomfortable. However, we account for this conclusion by arguing that, in TMG, a good percentage felt comfortable; in addition, most of the experienced group confirmed that it was normal to feel some fear before performing. Moreover, considering the answers related to this aspect, USG believed that it was possible to overcome shyness and anxiety in public speaking,



and a good part of participants recognized a public speaking/debating course as the solution for overcoming these negatives aspects.

A third result is that it is believed that public speaking can have a very positive influence in different domains of life: professional, educational, and even emotional life. Related to this, the results obtained in the TMG confirmed the beliefs of the USG. First of all, 95% of the USG considered public speaking important in the professional world. These results were confirmed by the TMG that thought that the public speaking experience given by Toastmasters had positively affected their professional life, especially because they learnt how to communicate consciously and, consequently, they felt more sure of themselves. Furthermore, both groups expressed their interest and their agreement concerning the teaching of public speaking in high school and university. Specifically, 88% of the USG said that good public speaking skills could help them to live better the university context and the majority of them expressed their interest in attending a laboratory or a class if they could have the possibility. On the other hand, TMG as a whole expressed their agreement regarding public speaking courses presented at universities and schools. Furthermore, most of the participants in TMG added that if they could have attended a public speaking course already at school, they would probably have had more opportunities in life. Consistently with our expectations, the USG mindset found a confirmation: as several students said that speaking successfully in public was something important in their affective lives, 88,9% of the TMG confirmed that they had changed positively their emotional life. Finally, 76% of TMG and 60% of USG agreed with the saying that "*better public speaking means better life*".

Furthermore, the main difference between these two groups, one exposed to public speaking and another one without previous knowledge, is that the TMG have experienced a real change in their mindsets. This change was the development of the attitude to approach aspects related to communication, and connect to everyday life. The participants saw that to improve their capacity to communicate in public is not something related only to learning a skill for their work. Above all, public speaking was something that could help them to change positively aspects that concern life, among others: their emotional relationship, attitude at work, confidence and their fears to communicate ideas and opinions. Which is the main conclusion we can draw after our research? In sum, Public Speaking education can change the way we see different aspects of our lives. It can be seen as an instrument that we can learn to use in several different contexts and domains in order to reach a unique aim: improve our relationship and, as a consequence, our life.

# **CHAPTER THREE: The temporal alignment of speech and gesture: considerations for intelligibility in relation to public speaking**

## **3.1 Introduction**

As argued by Munro (2010), intelligibility is an essential condition in human interaction. It was studied in relation to language teaching when, at the beginning of the XX century, researchers started to study the implications of L2 learning.

Correlations between speakers' pitch and head-movements have been found to increase speech-in-noise intelligibility (Al Moubayed *et al.*, 2010). However, Yuan *et al.* (2018) reported that the role of gestures on speech processing and intelligibility is still largely ignored and the little evidence mainly concerns L1.

In this experiment we will investigate the effect of speech and gesture alignment on intelligibility in L2, comparing a set of timely aligned co-speech gestures with ad-hoc stimuli in which gestures are temporally misaligned with speech.

According to Burianová and Marstaller (2014), "*co-speech gestures are hands movements that accompany speech and allow the speaker to effectively communicate thoughts and ideas in two separate modalities*" (p. 3). For this reason, co-speech gestures represent a unique form of multimodal communication for the importance that hand movements temporally synchronized with speech have on semantics.

Gullberg (1998) found that speakers tend to increase the use of gestures when speaking a second language; also, speakers' access to L2 is cognitively more difficult than access to L1, and because of this, fluency and speech rate are

hindered. As a result, L2 speakers are often more difficult to understand because, as Bergmann *et al.* (2015) observed, they tend to produce more pauses and hesitation. This affects also gestures, which are often performed much earlier than speech in L2, as argued in Graziano and Gullberg (2018).

Moreover, as Cavicchio and Kita (2013) observed, in the context of bilingualism, the use of gestures alternates accordingly with the switch of languages.

Concerning these assumptions, considering that L2 speakers have difficulties to access lexicon, we expect participants to answer more slowly when gesture and speech are misaligned, since we hypothesize that speech and gesture misalignment is detrimental to intelligibility.

In every public speaking manual, it is emphasized how important it is to make a proper use of non-verbal language during speech (Cavazza, 2009; Donovan, 2014; Fujishin, 2016; Keith and Lundberg, 2015; Meany and Shuster, 2015; Rosa, 2013). As reported in the first chapter, it is important to control matching words and gestures. As observed by Graziano and Gullberg (2013), L2 speakers' mismatched gestures and words could have an important consequence in communication.

In addition, according to Busà (2010), *"when speaking a second language, it is important to be aware of what the body communicates when particular postures, gestures or facial expressions are used, as they may convey unintentional meaning and thus affect the outcome of L2 communication"* (p.61).

Considering the factors reported above, the aim of this experiment is to test whether the misalignment of gestures and speech in L2 affects intelligibility. In order to do so, we will show a range of videos at two different groups of Italian

university students. We will focus on three types of findings: firstly, the reaction time (how long it takes the participants to answer the experimental questions), secondly, the accuracy of the answers (if participants answer correct or incorrect), thirdly, the English level of the participants to verify if it could significantly affect our results.

The results of this perception test will shed light on the extent to which speakers integrate speech and gestures in L2. In fact, as mentioned above, it has been shown that L2 learners' gestures may differ in subtle ways from the gestures of native speakers of L1. However, it is unclear whether native speakers of L1 notice these differences in L2 learners' gesture, and to date, there is no conclusive evidence that they hinder communication.

The experiment was undertaken in Padua, Italy.

This research aims to investigate whether the misalignment has an effectiveness on intelligibility. We believe that the proper use of gestures and speech contributes importantly to effective communication.

With this target in mind, we present the following research questions:

### 3.2 Research questions (RQs) and hypotheses

This experiment aims to demonstrate if the misalignment between gesture and speech have a relevant effectiveness for the listener/s investigating the impact of a congruent use of gestures. In order to investigate this, two research questions are addressed.

*RQs 1: Do mismatched gestures and speech have an effect on the listener's comprehension of the message?*

The assumption for this RQ is that, when speech and gesture are synchronized, they help the speakers' semantic representation as argued by McNeill (2005). He also observed that gestures tend to anticipate the words that lexically reflect them, but they can also, simultaneously, be synchronized with speech. Furthermore, a proper use of gestures is essential to try to avoid the mismatch for a proper communication because it can have a crucial influence for intelligibility.

*RQs 2: May the mismatch affect comprehension or cause slower comprehension?*

The aim of this RQ is to research the consequences that the mismatch can have on the listeners' comprehension. Vieira (2017) argued that for L2 speakers there is a lack of automaticity?? that makes it difficult for them to access L2 lexicon. As reported in the introduction above, Graziano and Gullberg (2018) observed that this difficulty affects also the use of gestures. Testing the effects of the alignment and misalignment of gestures and speech will provide important evidence regarding the possibility that the mismatch can cause interference on comprehension.

### 3.3 Participants

The participants in our experiment were all native speakers of Italian, all students of Translation studies at the University of Padua. They consisted of 40 students, 34 females and 6 males; the average age was 22,4 years. Half of the participants had a B2 level of English on the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Language) and half had a C1 level. They were divided in two groups and the results concerned two factors: first, the accuracy of the participants' answers, second, the reaction time, that is to say how long it took them to choose the correct figure.

### 3.4 Instruments and procedure

For the experiment we created 43 files to show the participants. The following procedure was used. First of all, we created two types of SVO sentences to present in the experiment: the 'aligned' phrases, which involved an iconic gesture aligned with its semantic referent; and the 'filler' phrases that were SVO as well, but they contained other gestures, including facial expressions or head movements or eyes expressions representing the verb content.

Table 1 shows the average length of all sentences presented: aligned, misaligned, and filler. The sentences reported here include only the verb corresponding to the gesture, to read the complete sentences see Appendix 4.

The sentences were 3908 sec. long on average. The average length of the aligned videos was slightly longer due to the fact that there was the need to have more time to modify the videos in order to create the misalignment.

The results indicated in Table 2 show the onset of gesture and speech between aligned and misaligned sentences. Differently from the previous table, there was no interest in considering the filler sentences. In this table, all sentences have been measured pointing the onset of gesture and the onset of speech. In this way the findings have been exported in order to estimate two kinds of data: first, the difference between the beginning of gesture and speech to emphasize the mismatch between aligned and misaligned videos, secondly, the different timing spent between the end of gesture and the onset of speech to estimate whether the differences between aligned and misaligned videos were significant or not.

<b>SENTENCES</b>	<b>AVERAGE LENGHT ALI. sec.</b>	<b>AVERAGE LENGHT MISALI. sec.</b>	<b>FILLER</b>	<b>AVERAGE LENGHT2 sec</b>
closes the door	4,587	3,628	looks gross	3,461
combs her hair	3,628	4,379	looks up the stairs	3,712
drinks some water	4,462	4,129	nods at the teacher	3,586
eats the cheese	3,671	3,421	looks at the mirror	3,753
falls on the ground	4,504	3,545	reads the book	3,975
jumps on the cheese	4,379	4,713	reast on the branch	3,169
knocks at the door	4,379	4,379	says no to the fox	3,503
looks around the town	4,254	3,503	scares the chicken	3,671
moves the mouse	4,462	4,087	sleeps in the cove	3,336
opens his beak	5,046	4,921	smeels at the cheese	4,254
opens the lid	3,211	3,128	smiles at the crow	3,461
picks up the cheese	5,463	4,713	stairs at the window	3,586
plays thepiano	3,628	3,169	turns to the left	3,461
runs up the tree	3,211	3,086	turns to the right	3,962
shoots at the fox	4,546	3,67	bows at he audience	3,336
takes the cheese	4,087	4,087	chews the gum	3,671
turns on faucet	4,254	4,254	doesn't care about it	3,461
walks around the block	4,504	3,795	looks angry	3,421
writes a letter	4,004	3,211	winks at the boy	3,921
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>4,225263158</b>	<b>3,885157895</b>		<b>3,615789474</b>
<b>TOTAL AVERAGE</b>	<b>3,908736842</b>			

**Table 1 Average length of all sentences (aligned, misaligned, and filler)**



FILE	ONSET GESTURE - ONSET SPEECH ALI. msec.	END GESTURE - ONSET SPEECH ALI. msec	ONSET GESTURE - ONSET SPEECH MISALI. msec.	END GESTURE - ONSET SPEECH MISALI. msec.
answers the phone	96	471	-720	-220
closes the door	50	425	-1050	-341
combs her hair	109	651	-1020	-186
drinks some water	0	250	-768	-310
eats the cheese	-25	307	-1060	-351
falls on the ground	-156	177	-940	-190
jumps on the cheese	-82	251	-810	-92
knocks at the door	-158	343	-1000	-250
looks around the town	58	516	-990	-240
moves the mouse	-11	321	-1060	-394
opens his beak	-71	304	-800	-299
opens the lid	12	387	-650	-67
picks up the cheese	-376	0	-940	-314
plays the piano	-30	469	-930	-282
runs up the tree	20	914	-720	60
shoots at the fox	0	376	-960	-251
takes the cheese	-11	280	-910	-201
turns on faucet	0	333	-810	-268
walks around the block	125	709	-1030	-114
writes a letter	-208	376	-894	-102
AVERAGE	-32,9	393	-903,1	-220,6

**Table 2** Timing measurement of aligned and misaligned videos considering the onset of gesture and speech (the negative sign (-) indicates the difference between the timing in which gesture and speech appeared).

Secondly, we created videos to show to the participants, using the following procedure: first, 20 videos were recorded in English by a L2 speaker, in these videos the gesture was temporally aligned with the verb; an example is shown by the phrase: “The teacher writes a letter;” where the gesture for “writes” is aligned with the verb. Then, we created 20 filler videos whose example is given by the sentence: “The boy nods at the teacher;” where there was no iconic gesture, but

the gesture of “nods” was matched by a head movement. At this point, the aligned videos were temporally manipulated using the software Final Cut Pro X, version 10.4.2. The manipulation consisted of shifting backward the video frames of the gestures and anticipating the time in which the gesture appeared; basically, in the manipulated videos the gesture appeared aligned with the subject of the sentence and not with the verb. Focusing on the previous example, “The teacher writes a letter,” we anticipated the gesture of “writes” so that it was aligned with “The teacher” and not with “writes”, thus generating a similar mismatch to what appears frequently in L2 speakers -as observed in Cavicchio and Busà (in preparation). As a result of this manipulation, we obtained 20 videos in which the gesture was aligned with the semantic referent, and 20 videos in which the gesture was misaligned.

Finally, the videos were included in software for testing. The experiment was built using the software PsychoPy that, as explained in Peirce (2007), “*is a platform-independent experimental control system written in the Python interpreted language using entirely free libraries. PsychoPy scripts are designed to be extremely easy to read and write, while retaining complete power for the user to customize the stimuli and environment*” (p. 8).

The measure of the anticipation between gesture and speech, in the misaligned sentences, was calculated as 905 msec. long on average. Figure 1 shows the procedure used to extrapolate the data with the software Elan version 5.2. The videos were inserted in the software and two tiers were created: gesture and speech. After annotating the onset and the end of gesture and speech, the

findings were exported in an excel file? to calculate the differences between the sentences and to create the tables.

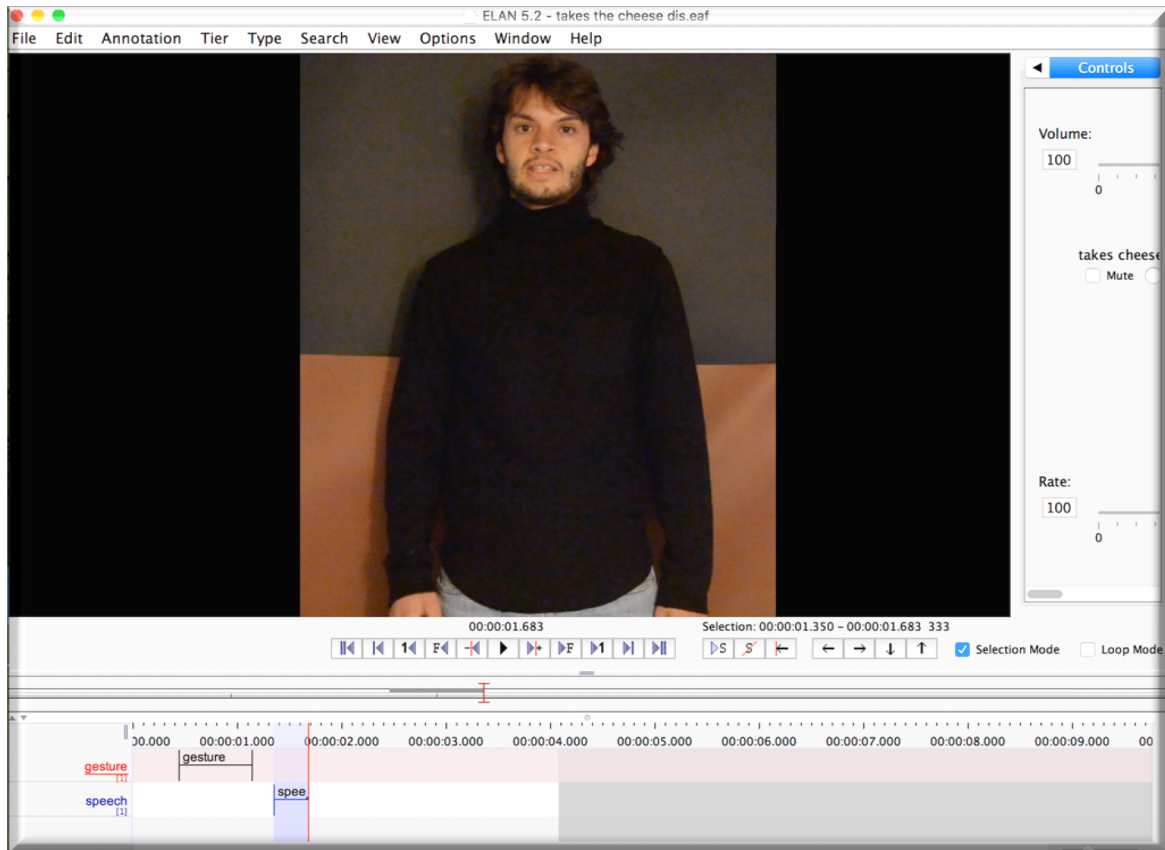


Figure 1 Gesture and speech timing record with Elan

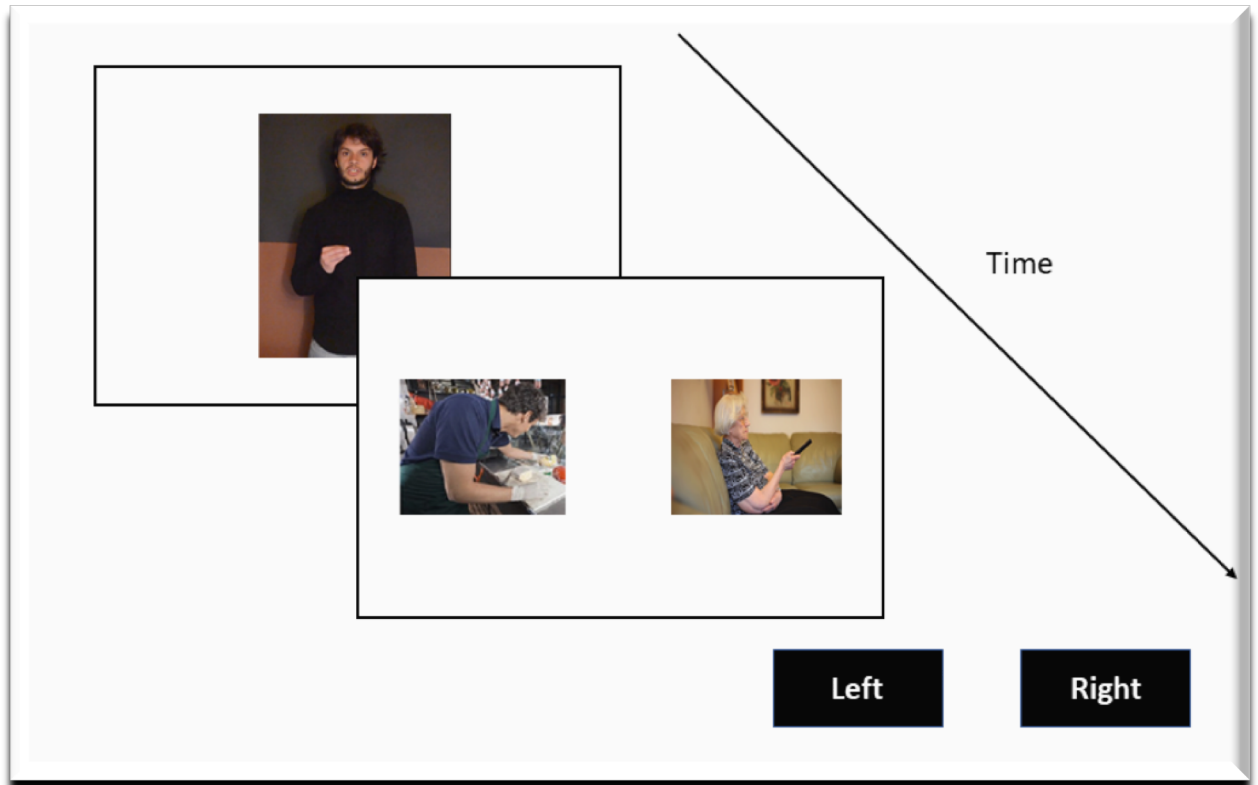
### 3.5 Experimental conditions

The participants were divided in two groups; and they saw a trial to familiarize themselves with the task, and then saw 38 test files. The two groups were exposed to two conditions. In the first condition, 20 participants watched 38 videos which consisted of: 10 videos with iconic gestures aligned with the semantic referents; 10 videos in which the gesture was misaligned with respect to its referent; and 18 fillers. In the second condition, 20 participants watched the

same videos, but the condition was the opposite. In other words, the gestures that were previously aligned were now misaligned, and viceversa; the fillers remained the same. This allowed us to analyze three factors: the effect of the gesture (mis)alignment between subjects; the intersubject differences in reaction times; and whether the answers were correct or incorrect. The 38 videos appeared to the participants in randomized order. Furthermore, the 40 participants were randomly assigned to either one of the two conditions. The entire list of phrases are shown in appendix 4.

### 3.6 Procedure

The procedure of the experiment was as follows: participants read the experiment instruction on the computer screen; then they took the trial test, and then the real task, which consisted of watching 38 videos; after each video, the screen showed two images, one on the right and one on the left; of these one represented the short sentence said by the speaker (e.g. the teacher writing a letter) whereas the other showed an unrelated image (e.g. the teacher watching the TV). The instruction, for the participants, was to click as fast as possible on the image that represented the story told by the speaker. Figure 2 represents a sketch of the experimental procedure.



**Figure 2 Experimental procedure**

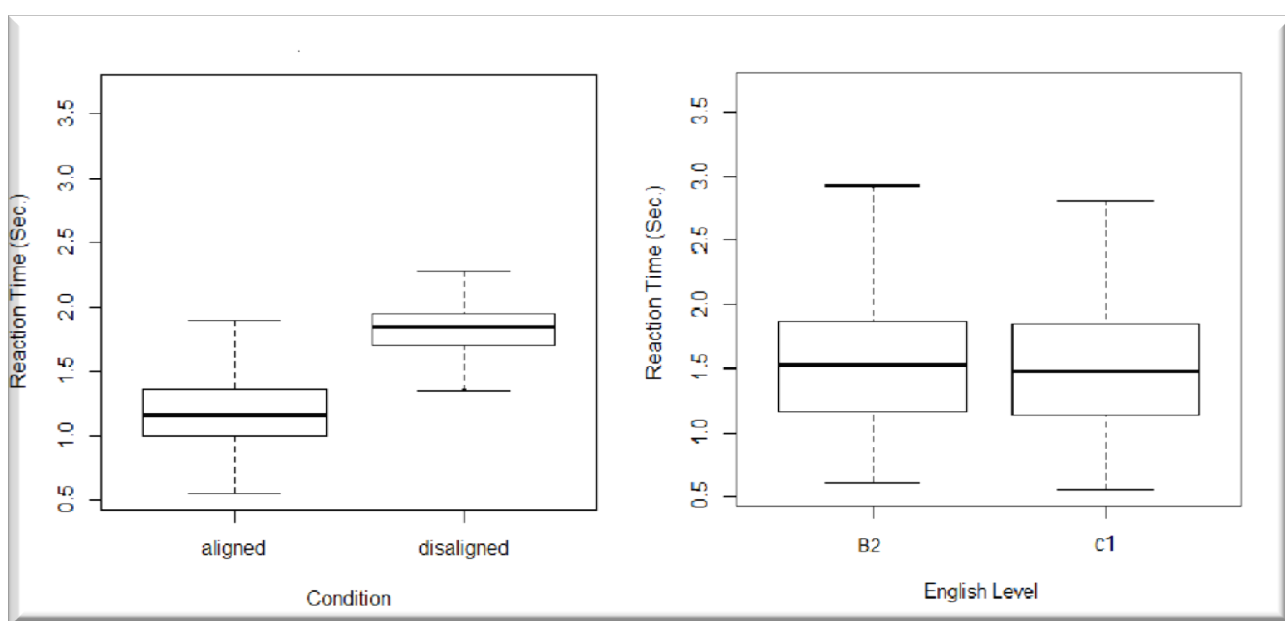
### 3.7 Results

The findings reported in this section are in line with the experimental hypothesis. Firstly, we investigated how the participants in the two conditions differed in terms of reaction time when they watched the misaligned and the aligned videos. In the videos in which the gestures were temporally aligned with their semantic referent, the participants were 680 msec. faster in responding with respect their answers to the videos that were misaligned (Est=0.680, S.E.=0.04, t value=16.17). The difference between the two experimental conditions (aligned vs misaligned) was significant (chisq=54.45, df=2,  $p < 0.001$ ) according to a likelihood ratio test. [As reported by Batista *et al.* (2013), the level of significance is show by the P value that “*is a continuous measure of evidence, but in practice it is typically*

*trichotomized approximately into highly significant, marginally significant, and not statistically significant;” the conventional levels corresponding are:  $p \leq 0.01$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ,  $p > 0.01$ . (p.34).]*

Secondly, we analyzed whether the level of English of the participants might have an effect on the reaction time. However, the difference in reaction time between the B2 and C1 level participants was not significant (Est=0.06, S.E.= 0.04, t value=1.35, chisq=2.26, df=2,  $p=0.32$ ).

Finally, we compared the interaction between English level (B2/C1) and condition (aligned/misaligned). The data showed that there was no interaction between the two-independent variables (Est=0.03, S.E.= 0.04, t value=0.67, chisq=0.46, df=1, p value=0.5). The reaction times in seconds by gesture condition and English level are shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 5 Reaction times in seconds by gesture condition (gesture aligned/misaligned with semantic target) and level of English according to CEFR.**

### 3.8 Discussion and conclusions

In the previous sections we have described the results of our experiment. Overall, the present results confirm the hypothesis that aligning gesture and speech can have an important effectiveness in the speaker's intelligibility. Furthermore, as Dyer (2016) argued, it can reinforce or compromise the message.

Focusing on the first RQ, we can sustain that the mismatch between gesture and speech, created by L2 speakers, impacts on the intelligibility of the message. As reported in Alibali and Meadow (2013), it is obvious that gestures play an essential role in listener's comprehension. In particular, we tested whether the listeners react more slowly to speech that is misaligned than aligned with gesture. This finding confirms how the conscious and strategic use of gestures can determine the effectiveness for a speaker.

Concerning our second RQ, this experiment shows that, when gestures and speech are misaligned, participants process speech and gesture more slowly, as we expected in our initial assumption. We found that the mismatch affected the participants' intelligibility. Specifically, we noted a significant comprehension delay when we compared the reaction times of the group looking at the videos showing alignment and those of the group looking at the videos showing misalignment. However, in terms of accuracy, we did not find a significant difference between the two groups. In fact, most participants clicked on the correct image in both conditions, only 7 participants answered the questions incorrectly.

Also, regarding the different English level of the participants, there was no relevant result to report. That is, the different proficiency in the knowledge of English did not affect the participants' reaction time, and so it does not seem to be an important component for intelligibility.

What is the main conclusion we can draw from our experiment? In sum, as argued by McNeill (1994), gesture and speech can be considered as 2 parts of a single system of meaning. This research tested the hypothesis that gesture anticipation with respect to speech hinders intelligibility –what we noticed also in less fluent English L2 speakers.

Future studies will focus on how pauses and lack of fluency can increase the misalignment, providing data on the accuracy of the answers given by participants.

### 3.9 Implications for public speaking

If the main aim for a great speaker is to communicate effectively and successfully, the present experiment has fundamental implications for public speaking because it focuses on one of the fundamental aspects that concerns public speaking: the use of gestures.

This research fills the gap of scientific studies relating to the effectiveness of public speaking. We believe that the great speaker is someone who knows how to govern consciously both the use of verbal communication, words and voice, and of non-verbal communication, body and gestures.



In fact, there are relatively few experimental studies that provide evidence for the communicative functions of gestures in public speaking. Ozyurek (2002), for instance, reported several studies that tried to research the communicative function of gestures; specifically, those studies aimed to show whether gestures are intentionally or unintentionally related to production and intelligibility. The findings of her experiments demonstrated the communicative use of gestures and their relationship with the different changes of addresses, but there is no direct implication to public speaking. Furthermore, as reported in the introduction, there are several studies aimed to research the implication of gestures and speech for L1 speakers.

However, a lot of attention has recently been paid to L2 learners and speakers in particular for what concerns interactive communication, as noted by Boyd *et al.* (2017). Zanola (2016) also observed that there is a strong need to familiarize speakers with the impact of good public speaking skills in business communication in English.

For these reasons, the results of the experiment above also have implications for the current role of public speaking. Specifically, the results show that the correct use of aligned gestures has a vital importance for the audience; in fact, it can help or hinder the listener's intelligibility.

Moreover, especially considering the demand to communicating using English as a lingua franca and learning to control and to utilize properly gestures and speech, the experiment demonstrates that the difficulties present in a L2 context can have essential consequences in public speaking.

To summarize, the research proves that the use of gestures in public speaking is a fundamental factor and can regulate the effectiveness of the message communicated by the speaker, especially when the speech is given by a non-native speaker.

## Conclusions

The conclusions of this work reflect the expectations: public speaking can have an essential impact in people's daily life.

This thesis aimed to investigate communication focused on one of its most ancient function: the ability to speak in public.

In order to do so, public speaking has been studied starting from the past, with reference to the ancient Greek, to the present time, analyzing the current context through the advent of the English language as a lingua franca, and the role of public speaking in the educational system.

As a result, it is possible to understand that, as a consequence of the relevant changes occurred in the last two decades, there is an increased interest towards the ability to communicate effectively.

Gocci (2004) observed how language constitutes the greatest feat of human beings, by making a world in which it is possible to communicate with others through words and signs. In this respect, this thesis showed how a proper use of strategies in communication seems to have a great significance for the business world and for relationships.

Regarding this, the strategical functions that constitute a great speaker were outlined, reporting theoretical aspects, such as the attitude to govern the different situations and environments, and the practical aspects, that concern the verbal and non-verbal factors to follow in order to be inspiring and powerful. Moreover, literature was reviewed to shed light on research that has been conducted in the same area to validate this work and to base on what has already been done.

Furthermore, this thesis focused on one of the fundamental factors of public speaking: the use of gestures. Particularly, the relationship between gestures and speech is discussed in order to explain the crucial connection with public speaking and the communicative role of gestures.

Two questions were addressed: “is there a method to get evidence that public speaking has a positive impact on people’s life? Which consequence for a speaker does a proper use of gestures have?”

Two studies were conducted to answer these two questions.

The findings have revealed important implications for public speaking. First of all, public speaking seems to be an aid to develop not only communicative skills for a professional life, but also to improve the everyday’s relationship. In the first study, the comparison between more and less competent communicators has emphasized the opportunities that a course aimed at improving communication skills creates; moreover, the survey has highlighted several commonalities between the expectations of the participants in the survey and the experience acquired through the course by the competent group.

The second point regards the fact that the proper use of gestures and speech is essential for speakers’ intelligibility, especially for L2 speakers. The results of the second experiment show that the misalignment of gestures and speech, which often occurs in L2, is detrimental to the speaker’s intelligibility and so affects communication. A large number of studies have reported the role that gestures have in L1, but with the expanding globalization the need to communicate using English has increased and so it is important to understand the dynamics of L2 communication.

To summarize, the *medium* through which people communicate can change, and certainly changes have occurred during history, but the power of what is communicated depends on how humans communicate with verbal and non-verbal language.

This work emphasized how many factors contribute to distinguishing a good speaker from a great speaker.

In today's job market, learning to speak in public means discovering a new way to approach different contexts and circumstances. Specifically, learning to recognize and control the relation between speech and gestures means to be aware of how verbal and non-verbal language can determinate the effectiveness of communication between individuals in different settings.



## References

Abidin, Z., M., Yee, M., K. (2014). The Use of Public Speaking in Motivating ESL Learners to Overcome Speech Anxiety. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL)*. Volume 2, Issue 11. pp. 127-135. [<https://www.arcjournals.org/pdfs/ijSELL/v2-i11/16.pdf>].

Alibali, M.W., Breckinridge, R., Kelly, D. S. (2017). *Why gesture? How the Hands Function in Speaking, Thinking and Communicating*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Alibali, M. W., Meadow, G.S. (2013). Gesture's role in Speaking, Learning, and Creating Language. *Annual Reviews of Psychology*. pp. 257-283. [<https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev-psych-113011-143802>].

Al Moubayed, S., Beskow, J., Granström, B., House, D. (2010). Audio-Visual Prosody: Perception, Detection, and Synthesis of Prominence. Toward Autonomous, Adaptive, and Context-Aware Multimodal Interfaces: *Theoretical and Practical Issues*. [[https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-642-18184-9\\_6](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-642-18184-9_6)].

Astutik, Y. (2017). International Strategies in Public Speaking Class Used by Low Learners. *JEES (Journal of English Educators Society)*, 2(2). 65-74. [<http://ojs.umsida.ac.id/index.php/jees/article/view/964/711>].

Bambaeeroo, F., Shokrpour, N. (2017) The impact of the teachers' non-verbal communication on success in teaching. *Journal of Advances in Medical Education & Professionalism*. 5(2):51-59. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5346168/>].

Batista, M., Filho Figueiredo, B., D., Manoel, L., Marino, G., J., Paranhos, R., Rocha, C., E., Da Silva jr, J.,A., Santos, D.,W. (2013). When is Statistical Significance not Significant? *Brazilian Political Science Review*. 7(1). pp. 31-55. [<http://www.scielo.br/pdf/bpsr/v7n1/02.pdf>].

Bauman, Z. (2006). *Amore Liquido*. Bari: Editori Laterza

Beard, C., Wilson, P.J. (2013). *Experimental learning*. London: Ashford Color Press Ltd.

Beattie, G., Holler, J., Shovelton, H. (2009). Do Iconic Hand Gestures Really Contribute to the Communication of Semantic Information in a Face-to-Face Context? *J. Nonverbal Behav* 33. pp. 73-88. [<http://pubman.mpdl.mpg.de/pubman/item/escidoc:541560:3/component/escidoc:541644/holler>].

Benn, M. *Why Don't Schools Focus on Public Speaking? Discuss*. The Guardian. Available in: [<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/nov/08/why-dont-schools-focus-on-public-speaking-campaign>]. (2016, Accessed on May 29<sup>th</sup> 2018).

Bergmann, C., Sprenger, S., A., Schmid, M., S. (2015). The impact of language co-activation on L1 and L2 speech fluency. *Acta Psychologica*. Volume 161. pp. 25-35. [<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001691815300305>].

Beukeboom, C., J. (2009). When words feel right: How affective expressions of listeners change a speaker's language use. *European Journal of Social Psychology*. 39(5): pp. 747-756. [<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/ejsp.572>].

Boonkit, K. (2010). Enhancing the development of speaking skills for non-native speakers of English. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 2(2). 1305-1309. [<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042810002314>].

Boyd, E., Brezina, V., Gablasova, D., Mcenery, T. (2017). Epistemic stance in spoken L2 English: the effect of task and speaker style. *Applied Linguistics*. Volume 38, Issue 5. pp. 613-637. [<https://academic.oup.com/applij/article/38/5/613/2952204>].

Brantley, W., Liu, L., O., Sparks, J., R., Song, Y. (2014). Assessing Written Communication in Higher Education: Review and Recommendations for Next-Generation Assessment. *Wiley Online Library*. Volume 2014, Issue 2. pp. 1-52. [<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/ets2.12035>].

Briz, E., Orejudo, S., Turrado, F.T. (2012). Results of a Program to Reduce the Fear of Speaking in Public and to Improve Self-Efficacy in First Year College Students. *Estudio Sobre Educación*. Volume 22. pp. 199-217. [<https://www.unav.edu/publicaciones/revistas/index.php/estudios-sobre-educacion/article/viewFile/2079/1944>].



Bruce, J. *Why Soft Skills Matter and the Top 3 You Need*. Forbes. Available in: [<https://www.forbes.com/sites/janbruce/2017/03/10/why-soft-skills-matter-and-the-top-3-you-need/> - 6c11e61a76f3]. (2017, Accessed on June 16<sup>th</sup> 2018).

Burianová, H., Marstaller, L. (2014). The multisensory perception of co-speech gestures – A review and meta-analysis of neuroimaging studies. *Journal of Neurolinguistics*. 30. 69–77. [<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0911604414000281>].

Busà, M.G. (2010). Sounding natural: improving oral presentation skills. *Language Value*, 2 (1), 51-67. Jaume I University ePress: Castelló, Spain. [<http://www.languagevalue.uji.es/index.php/languagevalue/article/view/42>].

Cairns, D. (2005). *Body Language in the Greek and Roman Worlds*. Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales.

Campbell, R., Messing, L., S. (1999). Gesture, Speech, and Sign. In Feyereisen, P. (a cura di) *Neuropsychology of Communicative Movements*. (pp.3-25). New York: Oxford University Press.

Carney, R., D., Cuddy, A., J., C., Yap, A., J. (2010). Power Posing: Brief Nonverbal Displays Affect Neuroendocrine Levels and Risk Tolerance. *Association for Psychological Science* (APS). [[http://www.people.hbs.edu/acuddy/in\\_press\\_carney\\_cuddy\\_yap\\_psych\\_science.pdf](http://www.people.hbs.edu/acuddy/in_press_carney_cuddy_yap_psych_science.pdf)].

Cavazza, N. (2009). *Comunicazione e Persuasione*. Bologna: il Mulino.

Cavicchio, F., Kita, S. (2013). Bilinguals Switch Gesture Production Parameters when they Switch Languages. In *Proceedings Tilburg Gesture Research Meeting (TIGeR)* 2013. [[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236899431\\_Bilinguals\\_Switch\\_Gesture\\_Production\\_Parameters\\_when\\_they\\_Switch\\_Languages](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236899431_Bilinguals_Switch_Gesture_Production_Parameters_when_they_Switch_Languages)].

Crystal, D. (2004). *The Language Revolution*. Malden (MA): Polity Press LTD.

Cohen, S., D. *Tips on public speaking: eliminating the dreaded “Um.”* Harvard Extension School. Available in: [<https://www.extension.harvard.edu/inside-extension/tips-public-speaking-eliminating-dreaded-um>]. (Accessed on February 9<sup>th</sup> 2018).

Denes, P., B., Pinson, N., E. (1993). *The Speech Chain. The Physics and Biology of Spoken Language*. New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.

Donovan, J. (2014). *Metodo TED para hablar en público*. Barcelona: Editorial planeta S.A.

Dyer, J. (2017). Delivering an Effective Speech1. *UF University of Florida*. pp.1-5.  
[[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237517504\\_Delivering\\_an\\_Effective\\_Speech1](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237517504_Delivering_an_Effective_Speech1)].

Eadie, W., F. (2009). 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communication: a reference handbook. In Sherwin, P. (a cura di) *Competent and Incompetent Communication*. (pp. 444-453). London: Sage Publication LTD.

Efron, D. (1941). *Gesture and Environment*. New York: Kings Crown Press.

Eire, A.L. (2000). *Esencia y objeto de la retórica*. Salamanca: Europa Artes Graficas.

Francis, C. (2009). *Wisdom well said*. El prado: Levine Mesa Press.

Fry, H., Ketteridge, S., Marshall, S. (2009). *A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*. New York: Routledge.

Fujishin, R. (2016). *The Natural Speaker*. New York: Routledge.

Galvin, C., Power, M., R. (1997). The culture of speeches: Public speaking across cultures. *Culture Mandala: The Bulletin of the Centre for East-West Cultural and Economic Studies*: Vol. 2: Iss. 2, Article 2.  
[<https://epublications.bond.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1032&context=cm>].

Garavelli, B.M. (2000). *Manual de retórica*. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra.

Gocci, G. (2004). *Comunicazione e Cambiamento*. Trieste: Edizioni Goliardiche.

Goman, C.,K. (2011). *The Silent Language of Leaders*. San Francisco: A Wiley Imprint.

Graziano M, Gullberg M. (2018). When Speech Stops, Gesture Stops: Evidence From Developmental and Crosslinguistic Comparisons. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 9:879. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5992892/>].

Griffin, C.L. (2012). *Invitation to public speaking*. Boston: Wadsworth.

Gullberg, M. (1998). Gesture as a Communication Strategy in Second Language Discourse: A Study of Learners of French and Swedish. *Lund Press University*. [<http://portal.research.lu.se/ws/files/4825091/3912717.pdf>].

Hargie, O. (2016) The importance of communication for organisational effectiveness. In Lobo, F. (ed.) *Psicologia do Trabalho e das Organizações*. Braga, Portugal: Axioma. pp. 15-32. [[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304626602\\_The\\_Importance\\_of\\_Communication\\_for\\_Organisational\\_Effectiveness](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304626602_The_Importance_of_Communication_for_Organisational_Effectiveness)].

*Ideas Reinvented*. The Economist. Available in: [<https://www.economist.com/business/2014/03/20/ideas-reinvented>]. (2014, Accessed on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2018).

Illich, I. (2009). *La perdita dei sensi*. Firenze: Libreria Editrice Fiorentina.

Jain, N. *Rethinking Education: Why our Education System is Ripe for Disruption*. Forbes. Available in: [<https://www.forbes.com/sites/naveenjain/2013/03/24/disrupting-education/7c0cc6e723ef>]. (2013, Accessed on March 19<sup>th</sup> 2018).

Keith, W.M., Lundberg, O., C. (2015). *Public Speaking. Choices and Responsibility*. Boston: Cengage Learning.

Kendon, A. (1997). Do gestures communicate? A review. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*. 27(3), pp. 175-200. [[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/243613099\\_Do\\_Gestures\\_Communicate\\_A\\_Review](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/243613099_Do_Gestures_Communicate_A_Review)].

Kita, S. (2009). Cross-cultural variation of speech-accompanying gesture: A review. *Language and Cognitive Processes*, 24:2, 145-167, DOI: [[10.1080/01690960802586188](https://doi.org/10.1080/01690960802586188)].

Kleidon, M., Peter, M., Treffner, P. (2008). Gestures and Phases: The Dynamics of Speech-Hand Communication. *Ecological Psychology*. 20:32, 64. [<http://metaffordance.com/papers/Treffner-gestures-EcologicalPsychology.pdf>].

Krauss, M., R. (1998). Why Do We Gesture When We Speak? *Current Directions in Psychological Science*. 7(2). pp. 54-56. [<http://www.columbia.edu/~rmk7/PDF/CD.pdf>].

Lakoff, G., Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lucero, C., Zaharchuk, H., Casasanto, D. (2014). Beat gestures facilitate speech production. In Bello, P., Guarini, M., Scassellati (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*. pp.898-903. Austin, TX. [[http://casasanto.com/chelucero/papers/LuceroZaharchuk&Casasanto\\_CogSci\\_2014.pdf](http://casasanto.com/chelucero/papers/LuceroZaharchuk&Casasanto_CogSci_2014.pdf)].

*Managing Across Distance in today's Economic Climate: The Value of Face-to-Face Communication*. Harvard Business Review. Available in: [[https://hbr.org/resources/pdfs/comm/british-airways/hbras\\_ba\\_report\\_web.pdf](https://hbr.org/resources/pdfs/comm/british-airways/hbras_ba_report_web.pdf)]. (2016, Accessed on April 7<sup>th</sup> 2018).

Mancera, C.A. (1998). *Estudios de comunicación no verbal*. Madrid: Editorial Edinumen.

McLuhan, M. (1964). *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man*. London: The MIT Press.

McNeill, D. (2005). *Gesture and Thought*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

McNeill, D., McCullough, J. (1994). Communicative Effects of Speech-Mismatched Gestures. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*. 27. pp. 223-237. [[https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327973rlsi2703\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327973rlsi2703_4)].

Meadow, G., S., Iverson, M., J. (1997). What's Communication Got to Do with It? Gesture in Children Blind from Birth. *American Psychological Association*. Volume 33. pp. 453-467. [[https://goldin-meadow-lab.uchicago.edu/sites/goldin-meadow-lab.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/PDFs/1997\\_Iverson\\_GM.pdf](https://goldin-meadow-lab.uchicago.edu/sites/goldin-meadow-lab.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/PDFs/1997_Iverson_GM.pdf)].

Meadow, G., S., Novack, M. (2015). Learning from Gesture: How our Hands Change our Minds. *Educational Psychology Review*. 27(3). pp. 405-412. [[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281779625\\_Learning\\_from\\_Gesture\\_How\\_Our\\_Hands\\_Change\\_Our\\_Minds](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281779625_Learning_from_Gesture_How_Our_Hands_Change_Our_Minds)].

Meany, J., Shuster, K. (2015). *Speak up! Debate and Public Speaking in High School*. New York: International Debate Education Association.

Mercer, N., Ahmed, A., Warwick, P. *We Should be Teaching Kids Public Speaking at School*. The Washington Post. Available in: [[https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2014/10/04/we-should-be-teaching-kids-public-speaking-in-school/?utm\\_term=.d4457260b8ae](https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2014/10/04/we-should-be-teaching-kids-public-speaking-in-school/?utm_term=.d4457260b8ae)]. (2014, Accessed on March 30<sup>th</sup> 2018)

Morales, J.C. (2011). *Guía para hablar en público*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial S.A.

Mueck, F. (2013). *PLUSPLUS Patterns for Better Communication*. Germany: Amazon Distribution GmbH.

Munro, M. J. (2011). Intelligibility: Buzzword or buzzworthy? In. J. Levis & K. LeVelle (Eds.). *Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching Conference*, Sept. 2010. (pp. 7-16), Ames, IA: Iowa State University.

Narayanan, S., Yang, Z. (2014). Analysis of Emotional Effects on Speech-Body Gesture Interplay. *Research Journal of Library Sciences* (ISCA). pp. 1934-1928. [<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/afbf/f3e5d8c5b8e4d7a68ebda1b9866fc1f1e369.pdf>].

Neil, S. (2010). *The Art of Public Speaking. An Exposition of the Principles of Oratory*. (London: Kessinger Publishing.

Nolen, R. (2016). *Body Language*. Wroclaw: Poland Sp. Z o. o.

Ozyurek, A. (2002). Do speakers design their co-speech gestures for their addressees? The effects of addressee location on representational gestures. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 46(4), pp. 688-704. doi:[[10.1006/jmla.2001.2826](https://doi.org/10.1006/jmla.2001.2826)].

Parejo, J. (1995). *Comunicación no verbal y educación. El cuerpo y la escuela*. Barcelona: Ediciones Paidós Ibérica, S.A.

Pease, A., Pease, B. (2006). *The Definitive Book of Body Language*. New York: Bantam Delly.

Pierce, W., J. (2007). PsychoPy-Psychophysics software in Python. *Journal of Neuroscience Methods*. Volume 162. Issues 1-2. pp. 8-13.

[\[https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0165027006005772?via%3Dihub\]](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0165027006005772?via%3Dihub).

Poggi, I. (2008). Iconicity in different type of gestures. *John Benjamins Publishing Company*. pp.45-63. [\[https://doi.org/10.1075/gest.8.1.05pog\]](https://doi.org/10.1075/gest.8.1.05pog).

Raja, F. (2017). Anxiety Level in Students of Public Speaking: Causes and Remedies. *Journal of Education and Education Development*. [\[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317357079](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317357079) Anxiety Level in Students of Public Speaking Causes and Remedies *Journal of Education and Educational Development*].

Remilliard, V., Williams, K. (2016). *Human Communication Across Cultures*. Sheffield: Equinox Publishing Ltd.

Rosa, A. (2013). *Hablar bien en publico es posible, si sabes cómo*. Barcelona: Impreso en Limpergraf S.L.

Santos, A., Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. (2017). Attitudes and Anxieties of Business and Education Students towards English: some data from the Basque Country. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 1-17. Doi:[\[10.1080/07908318.2017.1350189\]](https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2017.1350189).

Savaşçı, M. (2014). Why are some Students Reluctant to use L2 EFL Speaking Classes? An Action Research at Tertiary Level. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Volume 116. Pp. 2682-2686. [\[https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042814006521\]](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042814006521).

*Schools are Finally Teaching what Kids Need to be Successful in Life*. Quartz. Available in: [\[https://qz.com/656900/schools-are-finally-teaching-what-kids-need-to-be-successful-in-life/\]](https://qz.com/656900/schools-are-finally-teaching-what-kids-need-to-be-successful-in-life/). (2016, Accessed on March 19th 2018).

Schneider, J., Börner, D., Peter, V., R., Specht, M. (2015). Presentation Trainer, your Public Speaking Multimodal Coach. *ACM on International Conference on Multimodal Interaction*. pp. 539-546. [\[https://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=2830603\]](https://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=2830603).

*Successful Speaking for Oregon Students*. Available in: [\[https://www.mesd.k12.or.us/cms/lib/OR01915807/Centricity/Domain/35/SSOS.pdf\]](https://www.mesd.k12.or.us/cms/lib/OR01915807/Centricity/Domain/35/SSOS.pdf). (Accessed on April 2nd 2018).

The Editors. (2018). *Universities Should Encourage Scientists to Speak out about Public Issues*. Scientific American. Available in: [<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/universities-should-encourage-scientists-to-speak-out-about-public-issues/>].

Van Edwards, V. (2017). *You are contagious*. Youtube video. Posted by “TEDx talks”. June 27<sup>th</sup> 2017. [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cef35Fk7YD8>].

Van Eemeren, F.H., Garssen, B. (2009). *Pondering on problems of argumentation*. Amsterdam: Springer Science + Business Media B.V.

Vieira, V., G. (2017). Lexical Access in L2 Speech Production: A Controlled Serial Search Task. *Ilha do Desterro*. 70(3). pp. 245-264. [[http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S2175-80262017000300245&script=sci\\_abstract](http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S2175-80262017000300245&script=sci_abstract)].

Viganò, E., D. (2003). *I Sentieri della Comunicazione. Storie e Teorie*. Soveria Mannelli (CZ): Rubbettino Editore.

Voltattorni, C. *Da Cicerone al “public speaking.” L’oratoria entra nelle scuole d’Italia*. Il Corriere della Sera. Available in: [[https://www.corriere.it/scuola/secondaria/16\\_marzo\\_03/public-speaking-entra-scuole-d-italia-a8b1fd54-e16c-11e5-86bb-b40835b4a5ca.shtml](https://www.corriere.it/scuola/secondaria/16_marzo_03/public-speaking-entra-scuole-d-italia-a8b1fd54-e16c-11e5-86bb-b40835b4a5ca.shtml)]. (2016, Accessed on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018).

Wallwork, A. (2010). *English for presentations at Internationals Conferences*. New York: Springer Science + Business Media.

Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J., H., Jackson, D., J. (1971). *Pragmatica della Comunicazione Umana*. Roma: Astrolabio Ubaldini.

Yammiyavar, P., Clemmensen, T., & Kumar, J. (2008). Influence of cultural background on non-verbal communication in a usability testing situation. *International Journal of Design*, 2(2), 31-40. [[http://ijdesign.org/index.php/IJDesign/article/view/313/164 - 3](http://ijdesign.org/index.php/IJDesign/article/view/313/164-3)].

Yuan, C., Gonzales-Fuente, S., Balls, F., Prieto, P. (2018). Observing Pitch Gestures Favors the Learning of Spanish Intonation by Mandarin Speakers. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*. pp.1-28. [<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/studies-in-second-language-acquisition/article/observing-pitch-gestures-favors-the-learning-of-spanish-intonation-by-mandarin-speakers/D04E84DB1C6786E8105917338A58F7C1>].

Zanola, A. (2016). Business Communication and Public Speaking in the ESP Domain: Some Considerations. *Linguistics and Literature Studies*. 4(5). pp. 331-335. [<http://www.hrpub.org/download/20160730/LLS3-19306495.pdf>].



# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Survey delivered to Toastmaster's participants



1. **How long have you been you a Toastmaster's member?**
  - Less than six months
  - More than six months
  - One year
  - More than two years
2. **What made you decide to become a member?**
  - My job
  - Passion for Public Speaking
  - I needed to increase my self-confidence
  - For me it is a hobby
  - Other.....
3. **Are you?**
  - Female
  - Male
  - I prefer not say
4. **How old are you?**
  - Between 20 and 30
  - Between 30 and 40
  - Between 40 and 50
  - More than 50
5. **How do you evaluate your ability as a communicator before becoming a member?**
  - Insufficient
  - Quite good
  - Good
  - Great
6. **Which were your fears before becoming a member? (Maximum two answers):**
  - Speaking in front of a person
  - Speaking in front of lots of people
  - Communicating my ideas
  - Other people's judgment

- Other.....
- 7. Which part of yourself did you want to improve before becoming a member? (More than one answer if you want):**
- Relationships
  - Fears
  - Self-confidence
  - Language skills
  - Leadership skills
  - Other.....
- 8. How did you feel before becoming a Toastmaster in terms of self-confidence? (More than one answer if you want):**
- Scared
  - Shy
  - Complacent
  - Confident
  - Other.....
- 9. How do you consider your communication skills now that you are a Toastmaster?**
- Still insufficient
  - Good enough
  - Good
  - Great
- 10. Do you feel any fears in terms of Public Speaking now that you are a Toastmaster?**
- Yes
  - A little bit, there is always some fears
  - No, I feel comfortable
- 11. Which types of skills do you have to improve now that you are a Toastmaster?**
- Voice control
  - Eye gaze
  - Use of body and gestures
  - Language
  - Other.....
- 12. How do you feel in terms of self-confidence now that you are a Toastmaster? (Choose more than one answer if you want)**
- So and so
  - Still Shy
  - Confident
  - Secure
- 13. Do you think that Toastmaster has affected you positively in your emotional life?**
- Yes
  - No

**14. If you answered YES, in which terms? (choose more than one answer if you want)**

- I feel more secure of myself
- I feel that I have improved my communication skills with people
- I felt that I can better manage my emotions
- I know what to say and how to say it
- Other.....

**15. If you answered NO, in which terms? (More than one answers if you want)?**

- I do not think that Toastmaster is concerned with emotions
- Nothing has changed
- I never had problems in managing emotions
- Other.....

**16. Do you think that Toastmaster has affected you positively in your work life?**

- Yes
- No

**17. If you answered YES, in which terms? (More than one answer if you want)**

- I feel more secure of myself
- I have improved my ability to communicate with people
- I feel that I have improved my ability to manage emotions
- I know what to say and how to say it

**18. If you answered NO, in which terms? (More than one answers if you want)?**

- I do not think that Toastmasters is related to my job
- Nothing has changed
- I have never had problems to managing my communication at work
- I prefer to separate Toastmasters and my job

**19. Do you think that in 2018 it could be useful for students to learn how to speak in public at school?**

- No
- I had never thought about it
- In my country it is taught
- Yes

**20. Would you recommend to your son/daughter, grandchild, brothers/sisters to attend a Public Speaking laboratory if there was a chance at school?**

- No
- Yes

**21. If you answered YES, why? (More than one answer if you want)**

- I think it could help people to grow up as individuals
- I think that, nowadays, a communication awareness is fundamental

- It could overcome several weakness problems that are present in young generations
  - It could solve lots of problems related to the future job
- 22. If you answered NO, why? (More than one answers if you want)?**
- Students can attend more useful laboratories
  - They would be too young to understand the real value of public speaking
  - I do not believe that young people can have any problems to speak in public
  - They can learn this ability when they start to work
- 23. Do you agree that a Public Speaking course should be present in every University?**
- Yes
  - No
- 24. Do you think that shyness, fear of speaking, and little self confidence can contribute to losing opportunities during people's life?**
- No
  - Opportunities are always around us
  - Yes
- 25. Do you think that if you could have attended a Public Speaking course already at school, you would have used more opportunities in your life?**
- No
  - I had never thought about it
  - Nobody can say it
  - Yes
- 26. Do you agree with this phrase: "Better public speaking means better life"?**
- No
  - The question is not clear
  - I think so
  - Absolutely yes
- 27. OPTIONAL:** If you want you can leave here some comments or suggestion based on the survey. Any thing that could be useful for this research.

## Appendix 2: Survey delivered to Student's participants



1. **In which faculty do you study?**
  - Faculty of Engineering
  - Faculty of Arts
  - Faculty of Pharmacy
  - Other.....
2. **For which degree do you study?**
  - English studies
  - Philology
  - Translation and interpreting
  - History
  - Geography and land management
  - Art history
  - Basque studies
  - Other.....
3. **Which year are you attending:**
  - First
  - Second
  - Third
  - Fourth
  - Other.....
4. **Which high school did you attend before entering University?**
  - Humanistic
  - Scientific
  - Other.....
5. **Did this high school have more written or oral exams?**
  - Written
  - More written than oral
  - More oral than written
  - Oral
6. **How old are you?**
  - Between 18 and 20
  - Between 21 and 23
  - More than 23
7. **Are you?**
  - Female

- Male
- I prefer not to say
- 8. Does your University have more written or oral exams?**
- Written
- More written than oral
- More oral than written
- Oral
- 9. Which type of exams makes you feel more comfortable?**
- Written
- Oral
- In my country all exams are written
- 10. If you choose: written, why? (choose more answers if you want)**
- I have more time to think about the answers
- I don't like to speak in front of others
- I just prefer to write
- I am not used to giving oral exams
- Other.....
- 11. If you choose oral, why? (Choose more answers if you want)**
- I feel more comfortable speaking
- I like speaking in front of others
- I can achieve better grades
- I can improvise if I do not know the answer
- Other.....
- 12. When you have to make a presentation in front of the class, what scares you most?**
- Others' judgment
- The fear to say something wrong/that something goes wrong
- Do not know how to control my voice and my body
- Nothing, I feel good on the stage
- Other.....
- 13. Do you think that it is possible to overcome shyness and fears in public speaking?**
- Yes
- I do not care
- No
  
- 14. What do you think can help you to overcome the anxiety to speaking in public?**
- Theater
- Public speaking/debate course
- Nothing, it is my character
- Work

- 15. Do you think that improving your communication ability in front of others could help you to improve your self-confidence in everyday life?**
- Yes
  - I do not know
  - No
- 16. Do you think that to know how to speak in public successfully is something important in the professional world?**
- Yes
  - There are other things that are more important
  - No
- 17. Do you think that to know how to speak in public successfully is something important in the affect relationship?**
- Yes
  - There are other things that are more important
  - No
- 18. Do you think that good public speaking skills could help you to live better the University context?**
- No
  - Public speaking and social life are not connected
  - Si
- 19. Do you think that if during high school you had attended a public speaking course today you would have no problems speaking in public?**
- Yes
  - Probably not, who can say it!
  - No
- 20. If you could go back and there was a public speaking laboratory, do you think you would like to attend it?**
- Yes
  - In my high school there was a public speaking laboratory
  - No
- 21. If you answered yes, why? (Choose more than one answer if you want)**
- It could help me to overcome many fears
  - It is fundamental in the professional world
  - It could help me to increase my self-confidence
  - I am interested in the world of communication
- 22. If you answered no, why? (Choose more than one answer if you want)**
- There are more important labs to attend
  - I am not interested in Public Speaking
  - I can improve my skills when I will start to work
  - I do not think it is important
- 23. Have you ever attended a Public Speaking class/course?**
- No
  - Yes

**24. Do you think that Professors should know how to speak well in public?**

- No
- I have never thought about it
- Probably yes, but I do not think it is essential
- Yes

**25. Do you think that the ability to speak in public can make the difference in terms of how much students learn during lessons?**

- No
- I have never thought about it
- Probably yes, but I do not think it is essential
- Yes

**26. Do you think that the University should teach Professors how to speak in public?**

- Yes
- I have never thought about it
- In my country it is taught
- No

**27. How do you judge your Professor's skills in terms of public speaking?**

- Insufficient
- Someone is good, others are bad
- In general, good
- Very good

**28. Do you agree with this phrase: "Better public speaking means better life"?**

- No
- The question is not clear
- I think so
- Absolutely yes

**29. OPTIONAL:** If you want you can leave here some comments or suggestions based on the survey. Any things that could be useful for this research.



### Appendix 3: Consent Form



## FORMULARIO DE AUTORIZACIÓN

### TRABAJO FIN DE MÁSTER

RESUMEN DEL PROYECTO: Tomar informaciones sobre el Public Speaking para investigar la real eficacia.

Firmando a continuación confirma que:(1) ha leído y entendido la hoja de información, (2) las preguntas acerca de la participación en este estudio han sido satisfactoriamente respondidas, y (3) está tomando parte en este estudio voluntariamente (sin coacción).

.....  
Nombre del participante\*

..... 12/04/2018  
Firma del participante\* Fecha

.....  
.....  
Nombre de la persona que recibe el consentimiento Firma de la persona

### CONFIDENCIALIDAD/ANONIMATO

Todos sus datos serán completamente anónimos. Los datos que aporte en el cuestionario personal sólo servirán al investigador como información para la creación de un perfil lingüístico.

Cuando su participación en el presente estudio termine, todos sus datos serán anonimizados. Desde ese momento no habrá constancia de ningún vínculo entre sus respuestas y sus datos personales (por ejemplo: su nombre, apellidos, correo electrónico, etc.). Después de que sus datos hayan sido anonimizados, puede tomar la decisión de que se descarten y no se incluyan en el estudio. Para

hacer referencia a cualquiera de los participantes se hará uso de pseudónimos, en ningún caso se utilizarán nombres reales.

Usted puede decidir dejar de formar parte en el experimento en cualquier momento. También tiene derecho a solicitar que los datos que haya ofrecido hasta este momento sean descartados y/o destruidos. Tiene derecho a negarse a responder a cualquier pregunta que se le formule. Tiene derecho a preguntar cualquier duda sobre la finalidad del estudio (una vez acabado el estudio, para así no interferir con los resultados).

#### PARA MÁS INFORMACIÓN

Andrea Liotto estará encargado de responder a cualquier pregunta acerca de la investigación. Puede contactar con el a través del siguiente correo electrónico: **[andrea.liotto.1@studenti.unipd.it](mailto:andrea.liotto.1@studenti.unipd.it)**

## Appendix 4: SVO sentences showed to participants in the experiment



### Trial:

- 1) The student plays the piano
- 2) The granny squints her eyes
- 3) The dad stirs the soup

### Aligned:

- 1) The crow takes the cheese
- 2) The fox runs up the tree
- 3) The fox jumps on the cheese
- 4) The man shoots at the fox
- 5) The cheese falls on the ground
- 6) The man picks up the cheese
- 7) The lady knocks at the door
- 8) The bird opens its beak
- 9) The spy looks around the town
- 10) The lady opens the lid
- 11) The lady walks around the block
- 12) The teacher writes a letter
- 13) The boy answers the phone
- 14) The student drinks some water
- 15) The student moves the mouse
- 16) The man turns on the faucet
- 17) The man closes the door
- 18) The fox eats the cheese
- 19) The lady combs her hair

20)The student plays the piano

Filler:

- 1) My dad stares at the window
- 2) The lady reads the book
- 3) The student chews the gum
- 4) The boy nods at the teacher
- 5) My mom doesn't care about it
- 6) The crow sleeps in the cave
- 7) The crow says no to the fox
- 8) The princess looks at the mirror
- 9) The fox scares the chicken
- 10)The crow rests on the branch
- 11)The girl turns to the right
- 12)The boy turns to the left
- 13)The man looks down the stairs
- 14)The lady looks up the stairs
- 15)The girl winks at the boy
- 16)The fox smells at the cheese
- 17)The man bows at the audience
- 18)The cheese looks gross
- 19)The fox smiles at the crow
- 20)The mom looks angry

