

THE RELATIONSHIP OF OBSERVED SPEECH FRIGHT
TO OTHER OBSERVED SPEECH VARIABLES

By

JOACHIM JOSEPH SPEXARTH, O.S.B.

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Bachelor of Arts

Immaculate Conception Seminary

Conception, Missouri

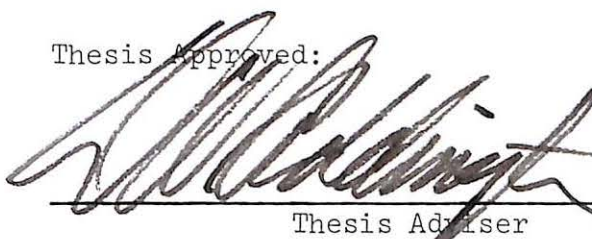
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Thesis Adviser



Fred T. Jewell



Dean of the Graduate College

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Speech fright is recognized as a problem by almost everyone in speech--teacher and student alike. Attesting to the universality of that concern and interest is the wealth of published information focusing on the problem in most basic speech texts, in articles which appear regularly in all three major speech journals, and in theses and dissertations of scholars in the field of speech.

Yet, despite the abundance of information on the subject, our understanding of the phenomenon is unfortunately incomplete. The inability of experimentalists to provide a statistically valid definition of speech fright has no doubt contributed significantly to that lack of understanding.

In a recent article, Clevenger¹ focused attention on the difficulty inherent in defining speech fright when he noted the discrepancy in the relationship of the results of studies predicated on the three traditional measures of speech fright: 1) introspective accounts, in which the speaker describes on an interval scale or in descriptive terms his mental attitudes and bodily experiences before, during, or after

¹Theodore Clevenger, Jr., "A Synthesis of Experimental Research in Stage Fright," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XLV, (1959), pp. 134-145.

the speaking performance; 2) observer ratings, in which an observer subjectively evaluates on an interval scale the degree of speech fright experienced by the speaker or lists descriptive terms which reveal to him the speaker's speech fright; 3) physiological measures, in which the speech fright of the speaker is measured by instruments showing changes in the amount of his perspiration, blood pressure, or pulse rate as a result of the speech performance. Since, as Clevenger reported, the three measures do not appear to be describing the same phenomenon, the validity of each of the measures may be questionable.

Of particular interest are the measures of speech fright obtained by observer ratings. Since the symptoms of fright listed by observers are not always the same or similar to those listed by speakers, and since, even when similar symptoms are listed, the coefficients of the correlations of the measures are unreassuringly low, an investigation of the construct validity of observer measures of speech fright should not seem out of place. Another reason for such an investigation is afforded by Becker.² In his study of scale independence in the rating of speeches, he found that the variety of scales commonly used on a rating form do not reveal independent aspects of the speaking performance but are clustered into three scales--a content analysis scale, a delivery scale, and a language scale.

Hence the following questions might suggest appropriate areas for fruitful research: 1) Is it really possible for judges to evaluate the degree of fear experienced by a speaker? Stated another way, is it not possible that speech fright is a purely personal thing unavailable to

²Samuel L. Becker, "The Rating of Speeches: Scale Independence," Speech Monographs, XXIX, (1962), pp. 38-44.

public observation? 2) Can speakers, with varying degrees of ability, control overt manifestations of fright? 3) Do judges make stereotyped judgments of fear based on cues unrelated to the degree of fear the speakers experience? 4) Do judges confuse symptoms of poor delivery with speech fright symptoms?

Since the reports of several studies suggest that the symptoms of fright listed by observers might be used to describe poor delivery (see pages five and six), an investigation of the relationship of delivery ratings to speech fright ratings seemed appropriate to the writer. The research reported in this thesis addressed that problem.

History of the Problem

Introspective measures of speech fright.

One of the methods by which researchers hoped to clarify the nature of speech fright was by the use of introspective measures. Those researchers asked speakers to list or check elements which they considered symptomatic of any speech fright experienced during the speaking performance.

One such introspective measure was devised by Gilkinson in 1940.³ His purpose in developing such a measure was two-fold:

1. To develop a method of securing reports from students on the emotions which they experience in speaking before their classmates.
2. To study the association and correlation of these reports with data relative to such factors as speech skill,

³Howard Gilkinson, "Social Fears as Reported by Students in College Speech Classes," Speech Monographs, IX (1942) pp. 141-160, and Gilkinson, "A Questionnaire Study of the Causes of Social Fears Among College Speech Students," Speech Monographs, X (1943), pp. 74-83.

academic achievement, age, experience, training, physical status, fears and sensitivities, and morale.⁴

To fulfill those purposes Gilkinson drew up a questionnaire, constructed in an attempt to assess the degree of a speaker's speech fright, which he called the "Personal Report on Confidence As a Speaker" (PRCS). Gilkinson's questionnaire included three different types of measuring forms to be filled in by the speaker after he gave his speech:

1) "Graphic Rating Scales," on which the speaker was to indicate the feelings experienced just before and during the speech; 2) a "Check List of Descriptive Terms," on which the speaker checked terms which described his experiences before and during the speech; and 3) a "List of Descriptive Statements," numbering 104, on which the speaker checked "yes" or "no" or "?" thus indicating his degree of confidence or fear before, during, and after the speech.

Forty-nine percent of the subjects participating in the study checked "rapid heartbeat" on the "Check List of Descriptive Terms" as a major symptom of fear experienced before and during the speech; 41% checked "trembling." Other major symptoms of fear checked by a high percentage of the subjects were "sweating" (25%), "shortness of breath" (23%), "tense throat" (18%), and "dry mouth" (14%). These symptoms appeared frequently on the lists of the subjects who ranked below the PRCS median which is indicative of more than normal speech fright. Few subjects who ranked above the median listed such symptoms.

Ten years later Greenleaf⁵ found that the more severe the speech

⁴ Gilkinson, Speech Monographs, IX, p. 142.

⁵ Floyd I. Greenleaf, "An Exploratory Study of Speech Fright," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII, (1952), pp. 326-330.

fright, as self-rated by 789 freshmen and sophomore students in Communication Skills, the more numerous were the symptoms of speech fright reported by those students. According to Greenleaf, the important symptoms indicative of speech fright were "inability to finish speaking," "inability to produce voice," "weak voice," "inability to look at audience," "sensitivity to audience disapproval," "tremors of knees and hands," and "excessive perspiration."

In short, subjects experiencing speech fright described the fright using physiological terms.

Observer ratings and speech fright.

Researchers have also attempted to investigate and measure speech fright by studying observer ratings of it.

One of the first studies of observer ratings of speech fright was made by Gilkinson and Knowler.⁶ They reported that instructors had rated poor speakers on a "Speech Problem Survey Scale" significantly lower than good speakers in "speech behavior" (fidgety, nervous, listless, not conversational), "vocal behavior" (hesitant, monotonous, poor articulation), and "physical activity" (inanimate, little facial expression, poor posture).

Ten days before the subjects of Gilkinson's study of "Social Fears as Reported by Students in College Speech Classes"⁷ filled in a PRCS, they delivered a three minute extemporaneous speech before their classmates. The classmates and a judging committee rated each speaker for

⁶Howard Gilkinson and Franklin Knowler, "Individual Differences among Students of Speech as Revealed by Psychological Tests," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXVI, (1940), pp. 243-255.

⁷Gilkinson, Speech Monographs, IX, pp. 155-156.

general effectiveness and checked terms and phrases on a privately prepared list which, in their opinion, described the speaker's behavior. The terms which more clearly differentiated the fearful speakers from the confident speakers were "nervous," "listless," "inanimate," "little facial expression," and "little eye contact."

In 1950, Dickens, Gibson, and Prall,⁸ testing the reliability and validity of judges' ratings of speech fright, had forty male student speakers give a one minute serious speech on the topic, "My Most Useful Study Method," before sixty-one judges, consisting of graduate students and instructors in speech, who rated each speaker on a 1-5 equal interval scale for observable degrees of speech fright. After the speech the subject filled out a PRCS questionnaire. The judges' rating scores provided a remarkably reliable tool for measuring overt manifestations of speech fright. Split-half comparison of the sixty-one judges' ratings revealed a correlation coefficient of .98.

In the same year Low⁹ had one hundred students list the speech fright characteristics of their classmates. Those mentioned most were "poor eye contact," "timid voice," "embarrassment," "awkward posture," "body quiver," "nervous hand movements," and "restless shifting of feet."

Also in 1950, Williams¹⁰ studied the symptoms and degrees of

⁸Milton Dickens, Francis Gibson, and Caleb Prall, "An Experimental Study of the Overt Manifestations of Stage Fright," Speech Monographs, XVII, (1950), pp. 37-47.

⁹Gordon M. Low, "The Relation of Psychometric Factors to Stage Fright," (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1950).

¹⁰Norma G. Williams, "An Investigation of Maladjustment to a Speaking Situation Shown by 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th Grade Students in a Secondary School" (unpublished Master's thesis, State University of Iowa, 1950).

maladjustment shown in the speech performance of 298 seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth grade students, each of whom prepared and delivered a five minute informative speech. Williams found that the items she most often checked on a privately prepared check list were those listed as physical or vocal reactions rather than emotional.

Evidently the reliability with which judges are able to list those characteristics which convey to them the existence of speech fright is relatively high. Furthermore the terms which they use to describe severe speech fright are of a sort very similar to those which they might also use to describe poor delivery.

Physiological measures of speech fright.

Studies have also been conducted using physiological instruments to measure degrees of speech fright.

In 1951 Dickens and Parker¹¹ ran a study in which blood pressure and pulse readings were taken on fifty male and fifty female subjects before and after a speaking performance. In one speaking session readings were taken immediately after the subject's speaking performance, and on another occasion readings were taken immediately before the performance. The conclusions drawn from the research were: 1) that the normal pulse and blood pressure rates of over 90% of the subjects increased because of the speaking situation, 2) that a significantly larger number of subjects showed a greater pulse rate immediately before than immediately after speaking, and 3) that differences in blood pressure before and after speaking were not significant.

¹¹ Milton Dickens and William R. Parker, "An Experimental Study of Certain Physiological, Introspective and Rating Scale Techniques for the Measurement of Stage Fright," Speech Monographs, XVIII, (1951), pp. 251-259.

In 1963 Bode and Brutton¹² conducted research that was concerned with the amount of speech fright experienced during repeated oral readings before a real and an assumed audience. Thirty-six subjects who were enrolled in the course Basic Public Speaking, at Southern Illinois University, were given the palmer sweat test during the oral readings. From the resulting data the authors concluded that severity of speech fright decreased significantly during four consecutive oral readings before a real audience of one listener, but that the gain in adaptation to the reading situation was lost significantly during the fifth and sixth readings when a supposed audience of peers or faculty members was thought to be present.

These two representative studies of physiological measures seem to indicate that the speaking experience causes an increase in perspiration, blood pressure, and pulse rate.

Speech fright and speech experience.

Since many of the symptoms of speech fright mentioned above might reveal themselves in a speaker's delivery, and since it may be assumed that delivery technique can be improved by increased practice in public speaking, researchers were prompted to investigate the relationship of speech fright to speech training and experience.

In 1940 Chenoweth¹³ conducted research on the relationship of speech fright to speech training and experience. Freshmen students at

¹²Daniel L. Bode and Eugene J. Brutton, "A Palmer Sweat Investigation of the Effect of Audience Variation upon Stage Fright," Speech Monographs, XXX (1963), pp. 92-96.

¹³Eugene C. Chenoweth, "The Adjustment of College Freshmen to the Speaking Situation," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXVI (1940), pp. 585-588.

the State University of Iowa enrolled in the beginning speech course served as subjects. They were rated on a 1-7 equal interval adjustment scale on two speaking occasions by the instructor of the class. A case-history questionnaire which dealt with environmental background and previous speech training and experience was filled out by 877 of the students who had received identical ratings on the two 1-7 equal interval adjustment scales. It was found that the only consistent and systematic difference between well adjusted and poorly adjusted speakers was that the former had had a continuous and varied record of speaking experience and training from early childhood through high school, whereas the latter lacked that experience and training.

Using a test-retest procedure on the PRCS, Gilkinson,¹⁴ in 1943, discovered that after a period of four months of speech training 117 subjects showed a significant reduction in fear as reflected in their averaged PRCS scores.

Henrickson¹⁵ also conducted a study in 1943, in which he investigated the degree of speech fright present in those persons having had speech training. Two hundred five students in a Fundamentals of Speech course at Iowa State Teachers College rated themselves at the beginning of the course on a 1-10 equal interval scale of confidence and fear in regard to seven types of speaking situations. At the end of the course the same subjects filled in a second and similar scale of confidence and fear indicating their present feelings. The results of that study confirmed the findings of the investigations cited, in that they

¹⁴ Gilkinson, Speech Monographs, IX, p. 155.

¹⁵ Ernest H. Henrickson, "Some Effects on Stage Fright of a Course in Speech," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXIX (1943), pp. 490-491.

indicated that speech training promoted confidence. The average gain of confidence was 6.67 points, whereas the average gain of confidence of fifty students without the speech course was 1.40 points.

In 1950 Low¹⁶ conducted research using 132 speech students. A speech of those students was self-rated and rated by classmates and instructors. The total of these three ratings were averaged for each speaker. Thereupon Low polled those subjects, whose averaged ratings showed extreme speech fright or no speech fright, regarding their past speaking experience. He found that those ranked as having extreme fear had had less speaking experience than those with no fear.

In 1964 Gruner¹⁷ administered a yes-no questionnaire of factors contributing to speech fright to 205 students in a speech course. The highest percentage of students, 89.4%, checked "practice" as that factor which contributed most toward the reduction of speech fright. Of the 205 students, 66.4% checked "enlarged understanding of speech" as the second most important contributing factor.

The 1963 study of Bode and Brutton¹⁸ revealed that continued experience in speaking decreased speech fright but that the gain in adaptation was lost significantly when new factors were introduced into the speaking situation.

These studies on speech training and speech fright clearly indicate that a speaker feels he suffers less from speech fright after training and experience than before, and that observers do not notice as high a degree of fright in trained speakers as they do in those lacking

¹⁶Low, p. 118-119.

¹⁷Charles R. Gruner, "A Further Note on Speech Fright," The Speech Teacher, XIII (1964), pp. 223-224.

training and experience.

These findings could be interpreted to mean that after speech training and experience speakers become more adept in delivery and are subject, therefore, to less speech fright. Furthermore, it could be interpreted to mean that after speech training, audiences become less aware of the fright of the speaker.

Correlation of the three measures.

In using the three measures of speech fright, most researchers appear to have assumed that each measure is in itself a valid measure of speech fright. Some, however, questioned whether all three measures do in fact, measure the same phenomenon.

One study investigating the correlation between introspective measures and observer ratings was conducted by Gilkinson.¹⁹ A correlation coefficient of .39 was found between the averaged committee ratings and PRCS scores, and a coefficient of .41 between pooled student ratings and PRCS scores. Student ratings and committee ratings correlated .70 with each other, and a corrected odd-even reliability coefficient of PRCS scores was .87. Even though the reliability of each measure was relatively high, a weak relationship was shown to exist between the two.

Dickens, Gibson, and Prall²⁰ also checked the correlation of judges' ratings and introspective accounts in their study of overt manifestations of speech fright. In general, the judges' ratings and the

¹⁸Bode and Brutten, p. 96.

¹⁹Gilkinson, Speech Monographs, IX, p. 155.

²⁰Dickens, Gibson, and Prall, p. 47.

PRCS scores tended to validate one another, since a coefficient of .59 was revealed.

In 1951 Dickens and Parker²¹ conducted a study in which the relationship of the three measures of speech fright was tested. The fifty male and fifty female subjects were rated by their classmates for observable degrees of speech fright on a 1-5 equal interval scale during a speaking performance. Immediately following the speech the subjects went into an ante-room where pulse and blood pressure readings were taken. Each subject then filled out a PRCS. The significance of the scores was tested at the .05 level. The significant correlation coefficients of the three measures for the fifty male speakers were: .46 for the PRCS scores and the judges' ratings, .33 for the PRCS scores and the physiological measures, and .64 for the physiological measures and the judges' ratings. The only significant correlation coefficient between the three measures for the fifty female students was .36, which was the coefficient for the physiological measures and the judges' ratings.

The results of the research on the relationship of the three measures of speech fright were summarized effectively by Clevenger, when he said:

The findings concerning the intercorrelations of various measures of stage fright suggest strongly that they are not measures of the same variable. . . .The measures may be thought of as the amount of fright a speaker says he has, the amount his audience says he has, and the amount a meter says he has. At least for the present it appears wise to think of these as three separate variables.²²

²¹Dickens and Parker, p. 251-259.

²²Clevenger, p. 138.

Definition of the Problem

A summarized review of the findings of speech fright reveal:

1. When speakers are asked to describe their own symptoms of speech fright they list trembling, restlessness, shortness of breath, tense throat, tense body, sweating, inability to look at audience, rapid heart beat, etc.
2. When observers are asked to describe the characteristics they use to identify speech fright, they list nervousness, awkward posture, tenseness, poor eye contact, weak voice, etc.
3. Symptoms of physiological measures are increased in perspiration, blood pressure, and pulse rate of the speaker.
4. In all three measures the symptoms or characteristics of speech fright decrease as speaking experience increases.
5. Further research showed that intercorrelation of the three measures resulted in low and disappointing coefficients, apparently indicating that the validity of all or any of the measures of speech fright is questionable.

Therefore, since low coefficients result from intercorrelations between the three measures of speech fright, and since judges respond to increased experience of a speaker with lower ratings of speech fright, and since, as Becker²³ pointed out, observers apparently fail to discriminate speech behavior except on three general dimensions--a content factor, a delivery factor, and a language factor, it is logical to ask whether judges confuse speech fright with delivery. This assumption, that observers may not be reacting to a distinct entity "speech fright"

²³Becker, pp. 38-44.

but instead may be reacting to characteristics of poor delivery, was investigated.

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURE OF INVESTIGATION

At the beginning of the second semester of the 1965-66 academic year at Oklahoma State University, each of ninety-two male and female students enrolled in 'Introduction to Public Speaking' (Speech 202) delivered his first speech of the semester before a panel of four judges.

Since, as we have seen, speech fright diminishes with increased speaking experience and training, the first speech of the semester was chosen as the experimental sample in order to provide subjects more likely to exhibit stronger symptoms of speech fright.

Each speaker delivered a prepared three minute speech entitled, "The Gemini Space Flights of the United States." The topic was assigned rather than selected by the speaker, in order to minimize the possibility of a person choosing a subject with which he might be more at ease.

To avoid class schedule conflicts of the judges, four evening sessions of the course were set up, during which the students gave their speeches. A panel of four judges was present at each session. The four sessions were divided among a total of twelve judges, with some judging one session, and others two. The judges were speech faculty and graduate students in speech.

The judges were given rating forms (see Appendix I), on which the performance of the speaker was to be evaluated. The rating form contained twelve 5-point equal interval rating scales, one for each of the

following variables: analysis, material, organization, language, adjustment of speaker, bodily action, voice, articulation and pronunciation, fluency, speech fright, eye contact, and general effectiveness. These variables were chosen because of their universal use in the speech discipline. The judges were asked to assign a value to each variable, ranging from "1" (poor) to "5" (superior).

The data collected from the rating sessions were then tabulated on IBM Data Sheets and computed by the Oklahoma State University Computing Center. The variables were intercorrelated to show the relationship between each single speech variable and all other variables on the rating form. After the correlations were obtained, factor analysis was computed by orthogonal rotation. Factor analysis is a more refined test than correlation since it groups those variables which are not clearly independent and isolates those that are. The "BMD03M, General Factorial Analysis Program," was used.¹ The communality estimate was unity and seven factors were rotated.

Ebel's intraclass correlation formula was used to estimate the reliability of the ratings of the judges.²

¹Biomedical Computer Programs, Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, University of California (Los Angeles, 1965).

²Joy Paul Guilford, Psychometric Methods (2nd ed., New York, 1954), pp. 395-398.

CHAPTER III

EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The intercorrelations of the twelve speech rating scales, computed from the collected data of the judges' ratings, and the factors identified when the data were submitted to factor analysis will be presented and discussed in this chapter. Also to be included are the coefficients of the reliability of the judges' ratings.

To obtain the intercorrelations of the twelve scales on the rating form, the average of the four ratings given each speaker on each scale on the rating form was correlated with the average of the four ratings given him on each of the other scales. Thus a 12 x 12 correlation matrix was generated. The correlation matrix (see Table I) shows the relationship of each speech rating scale to every other rating scale.

Table I reveals two clusters of coefficients significant at the .01 level. Those clusters are encircled with broken lines. One cluster, which may be labeled as a content dimension, embraces the coefficients for analysis, material organization, and language. The other cluster, which may be labeled as a delivery dimension, embraces the coefficients for language, adjustment of speaker, bodily action, voice, articulation and pronunciation, fluency, speech fright, and eye contact.

Although the delivery dimension may be thought of as being composed of two different types of delivery variables (those perceived aurally and those perceived visually) the clusters do not appear to differentiate

TABLE I
SPEECH RATING INTERCORRELATIONS

| | G.E. | Ana. | Mat. | Org. | Lang. | Adj. | Art. & Pron. | Voice | Flu. | Sp. Fr. | Eye Con. |
|-----------------|------|------|------|------|-------|------|-----------------|-------|------|---------|-------------|
| Analysis | 787* | | | | | | | | | | |
| Material | 715* | 815* | | | | | | | | | |
| Organization | 777* | 825* | 797* | | | | | | | | |
| Language | 797* | 774* | 741* | 779* | | | | | | | |
| Adj. of Speaker | 860* | 659 | 544 | 615 | 667 | | | | | | |
| Art. and Pron. | 711* | 505 | 520 | 506 | 713* | 671 | | | | | |
| Voice | 780* | 591 | 525 | 557 | 727* | 707* | 767* | | | | |
| Fluency | 849* | 636 | 618 | 641 | 706* | 812* | 724* | 722* | | | |
| Speech Fright | 827* | 668 | 576 | 589 | 712* | 865* | 693* | 684* | 808* | | |
| Eye Contact | 706* | 520 | 404 | 511 | 429 | 724* | 492 | 600 | 657 | 589 | |
| Bodily Action | 695* | 549 | 497 | 558 | 544 | 673 | 598 | 550 | 687* | 619 | 655 |

*Significant r at .01 level = .684

the types. Articulation and pronunciation, voice, and fluency could be classified as scales perceived aurally, and adjustment of speaker, bodily action, and eye contact could be classified as visually perceived scales.

Closer examination of the two clusters discloses some interesting facts and problems.

The general effectiveness scale was shown to be correlated significantly, as in Becker's study,¹ with every other scale, revealing it to be a scale of little discriminatory value. This might be expected, as a general effectiveness scale is a scale intended to describe the general or over-all quality of a speech.

It should be noted, moreover, that the language scale is included in both clusters, correlating significantly with the scales in the content cluster and with those in the delivery cluster. Examination of the coefficients in the delivery cluster shows language to be significantly correlated with aural elements of delivery but not significantly correlated with visual elements. The language scale, therefore, is independent of visual elements of delivery but adds little or nothing to the discrimination of content from vocal delivery. This finding is not consistent with the results of Becker's study.² In his study, the language scale was found to be independent of both content and delivery. The independence of the language scale might be explained when it is noted that a high percentage of the judges in Becker's study were English

¹Becker, p. 39.

²Ibid., p. 39.

instructors.³ It seems logical that they would isolate the language scale, whereas Speech instructors would not, since Speech instructors should not be expected to be as sensitive to the language scale.

The correlation of the speech fright scale with the other scales is especially deserving of attention. Speech fright is found in the delivery cluster correlating significantly with language, adjustment of speaker, voice, articulation and pronunciation, and fluency. This finding provides at least partial support for the original hypothesis that the distinction between speech fright and delivery is at best hazy. On the other hand, speech fright is not correlated significantly with bodily action and eye contact. Surprisingly therefore, speech fright is associated more with vocal delivery than with physical delivery. These results may be interpreted to mean that judges may not be able to discriminate clearly speech fright from delivery and especially from those elements of delivery perceived aurally.

In order to define more clearly the dimensions according to which the speakers were rated, factor analysis was applied to the correlation matrix. Tables II and III show the results of that analysis. Table II displays the rotated factor matrix (the factor loading rounded to two places) and Table III provides a summary of the matrix. Table III contains the factors, the factor names, the scales which load on those factors, the factor loading rounded to two places (an index of the extent to which the variables measure the same dimension), and the purity of the loadings in "difference scores" (the difference between the highest factor loading on the factor being measured and the next highest

³Becker, p. 38.

TABLE II
LOADINGS FOR FACTORS FOUND IN THE ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX

| Scales | Factors | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---------|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|
| | I | II | III | IV | V | VI | VII |
| 1. Analysis | .03 | .80 | .22 | -.25 | -.30 | .06 | -.02 |
| 2. Material | .07 | .83 | .27 | -.15 | -.18 | -.09 | -.10 |
| 3. Organization | .02 | .81 | .22 | -.13 | -.32 | -.03 | .11 |
| 4. Language | .04 | .66 | .55 | -.26 | -.16 | .01 | .07 |
| 5. Adjustment | -.02 | .33 | .38 | -.54 | -.58 | .01 | .03 |
| 6. Bodily Action | .28 | .31 | .31 | -.17 | -.63 | -.03 | .00 |
| 7. Voice | -.12 | .33 | .70 | -.20 | -.39 | .02 | .01 |
| 8. Artic. and Pron. | .14 | .27 | .74 | -.23 | -.30 | -.04 | -.02 |
| 9. Fluency | .08 | .38 | .48 | -.40 | -.50 | -.24 | .00 |
| 10. Speech Fright | .06 | .36 | .43 | -.64 | -.38 | -.01 | -.02 |
| 11. Eye Contact | .07 | .23 | .23 | -.18 | -.78 | .00 | -.00 |
| 12. General Effect. | .03 | .55 | .45 | -.36 | -.52 | -.04 | .04 |

TABLE III
SUMMARY OF ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX

| Factors | Factor Name | Scales | Factor Loadings | Purity |
|---------|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------|
| II | Content Factor | Material | .83 | .56 |
| | | Organization | .81 | .49 |
| | | Analysis | .80 | .50 |
| | | Language | .66 | .11 |
| | | General Effect. | .55 | .03 |
| V | Physical Delivery Factor | Eye Contact | .78 | .55 |
| | | Bodily Action | .63 | .32 |
| | | Adjustment | .58 | .04 |
| | | Fluency | .50 | .02 |
| III | Vocal Delivery Factor | Artic. and Pron. | .74 | .44 |
| | | Voice | .70 | .31 |
| IV | Speech Fright Factor | Speech Fright | .64 | .21 |
| I | None | | | |
| VI | None | | | |
| VII | None | | | |

factor loading on any of the three other factors).

The factors are hierarchically arranged in Table III. Those factors composed of highly loaded and relatively pure scales appear at the top of the table and those with less highly loaded and more impure scales are placed toward the bottom of the table. The choice of factor names was based on the subjective judgment of the experimenter who attempted to select names appropriate to the scales most descriptive of the factor.

Since Smith defined the ideal scale as "one which is heavily loaded on the factor it measures and minimally loaded on all other factors,"⁴ the subsequent interpretation of the results of the factor analysis will be based on that definition.

It is apparent from Tables II and III that four factors emerged. The emergent factors tend to clarify the correlation matrix by dividing the delivery dimension into vocal and physical elements. Two other factors were also revealed, namely, a speech fright factor and a content factor.

Table III shows that all of the loadings on the factors are relatively high. The purity of some of the scales, however, is questionable. Scales showing an impure loading (though the loading may be high) do not add a great deal to the discrimination of the factor.

In the second rotation (see Table III, Factor II) a factor which might be labeled "content" emerged. The three scales which contribute the most to the definition of the factor are in order of their importance: 1) material, with a loading of .83 and a purity score of .56;

⁴Raymond G. Smith, "Development of a Semantic Differential for Use with Speech Related Concepts," Speech Monographs, XXVI, (November, 1959), p. 267.

2) organization, with a loading of .81 and a purity score of .49; and 3) analysis, with a loading of .80 and a purity score of .50. Other scales which contribute to a much lesser extent are: 1) language, with a loading of .66 and a purity score of .11; and 2) general effectiveness, with a loading of .55 and a purity score of .03.

Apparently the language scale is highly ambivalent, since it loads .66 on the content factor and .55 on the vocal delivery factor. (see Table II), thus adding very little to the discrimination of either factor. The finding is interesting in light of Becker's study⁵ in which language appeared to be an independent scale. Nevertheless this finding is not surprising when it is recalled that many of the judges in Becker's study were English instructors.

That the general effectiveness scale loaded almost equally on all four factors (see Table II) was not surprising, since it had been found to be the least discriminating of the twelve scales in the correlation matrix (Table I). More than likely general effectiveness is the most ambivalent of all the scales, since it loaded .55 on Factor II, .52 on Factor V, .45 on Factor III, and .36 on Factor IV (Table II). This finding is consistent with Becker's study⁶ in which general effectiveness was also found to be a highly ambivalent scale.

In the fifth rotation (see Table III, Factor V) a factor emerged which might be labeled "physical delivery." The two scales which contribute the most to the definition of that factor are in order of importance: 1) eye contact, with a loading of .78 and a purity score of

⁵ Becker, p. 40.

⁶ Ibid., p. 41.

.55; and 2) bodily action, with a loading of .63 and a purity score of .32. Two other scales which contribute to a much lesser extent are: 1) adjustment of speaker, with a loading of .58 and a purity score of .04; and 2) fluency, with a loading of .50 and a purity score of .02.

Apparently the adjustment of speaker scale is also a rather highly ambivalent scale, since it loads .58 on the physical delivery factor and .54 on the speech fright factor (see Table III), thus adding little to the discrimination of either factor. It is to be expected that the adjustment of speaker scale loads next highest on the speech fright factor, since adjustment of speaker is the only scale of the physical delivery dimension which correlated significantly with speech fright (Table I). Furthermore, the correlation coefficient is the highest in the matrix.

Apparently, too, the fluency scale is a rather highly ambivalent scale, since it loads .50 on the physical delivery factor and .48 on the vocal delivery dimension (see Table II), thus adding little to the discrimination of either factor. This is not surprising, since the correlation matrix (Table I) showed the scale associated with all the vocal delivery scales.

In the third rotation (see Table III, Factor III) a factor which may be labeled "vocal delivery" emerged. Only two scales appear to measure this factor: 1) articulation and pronunciation, with a loading of .74 and a purity score of .44; and 2) voice, with a loading of .70 and a purity score of .31. Apparently observers are unable to discriminate vocal effectiveness from elements of articulation and pronunciation with any clarity. On the other hand, they do seem to be able to isolate those two elements from the other elements in the speech performance.

Where in this study two delivery factors (vocal and physical)

emerged only one emerged in Becker's study.⁷ If, once again, we realize that the judges in Becker's study were composed partially of English instructors, the discrepancy among the two studies is not surprising. Speech instructors should be expected to be more sensitive to manner of presentation, the delivery, than should English instructors.

In the fourth rotation (see Table III, Factor IV) a factor which may be labeled "speech fright" emerged with only the one scale, speech fright, contributing to the discrimination of that factor. However, it is a relatively weak factor, since the loading of the speech fright scale on the factor was only .64 and the purity score for the factor was only .21. Apparently the speech fright scale is relatively ambivalent, since it loads .64 on the speech fright factor and .43 on the vocal delivery factor (see Table II). The loading of the speech fright scale on the vocal delivery factor is not surprising, since speech fright was found to be associated significantly with the vocal delivery scales in the correlation matrix (see Table I).

Since a speech fright factor did, indeed, emerge, it is difficult to say that judges fail to discriminate that scale from other delivery scales. Judgments of speech fright, then, may tentatively be said to be cued by characteristics other than those which lead to descriptions of vocal or physical delivery, and if discrimination among the factors does take place, speech fright is likely to be among those factors which are discriminated.

The results of the factor analysis generally provided support for

⁷Becker, p. 40.

Becker's⁸ previous findings. Both studies clearly indicate that speech raters are unable to provide independent ratings for ten or more scales. It is more likely that only three or four independent dimensions of the speaking performance are rated with much clarity. A content dimension including scales for analysis, material, and organization was common to both studies as was a delivery dimension. But where in Becker's study one delivery factor emerged, two emerged in the findings of the present research. One factor described the aural characteristics of the performance while the other described the visual elements. In both studies, moreover, general effectiveness, was found to be of little discriminatory value. Although in Becker's study the language scale factored out separately, it added little of discriminatory value to the present research. The present research also showed the two scales of adjustment of speaker and fluency to be of little discriminatory value.

In order to estimate the degree of uniformity with which the judges rated the speeches, Ebel's intraclass correlation formula of reliability was used.⁹ The formula for the reliability of the mean of k ratings is

$$r_{kk} = \frac{\frac{V}{p} - \frac{V}{p}}{\frac{V}{p}} . \text{ The reliability coefficients of the ratings of}$$

the judges are shown in Table IV.

Individual groups reliability coefficients (see Table IV) may appear to be too low for us to place much confidence in the results of the study. However, since four groups of judges were used, with some judges present in more than one group, this writer believes that the average

⁸ Becker, p. 44.

⁹ Ebel, p. 395.

of the reliability coefficients of the four groups combined provides a more appropriate description of the reliability of the judges' ratings. All the average reliability coefficients of the four combined groups of judges are above .50. Since other studies (Becker's for example)¹⁰ with equal and lower reliability coefficients have been considered acceptable and have been published, the coefficients of reliability revealed in this study, though lower than might have been desired, should not cause concern.

TABLE IV
RELIABILITY OF RATINGS

| | Group I | Group II | Group III | Group IV | Average |
|------------------|---------|----------|-----------|----------|---------|
| Analysis | .739 | .731 | .586 | .265 | .580 |
| Material | .756 | .448 | .654 | .218 | .519 |
| Organization | .777 | .646 | .275 | .489 | .546 |
| Language | .754 | .126 | .552 | .611 | .510 |
| Adjustment | .810 | .772 | .673 | .703 | .739 |
| Bodily Action | .751 | .444 | .490 | .538 | .555 |
| Voice | .791 | .372 | .682 | .831 | .669 |
| Artic. and Pron. | .823 | .286 | .652 | .701 | .615 |
| Fluency | .820 | .541 | .755 | .745 | .715 |
| Speech Fright | .702 | .580 | .650 | .782 | .678 |
| Eye Contact | .758 | .733 | .833 | .837 | .790 |
| Gen. Effect | .914 | .771 | .780 | .794 | .814 |

¹⁰
Becker, p. 41.

The instances of low reliability coefficients within individual groups of raters may have a reasonable explanation. Two of the four raters in Group II were relatively inexperienced. That fact may account for the low reliability coefficients of that group. One of the two also rated the speeches in Groups III and IV perhaps accounting for the low reliability coefficients of those groups. Group I, on the other hand, was composed entirely of experienced raters and the reliability coefficients of that group are much higher. With more experienced judges in Groups II, III, and IV, the reliability of those groups might also have been improved.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Problem

Since previous research has cast doubt on the construct and statistical validity of observer ratings of speech fright and since Becker's study¹ of scale independence cast doubt on observers' ability to discriminate beyond three dimensions of speaking behavior, it is reasonable to ask if observers are able, as traditionally assumed, to discriminate speech fright from other delivery characteristics.

Procedure of Investigation

To test that hypothesis, the following procedural steps were followed:

1. Each of ninety-two students enrolled in Speech 202. "Introduction to Public Speaking," delivered his first speech entitled "The Gemini Space Flights of the United States" before a panel of four judges.
2. The four judges rated each speaker on forms which were provided by the author and which contained twelve 5-point equal interval ratings scales of commonly rated speech scales. The twelve scales were: analysis, material, organization, language, adjustment of speaker, bodily action, voice, articulation and pronunciation, fluency, speech

¹ Becker, pp. 38-44.

fright, eye contact, and general effectiveness.

3. The reliability of the judges' ratings was tested by Ebel's formula of intraclass correlation.²

4. Each of the twelve speech rating scales was correlated with every other scale to generate a 12 x 12 matrix of correlation coefficients.

5. From that matrix, a factor analysis of the data was computed using orthogonal rotation.

Experimental Results

Correlations

1. When the twelve speech rating scales were intercorrelated, two clusters of coefficients significant at the .01 level were revealed. One, which was subsequently labeled the content cluster, embraced the coefficients of the intercorrelations of analysis, material, organization, and language. The other, subsequently labeled the delivery cluster, embraced the coefficients of the intercorrelations of language, adjustment of speaker, bodily action, voice, articulation and pronunciation, fluency, speech fright, and eye contact.

2. The general effectiveness scale was highly and significantly correlated with all of the other scales and the language scale was highly and significantly correlated with most of the other scales. Therefore, neither scale appears to be of much discriminatory value.

3. The speech fright scale appeared in the delivery dimension and appeared to be associated more with aural elements of delivery than with

²Guilford, p. 395.

visual elements, thus providing at least partial support for the original hypothesis that the distinction between speech fright and delivery is at best hazy.

Factor Analysis.

1. When the data were submitted to factor analysis four factors emerged. The labels for the factors were subjectively selected by the experimenter and were: Factor II, a content factor; Factor V, a physical delivery factor, Factor III, a vocal delivery factor, and Factor IV, a speech fright factor.

2. The three scales which contributed most to the content factor were material, organization, and analysis. Two other scales, language and general effectiveness, contributed to a much less extent.

3. The two scales which contributed most to the physical delivery factor were eye contact and bodily action. Two other scales, adjustment of speaker and fluency, contributed to a much less extent.

4. The vocal delivery factor emerged with the scales of voice and articulation and pronunciation measuring that factor.

5. The speech fright factor emerged with only the one scale, speech fright, measuring that factor. However, since the loading and purity of the scale were not particularly high, that factor must be considered to be relatively weak. Although speech fright did emerge as an independent factor, it appears as the weakest of the four emergent factors. Therefore, and since the speech fright scale clustered with the vocal delivery scales in the correlation matrix, the speech fright scale may be accepted only tentatively as a measure of an independent aspect of the speaking performance.

6. The general effectiveness, language, adjustment of speaker, and

fluency scales did not contribute much of discriminatory value when used as scales for rating speeches.

7. In the main, this study supported the results of Becker's research. Both studies emphasize the ambiguity of traditional speech rating procedure and suggest that, at best, judges are able to provide a description of only three or four (certainly not twelve) independent dimensions of the speaking performance. Both studies found the general effectiveness scale to be non-discriminatory, and a content and delivery factor were found common to both studies.

8. Becker's description of an independent language factor and a single delivery factor were unsupported in the present study. In the present study the language scale failed to factor out. Instead it was found to be associated with too many other scales to be of any discriminatory value. In the present study, moreover, two delivery factors emerged, one measuring the visual aspects of the speaking performance and the other measuring the aural aspects. Since a high percentage of the judges in Becker's study were English instructors, it seems logical that they would isolate the language scale from the other scales whereas the Speech instructors in the present study would not, and that Speech instructors would discriminate between the two types of delivery whereas English instructors would not.

Judges Reliability.

The average reliability coefficients of the four combined groups of judges were all shown to be above .50. Though lower than might have been desired, the reliability coefficients were actually higher than those reported in another similar study.

Research Implications

Since this study provided only partial or tentative support for the hypothesis that observers do discriminate speech fright from delivery, more conclusive research is definitely needed. Perhaps research using one of the following methods would provide a clearer understanding of the nature of perceived speech fright:

1. Future researchers might well investigate the hypothesis by means of a similar study using more experienced speech raters and a larger sample. That method might provide higher reliability coefficients and a more concrete identification of the speech fright scale.
2. Perhaps Analysis of Variance used to determine the differences among ratings of content, physical delivery, vocal delivery, and speech fright would more clearly distinguish the dimensions of the speaking performance and further determine the validity of a speech fright scale.
3. A third method which may be of value in providing a more concrete identification of the speech fright scale, would be to compute factor analysis on a rating form containing the delivery scales used in the present study and visible symptoms of speech fright, such as were identified in a study by Clevenger and King.³

Conclusions

The study emphasized the ambiguity of traditional speech rating procedure and suggested that judges are able to provide a description of only three or four (certainly not twelve) independent dimensions of

³Theodore H. Clevenger and Thomas R. King. "A Factor Analysis of the Visible Symptoms of Stage Fright," Speech Monographs, XXVIII (November, 1961), pp. 296-298.

the speaking performance. The scales clustered by the judges measured a content factor, a physical delivery factor, a vocal delivery factor, and a speech fright factor. Although speech fright did emerge as an independent factor, it appeared as the weakest of the four emergent factors. Therefore, and since the speech fright scale clustered with the vocal delivery scales in the correlation matrix, the speech fright scale may be accepted only tentatively as a measure of an independent aspect of the speaking performance.

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APPENDIX A

SPEECH RATING SCALE

| SPEECH PROCESSES | RATINGS | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------|---|---|---|---|
| ANALYSIS: | | | | | |
| original__logical__accurate__ | | | | | |
| thorough significant ideas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| MATERIAL: | | | | | |
| specific__valid__relevant__ | | | | | |
| sufficient adequate | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ORGANIZATION: | | | | | |
| clear arrangement of ideas__ | | | | | |
| introduction body conclusion | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| LANGUAGE: | | | | | |
| clear__accurate__varied__valid | | | | | |
| descriptive | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ADJUSTMENT OF SPEAKER: | | | | | |
| poised__at ease__communicative | | | | | |
| direct__personality pleasing__ | | | | | |
| projected to audience | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| BODILY ACTION: | | | | | |
| animated__fidgety__distracting__ | | | | | |
| stiff lifeless | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| VOICE: | | | | | |
| weak__varied__monotonous__ | | | | | |
| good quality rate | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ARTICULATION AND PRONUNCIATION: | | | | | |
| clear__correct__slurred__muffled__ | | | | | |
| defective acceptable standard | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| FLUENCY: | | | | | |
| extemporaneous__conversational__ | | | | | |
| varied__monotonous__hesitant | | | | | |
| too fast too slow | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SPEECH FRIGHT:

fear of the situation shown through
 speaker self expression: voice,
 bodily action

1 2 3 4 5

EYE CONTACT

communication with audience

1 2 3 4 5

GENERAL EFFECTIVENESS:

overall speaking effectiveness

1 2 3 4 5

Rating equivalents: circle appropriate number

1 - poor 3 - good 5 - superior
 2 - fair 4 - excellent

Kansas, December 11, 1938; the
 of Speech.

Colwich, Kansas; graduated
 Lawrence, Oklahoma, in 1956;
 gave from Immaculate Conception
 May, 1961; Further education
 College, Oklahoma Baptist
 Theological Seminary, Shawnee,
 Oklahoma, and
 Evanston, Illinois; and
 Lawton, Oklahoma; completed the
 degree in July, 1967.

the Benedictine Order at St.
 in 1967; was ordained to the
 teaching speech in St.

VITA

Joachim Joseph Spexarth, O.S.B.

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: THE RELATIONSHIP OF OBSERVED SPEECH FRIGHT TO OTHER OBSERVED
SPEECH VARIABLES

Major Field: Speech

: Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Colwich, Kansas, December 11, 1938, the
son of Bernard W. and Olivia B. Spexarth.

Education: Attended grade school in Colwich, Kansas; graduated
from St. Gregory's High School, Shawnee, Oklahoma, in 1956;
received the Bachelor of Arts degree from Immaculate Conception
Seminary, Conception, Missouri, in May, 1961; further education
received at St. Gregory's Junior College, Oklahoma Baptist
University, and St. Gregory's Theological Seminary, Shawnee,
Oklahoma, and Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois; and
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; completed the
requirements for the Master of Arts degree in July, 1967.

Professional Experience: Entered the Benedictine Order at St.
Gregory's Abbey, Shawnee, Oklahoma, in 1959; was ordained to the
Catholic Priesthood in 1965; is now teaching speech in St.
Gregory's Junior College.