

Gergely Kisházy

Performance, anxiety, suggestion

Reducing anxiety in performance
situations through suggestive
communication techniques

Abstract

Performance anxiety is an agonizing feeling. Fear of being judged is most often felt before public performances, especially when we are afraid of being embarrassed in front of others. The tingling excitement of subdued stage fright can be performance-enhancing, but if the pressure is too much, it can also have a negative impact on our physical and emotional well-being. Suggestive communication can be a good way of hiding stress symptoms and reducing stage fright; it can also significantly reduce anxiety, fear and bad feelings related to embarrassing situations, whether experienced by ourselves or others.

Keywords: performance anxiety, suggestive communication, speech-based stress symptoms

10.56044/UA.2022.2.3.eng

The power of suggestive words

Suggestive words can be any verbal content that makes an impression on us. Questions, addresses, encouragement can all have a suggestive power. Such communication is not an instruction, not a request, but a simple statement or thought that we deliberately say to other people. Its effect is not the result of a conscious decision, but of an involuntary action on the part of the recipient. There may be individual differences in sensitivity to suggestion, but we are all susceptible to most of them. In special, not ordinary situations:

- altered states of consciousness;
- fear, vulnerability, heightened emotional stress;
- unusual, novel situations

susceptibility to suggestion increases, so it is worth considering what communication options we have before we go on stage and what we can do to reduce the anxiety of the colleague we are helping before the performance.

Performance anxiety

The conditions that increase susceptibility to suggestibility can also be seen with performance anxiety; going on stage, sitting in the studio, standing up in front of an audience and starting to speak is a daunting task for many. This sense of anxiety feeds on the tension that precedes the performance, and its manifestations that destroy our credibility are worth managing. The aim is not to eliminate tension, but to maintain it at a level at which our performance does not deteriorate significantly. The psychological causes of nervousness most often include

- the herd instinct,
- feelings of inferiority and
- fear of failure.

Many of us like to blend in with the crowd, to benefit from the good feeling of being in the crowd. In the company of others, we are more likely to fit in with the majority, to be relieved of individual responsibility, and to lose our fear of punishment. On the contrary, we do not like to be singled out, to act. The reason for this lies in an innate need to be accepted and to belong. An inferiority complex can also underlie performance anxiety: if we do not trust ourselves, if we are not clear about our own values, if we do not know why we are likeable,

we become instinctively anxious. Anxiety can also be based on fear of failure: none of us likes to lose our dignity, pride and humanity.

A common cause of excessive stage fright is that we perceive the situation as unrealistically scary. Our thoughts revolve around worst-case scenarios, frightening events, devaluing our own ability to perform. We vividly imagine how we are going to fall in the speech, we can't breathe, lose our voice, our clothes get soaked under our armpits, we produce spectacular signs of embarrassment. We imagine the situation as dangerous, the audience as hostile or disinterested. We think of what we don't want to be asked, we anticipate the embarrassment and fear it. We also overestimate the consequences of failure: we feel that it will be fatal, that the performance will fail, that we will be humiliated and lose credibility. We use a wide range of negative suggestion in a colourful variety of ways:

- "...I'd do anything but this..."
- "...I'm sure I'd be laughed at and shamed..."
- "...I just want to survive this, I'll never do anything like this again..."
- "...I'm no good at this either, it's not for me..."
- "...I've never been able to do this..."
- "...just the thought of it makes me nervous..."
- "...I always get blocked, I forget everything when I have to stand in front of people..."
- "...They can't pay me enough to stand up ..."
- "...I never could speak in front of people, I can't do it now..."

All these are self-fulfilling prophecies that actually increase anxiety and increase the risk of failure. However, these fears and the negative suggestion they formulate are full of irrational exaggerations; solutions can be found in techniques based on positive self-suggestion.

Reducing performance anxiety

Many believe that anxiety should not be conquered, but tamed. One approach is to reinforce our supportive beliefs with positive suggestion: "...I have performed many times, I am a good performer, I can relate to the audience and I will feel good at the end of the presentation when I receive the applause...". We can work on limiting beliefs by reversing them to positive suggestions: for

example, by refuting the negative suggestion "...I always forget everything when I have to speak in front of many people..." part by part

- "...I have had some great experiences as a speaker, for example the last time..." or
- "...I will do it creatively, the others are with me and will help me..." or
- "...I will have my notes and the text on the projected slides next to me, they will give me security..." or
- "...today I have to speak in front of 150 people, last time 200 people listened and how well I did..."

these will be reinforced with language structures that will support successful performance. A realistic self-image is not a disadvantage, the unrealistic fear of performing is also underpinned by issues of self-awareness, self-esteem and self-confidence. As a negative suggestion, the structures

- "...I am not worthy enough, I am still not good enough..." or
- "...I don't deserve to succeed, to be applauded at the end..."

are the most common. These phrases influence how we feel when we have to perform. If we are beginners with real areas for improvement, it doesn't matter how we approach our own performance anxiety. Performing techniques and acting methodologies are not based on static skills, most people achieve the ability to deliver inspiring performances with routine confidence as a prepared performer through persistent practice.

Alison Wood Brooks suggests that instead of forcing a state of calm, we should try to transform our anxiety into a positive emotion, such as interest or enthusiasm, by replacing the therapeutic mantra "...I am calm...", which sounds alien in these situations, with the suggestion "...I am excited..." (Brooks 2014, 3–12). In one of his experiments, he gave university students the task that, after two minutes of preparation, they should give a persuasive speech about why they would be good colleagues. The participants, divided into two groups, were asked to say a short sentence before their speech, one group had to say "...I am calm..." and the other "...I am excited...". The speeches were recorded and then analysed. When the students labelled their emotions as excited, they were more confident and assertive than those who said they were calm. Expressing their fear as excitement also motivated the speakers, they had the courage to stay on the podium and on average they spoke about themselves for 29% longer. In the second phase of the experiment, the students were divided into three groups. The first group's suggestive sentence was "...I am nervous...", the

second group's was "...I am excited...", and the third group had to say nothing. The task was to sing a hit song from the 80s, and the accuracy of the singing was measured by a voice recognition program. Here again, the best performers were those who labelled their emotions as excitement, singing with 80% accuracy. Those who said nothing before singing scored 69% accuracy, with the 'nervous' group dropping to 53%. The experiments suggest that the use of self-soothing as described above should be discarded and that communication techniques based on (self-)suggestion should be tried instead.

Specific verbal suggestion techniques, researched mainly in medical communication, can be effectively used to relieve fears of oneself or others before a performance. In order to do this with confidence, it is worth reviewing the verbal power of suggestion: the main rules of its structure and the most common strategies. While the reception of suggestions is involuntary, their construction and elaboration require conscious linguistic editing.

The structure of suggestions

Katalin Varga collected aspects of the structure of well-performed suggestions: purpose, positivity, style, speech features, involuntariness, repetition, timing, quantity, rhythm and pauses, present tense, questions, sensory modality, motivation, focus on purpose, do-not-try, cognition, recovery and release (Varga 2011, 26–28).

- The aim is for suggestions to convey a central idea that identifies the response to be elicited (this could be, for example, the release of anxiety linked to performing).
- A positive formulation of a suggestion is more effective: the linguistic structure of "...don't be anxious, don't be nervous..." is worth trying "...just let your muscles rest comfortably...".
- Suggestions can be either permissive or dominant. Most often, the permissive style is effective: "...you are able to...", "...if you..., you will soon find that..." as opposed to dominant command type messages.
- When using suggestive techniques, the style of language structures is an inevitable element. It is important to use as few words as possible to produce the richest content. What makes a suggestion convincing depends on the situation of the moment, but an awareness of the psychological effects of your speech can help you to respond successfully. Again, the

power of persuasion depends on the force and personality of the speech. Abstract terms elicit less of an emotional response than concrete terms. The intensity of the suggestion is influenced by the ratio of verbs to pronouns: a higher proportion of verbs gives the text force. The personal style of our suggestions is an indication of how we relate to what we are saying, how much we believe what we are saying. A self-referential style conveys the message that the speaker is an authentic person, so it is a good idea to use it whenever possible.

- The speech of the person giving the suggestion should match the content of the suggestion: in "...calmly, slowly..." suggestions, the pitch, volume, tone, stress, pause length between words and rhythm of speech should really evoke the experience of the desired effect.
- The wording of the suggestion makes it easier to separate the voluntary command from the execution of the request: "...breathe deeply..." may call for wilful execution, "...your speech breath is deeper, more stable, of increasing capacity..." will evoke the involuntary occurrence of the effect.
- Suggestions can be repeated in unchanged form or by means of metaphorical references, repeated invocations. It is worth making sure that the repeated communication does not reflect dissatisfaction. If all the supported speaker hears is "...smile, smile, smile...", it may give the impression that they are not doing something right. It gives positive reinforcement to hear the following: "...a little smile..., yes..., like this..., go on..., very good..."
- Allow time for suggestions to have their effect: don't talk about immediate change, but about the change in the near future. "...the anxiety will disappear immediately..." suggests a rapid change, which is unlikely in this situation. A gradual change, e.g. "...the fear will slowly go away, the experience will return and you will feel more comfortable with it..." is a more effective tool in this situation.
- A suggestive way of speaking can take longer pauses, giving time for the suggestion to sink in and the effect to unfold. This can make it difficult for the person giving the suggestive speech, but with speech technique exercises, practising changes of tempo and rhythm, and taking advantage of the opportunities for pauses, positive changes can be experienced in a short time.
- Suggestion captures what the other person is experiencing: it is not effective to say "...calm..." to a highly anxious person. Instead, you can say "...

- you are still nervous, you can feel your heart pounding, and that's natural because it's an important situation. It is good to pay attention to the way you are getting calmer and calmer and your heartbeat will also calming ...".
- Suggestion embedded in questions can help to attract attention, and the answer can also bring about the desired effect. "...let me know when you are feeling more comfortable...!" suggests that it is only a matter of time before the experience of comfort will definitely come.
 - When working with imagination in particular, but also when describing present feelings, try to involve as many sensory modalities as possible, language structures that respond to sight, hearing, touch, smell or taste will help suggestion.
 - We can motivate the recipient to achieve what we are suggesting by indicating why it will be good if what we are suggesting occurs: '...it is more pleasant for you and more attractive for the audience...' or '...you are getting closer to enjoying your own performance...'
 - In suggestions, the goal should be kept in mind, the phrase "...relax..." is enough, the way to reach the goal is left to the unconscious.
 - If the suggestion is vague, it implies the possibility of failure. The goal to be achieved requires action: it is worth letting go of the conditional mode, and the suggestion can be made more stable if it is structured in the declarative mode. Covers are linguistic devices that reduce the strength and scope of the claim we make in a suggestion. They reflect the conflict we are experiencing: whether or not to say what we intend. We choose to say it, but either we build a cover to avoid the expected reactions, or we retroactively mitigate the claim, e.g. "who knows why, but the contributor is characterised by a rare and peculiar arrogance". The impression-forming effect of language can also be traced in the linguistic construction of definiteness: some people more often use "really", "actually" type of covers or add "isn't it" question marks at the end of their statements. A suggester who avoids such stylistic features makes a more definite impression.
 - It is helpful to build into the structure of the suggestion the actual knowledge of the situation, why you are feeling what you are feeling, the purpose of the intervention and how to intervene. This can reduce the uncertainty and fear felt in the situation.
 - Build the suggestion on the actual responses of the recipient, and first report back. If you want to achieve relaxation, wait for signs of initial relax-

ation before talking about full body relaxation, and then gradually introduce the suggestion you want to make. We can also use environmental elements: "...as the sigh of the exhalation caresses your body, each time you feel more and more relaxed and refreshed..."

- Dissolve any suggestion that you do not wish to maintain permanently. The most common dissolutions might be "...return to your body the familiar, pleasant feeling..." or "...settle your feelings, both physical and mental..."

The use of suggestion

According to Katalin Varga, the use of suggestions does not simply consist of a series of well-structured, sequentially delivered statements, but is adapted to some strategies that can be effectively applied in practice (Varga 2011, 29–31). These are yes-attitude, follow-lead, double-bind, framing, imaginative completion, purposeful fantasy, fixed word associations, implications, metaphors, anecdotes, symbols and authenticity.

In the 'yes' attitude, we ask the supported speaker or ourselves a series of questions, to which the answer is, by definition, "...yes...", and then insert into this series the suggestive final element, which is expected to lead to a 'yes': "...Does the sound system work? Is the projection visible? Is the projection on? Do you have the notes? Will the students be sitting there? Do we start in half an hour...?" The facts and the obvious can be banal, and it is not important to have an open yes answer. An internal nod of the head or a mid-voice murmur of approval is enough.

The follow-lead method is a more consciously developed version of the rule of starting from the present situation. The idea is that, before leading the supported speaker in the direction you want, you should stop for a while in the circumstances that are specific to the moment. In following up, simply formulate the likely experiences that the other person is having. To be sure of this, it's a good idea to be broad: "...it is an interesting feeling..." The leading phase starts when the partner is listening and confirms that what we said in the following phase is true. This will increase the likelihood that he will accept the suggestion made in the leading phase.

Double bind is the idea of choosing between two or more versions of something with your partner, whichever is the best for you. "...should I show the remaining speaking time on a whiteboard or electronic display, ..?" We

do not offer a choice about the main objective we want to achieve. We offer two options for the path to the desired outcome, and the partner can choose between them, there is no question of reaching the goal. This method is also transparent and is sometimes answered with “..either, it is all the same...”. It is therefore important to prepare the ground by providing motivation, models, analogies, similes, imagery or examples before applying substantive suggestions.

In reframing, the situation is given a different interpretative framework, a positive one instead of a negative one. In simple cases, this can be done by well-chosen labelling: the more positive interpretative frame brings with it the associated positive feelings.

The effectiveness of verbal suggestion is greatly enhanced by the addition of imagery: a visual image of the desired outcome, or a mood close to it. Purposeful fantasy is the imagination that, if it were to occur, would actually produce the desired effects. In the fantasy of “...imagine yourself in the shower after a performance, with the gentle, refreshing water running over your body...”, refreshment actually occurs, and so this fantasy helps to make the suggestion of freshness effective.

Many psychologists use fixed word associations that are suitable for introducing suggestion. These are good for creating an involuntary effect, as the suggestion will not be presented as a coercive statement.

- “...give yourself the opportunity to...”
- “...the important thing is that you will be able to...”
- “...and it might be nice when you realize...”
- “...and it won’t bother you when you notice...”
- “...and you’ll like it...”
- “...at such a time many people find it pleasant to...”
- “...I wonder if you’ve noticed before that...”
- “...it will be a particular pleasure to experience (that you can)...”
- “...to see that...”
- “...I want you to enjoy this experience...”

Indirect suggestion often involves the use of implicit suggestions. The effect intended by the suggestion is not overt, but the wording strongly implies it. The question “...which hand do you feel is relaxed now...?” implies that one hand is already loose for the partner, and implies that the other will soon be relaxed.

To prepare for the suggestive effect, we can use images of ourselves, of stories about other performers who have experienced a similar situation favourably, natural images, parallels. These speak for themselves to such an extent that they evoke a positive attitude, and the unconscious context prevails much more than the consciously processed content. The following variations are well suited:

- “...when he first held a presenter in his hands, how unsure he was of pressing the buttons...” – to illustrate what at first seems difficult, but which can later be done with everyday ease.
- “...when the auditorium is equipped, it is more cluttered at the beginning, then slowly the (seating) arrangement of the instruments and chairs is established...” – things have to be done, even if they seem difficult to think about.

Our suggestion should be honest and we should believe in its effectiveness. Let's not use suggestion that doesn't fit our style, that we find difficult to take up, that we feel pathetic. Let's find our own voice, our own style, taste the suggestion that suits us. It's easiest to try it on ourselves first and if we feel it worked, we can give it more authentically to others.

Suggesting atypical speech sounds

In situations requiring suggestive communication to relieve performance anxiety, we communicate not only with linguistic content but also with speech sounds, with open or less open articulation, with clear or distorted form, with high or low pitches, loud or soft, and this, among other things, is what we hope will keep the client's attention for a long time. In situations in which we are beginning to use suggestive communication techniques, especially at the beginning of the current situation, we can often identify ourselves with the vocal symptoms of stage fright, a stressful situation. These are most commonly found in the sounds of breathing, sighing, yawning, voice-starting, nasal, whispering, dry throat, croaking, coughing, stomach growling, burping, hiccuping and laughing, providing a great suggestive opportunity for ourselves and others.

Breath sounds

Perfect speech breathing is noise-free, inaudible. Inhalation that produces a hissing sound is not always caused by a narrowing of the epiglottis, it can

also be produced by the larynx, as the vocal folds sometimes move so close together during inhalation that they produce an 'H' sound. This can be so exacerbated that the sound produced by inhalation can even be noisy, with gasping breaths. Noisy, loud breathing in a situation of suggestive communication is only acceptable if it is dominated by theatrical performance and theatrical speech elements, as sudden start, a big sigh, and a heightened emotional content in dramatic presentation can be a natural gestural value. Speech-breathing is referred to in the literature in various ways: diaphragmatic breathing, deep breathing, abdominal breathing, mixed deep breathing, technical breathing, master breathing, combined breathing, etc., but for most authors it has similar content and its essential characteristic is that it is inaudible. If, despite this, we receive different feedback from our listeners, it is worthwhile to develop the correct technique using one of the breathing practice materials and then make the breathing safe and silent by improving support and increasing capacity.

Sigh

Sighing is an atypical breathing movement: it is characterised by a slow, moderately deep and moderately rapid inhalation followed by a prolonged exhalation, during which the air flow produces the characteristic sound of a murmur. Since the breathing dynamics before and after sighing are different, it is likely that sighing "re-tightens" the respiratory system, which has become irregular under stress, and the airways are relieved by relaxing the air bladders. Sighing is therefore not only responsible for getting oxygen into our bodies, but also plays a role in our psychological processes, as sighing is usually experienced in difficult situations. It has a role in relieving the chest pressure that often accompanies anxiety, as the force exerted by actively expanding the lungs reduces the feeling of tightness, and this has a feedback effect on anxiety through autonomic nervous system effects. In a suggestive communication situation, sighing in the focus of attention or before answering a difficult question may have dramatic value, its message being less supportive of the image of the assertive helper, whereas a sigh executed in "concealment" before a situation requiring specific suggestion may help.

Yawningsound

Yawning is an innate ancient reflex, involving deep, slow inhalation and rapid exhalation, designed to reduce oxygen deprivation, so the emphasis is on get-

ting as much air in as possible. Yawning is also a behaviour, a reaction to boredom, and therefore a means of interpersonal communication. If you are prone to yawning, you may want to try hiding it in preparation for a situation that requires suggestive communication: hand and finger gestures that cover the mouth can provide a good opportunity. If, as a speaker, we notice the same from the listener, we should respond by pausing or changing dynamics, or the understanding attitude to the physiological situation described above can be the basis for a verbal solution: "...I see (hear) I came early..." or "...I see you have just woken up, rested...?" / "...if you feel sleepy, let's continue the conversation tomorrow...", etc.

Sound start

The voice triggering of the person who gives a suggestion in Hungarian is usually soft, the air pressure is not high, the laryngeal muscles do not have to work harder, the energy of the outgoing air is almost completely transformed into sound energy, so we can create a pleasant, soothing feeling in the listener and we can say our thoughts with a pleasant feeling ourselves. However, if our larynx is not functioning naturally, if we are experiencing increased stress and need to speak, the start of our voice can be airy or harsh. We may need both to achieve a suggestive dramatic effect, but it is worth bearing in mind that it is technically difficult to deliver a passage in an airy, heightened or covered voice, and that a hard start can both tire the larynx muscles unnecessarily with increased pressure and drift towards the monotony of over-emphasis. When using a hard tone start during suggestion (also when coughing or croaking), the tension and protrusion of the neck muscles and the swelling of the neck veins become visible, enriching the recipient with a special aesthetic experience.

Nose sound

The important physiological role of the nasal cavity is to warm, humidify and filter the air we breathe, protecting the airways and the vocal cords, which are important for vocalisation. The mouth is the main site of speech resonance in the Hungarian-speaking voice; the nasal cavity contributes only as much as the pitch mixing ratio requires. If the resonance of the nasal cavity is more involved in amplification, then we can hear the nasal sound. Excessive nasal resonance makes the tone nasal, the speech muffled and unmotivated, and a blocked nasal cavity not only makes speech sounds and speech in general, but also nasal

sounds incorrect. In a situation of suggestive communication, it is important to pay attention to the proper functioning of the nasal cavity, because an obstruction to clear breathing compromises the beauty and smoothness of the whole speech process.

Whispering sound

Whispering is a natural form of speech, an opportunity for speech formation that may often become necessary in the process of giving and receiving suggestive communication. Whispering is produced by the friction of air passing between the vocal cords, so that speech is noisy and at a lower pressure than normal speech. When whispering occurs, the tension and vibration of the vocal cords change and are interspersed with characteristic “rubbing” sounds. In a suggestive communication situation, one method of the volume switch, of modulation, of attention can be to emphasise the essential message by using this mode of speech after the normal volume used previously.

The dry palate sound

Dry palate is one of the most well-known symptoms of stress associated with the delivery of suggestive speech, and many of us have experienced the feeling of the back of the tongue sticking to the roof of the mouth and feeling like it cannot be torn away, of a mouth that is as dry as the desert. The therapy for this symptom complex: drinking water. When preparing for a suggestive situation, we should always think of this possibility, with a bottle of water that is neither ice-cold nor hot, neither carbonated nor alcoholic. Before a live suggestion, in a protective environment, try out how natural it is to take a short sip, even during a sentence, with a pause or a pause in between. The point here is not to quench thirst or to drink large quantities of fluids, but to moisten the oral cavity.

Croaking sound

The croak is a voluntary or involuntary forced expiration of air, accompanied by a distinctive sound, to remove foreign matter that has entered or is thought to have entered the pharynx or larynx. There can be many reasons for this constant, regular croaking: for many people it is a way of drawing attention to themselves, of wanting to say something soon, for others it is a sign of criticism or dissent, suggesting inner tension based on an unspoken or unutterable thought. An interesting phenomenon of suggestive communication situa-

tions, linked to cracking, is when the speaker's increasingly low-quality sounds, increasingly short croaking, are accompanied by the communicator's own attempts to help the speaker by short or long throat clearing. Croaking can also be interpreted as a mental and behavioural disorder when it occurs as involuntary, rapid, repetitive, non-rhythmic movements, sudden onset and seemingly aimless sound formation. This tic-like phenomenon appears to be involuntary but can be hidden for longer or shorter periods. The most common vocal tics are croaks, coughs, sniffles, grunts and hisses, while more complex forms may include the repetition of idiosyncratic or obscene, vulgar words or the unwarranted imitation of the voices and words of others.

Coughing sound

Coughing ('a good excuse for a bad precentor') is a natural reflex process, a sudden rapid exhalation with a closed sound gap, the characteristic sound being caused by the rapid expulsion of air in a whirlpool. Coughing can be caused by pharyngeal and laryngeal secretions stuck to the mucous membranes, but it can also be caused by foreign bodies, inhaled dust, smoke, gas, vapour, etc., which may enter the airways or be swallowed. It can also be caused by abnormal secretions in the body during inflammation, a nervous disorder, the effects of medication, hysteria or bad habits, or it can be a sign of repressed anger, of emotions that we do not want to express or dare not express in words. The smoker's morning cough is linked to nicotine, which paralyses the cleansing cilia that line the surface of the airways. The cilia need several hours to become functional again, and can only do so during and after the nicotine-free period during sleep. The reason for the increased coughing in the morning after smoking is that this is when the cilia become functional again and try to clear the airways of the trapped foreign matter.

Stomach voice

Stomach growling is caused by the mixing of gastric juices and air. It is the last stage of digestion and is most audible 2-4 hours after a meal. It is also a sign of hunger, so it is a very healthy symptom to have a rumbling stomach when talking. All of the digestive processes are accompanied by sound, but these are rarely audible because of the soundproofing of the food still being digested, but there is nothing in the empty stomach to pick up the noise. In an interpersonal communication situation, it is a therapeutic procedure to take

a bite or two with the mouth closed before entering the space that requires suggestion.

Burping sound

During a burp, gases produced in the digestive tract are expelled from the body through the mouth. Burping is also a normal reflex, occurring most often after eating, when the lower oesophageal sphincter relaxes as the stomach dilates. Since we also take in air with every swallow, if we rush with our food before entering into a suggestive communication situation, we are more likely to be plagued by the unpleasant sound effect, both for us and for the listener. To avoid disturbing suggestibility, avoid carbonated, highly caffeinated and alcoholic drinks, and chew hard-to-digest foods thoroughly. Saliva produced during speech may also contain small air bubbles that enter the stomach when swallowed, but people who swallow continuously during meals may find themselves in an uncomfortable position. With care and practice, however, the amount of air swallowed can be reduced, so the first thing that comes to the mind of the person listening to us after a conversation is the quality of our burp.

Hiccup sound

During a hiccup, the sudden inflow of air into the lungs causes the larynx to close, the diaphragm to contract involuntarily, and the opening between the vocal cords to close quickly and loudly. The hiccups, which occur five or six times a minute, can occur spontaneously, but are most dangerous when air is not normally delivered to your lungs (e.g. when you are startled, when you eat too quickly and talk). Hiccups are usually harmless and will go away on their own in a short time, but if they occur in a suggestive communication situation it is worth trying some of the folk remedies and urban legends: from drinking lemon water, to scaring people, to holding your breath, but even if you wait patiently for the hiccups to go away, they will go away.

Sneezing sound

Sneezing is also a physiological phenomenon, a natural reaction to irritation of the mucous membranes of the nose. When something irritates the nasal mucosa for a long time (most often inhaling cold air), the soft palate rises and blocks the nasopharyngeal passage. The mouth closes, then a strong exhalation begins and the air in the airways is pressurised. When the soft palate

relaxes again, opening the nasal passage, air rushes out into the nasal cavity at high speed, sweeping the trapped material from the mucosal surface. If you find yourself in such a situation during suggestive communication, try to take it for granted that you will be well enough to thank him after it is done, have a tissue and then carry on as if nothing had happened. If the situation supports the main thought of the suggestion with some simple associative arc, take the opportunity.

Laughter

Laughter is an emotional expression that is associated with a characteristic tone of voice, facial expressions, motor reactions, physiological changes and emotional experience. There is a close relationship between laughter and humour, although there is laughter without humour, just as there is humour without laughter. Laughter is also related to smiling (and hence to distorted articulation during speech), although the overlap between the two phenomena is only partial. It can vary in degrees, from a quiet smile to a full-body, knee-shaking, boisterous laugh, and can even reach an intensity where the individual is temporarily unable to do anything else. Even while laughing, there are spectacular changes in breathing, circulation, chest and abdominal pressure, muscle movement and tension levels. In a situation focused on suggestive communication, it is worth bearing in mind that the sincerity of laughter is easy to recognise, but if the mirth is not natural, if the mirth is convulsive, it can be at the expense of authenticity.

In suggestive communication-based situations, the atypical speech symptoms described above are most often encountered. This study has not discussed situations that may be as uncomfortable or special as the previous ones in an interpersonal situation requiring suggestive communication. Nevertheless, loud swallowing, sore throat, vocal swallowing, screaming, various forms of gagging, yodelling, mouthing, snapping, snorting, snoring, gagging, moaning, the peculiarities of the human voice after inhalation of helium and sulphur hexafluoride, or the vocal communication characteristics of altered states of consciousness and sexual preference can also be exciting items for analysing the unexpected situations of a suggestion.

The above study focused on the possibilities of suggestive communication in situations of performance anxiety. To make the power of suggestive words

more powerful, below is a conversation between Mari Töröcsik, Attila Janisch and the dresser before entering the stage (Janisch 2021, 27–28):

I would have gone on, but she suddenly caught me by the hand and turned me towards her, grabbing me tightly. “Attila, darling, I have no idea what I’m going to do in there”, she said, almost desperately, looking at me as if he expected me to help her. “Come on, Mari, you are kidding, how can you say that”, I replied, a little taken aback, but taking his words as a whim. But as I looked into her eyes – the eyes whose emotional gleams I had watched so many times while directing our films together – I saw that there was really nothing in the depths of her gaze, not a sentence, not a gesture, nothing but the void I had never seen. My gaze glided from Mari’s face to the dresser behind her, who was silently observing the scene. “What now?” – my eyes asked her silently, to which she responded with an insider’s smile and a reassuring nod, as if to say: “Don’t worry, everything will be fine.”

Sources

- Antal Zsolt, Gázsó Tibor, Kubínyi Tamás and Pelle Veronika. 2015. *Médiabefolyásolás – Az új kislexikon*. Budapest: Századvég Kiadó.
- Bagdy Emőke and Nagy János. 2004. „Gondolatok a nevetésről.” *Psychiatria Hungarica*: 19/5 390–418.
- Brooks, Alison Wood. 2014. „Get Excited: Reappraising Pre-Performance Anxiety as Excitement.” *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General* 143, 3. 1144–1158. [https://www.hbs.edu/ris/Publication%20Files/xge-a0035325%20\(2\)_0287835d-9e25-4f92-9661-c5b54dbbcb39.pdf](https://www.hbs.edu/ris/Publication%20Files/xge-a0035325%20(2)_0287835d-9e25-4f92-9661-c5b54dbbcb39.pdf)
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035325>
- Haupt, Evemarie. 2006. *Hangterápia elméletben és gyakorlatban*. Budapest: Holnap Kiadó.
- Illés Györgyi. 2005. *Beszéd 1*. Budapest: Escrip Design.
- Janisch Attila. 2021. „Minden rendben lesz.” *Magyar Narancs*, XXXIII/16. 04. 22., 27–28. <https://magyarnarancs.hu/szinhaz2/minden-rendben-lesz-237811>
- László Móni. 2017. „Ne próbálj meg lehiggadni!” *Personal Branding*. Viewed on 31 May 2022. https://personalbranding.blog.hu/2017/03/20/ne_probalj_meg_lehiggadni

- Pap János. 2002. *Hang – ember – hang. Rendhagyó hangantropológia*. Budapest: Vince Kiadó.
- Scherer, Klaus R. 1989. „Vokális érzelmkifejezés”. In: *Érzelmek és érzelemelméletek 1.*, edited by Barkóczi Ilona AND Séra László, 259–318. Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó.
- Szabó Eszter Judit. 2019. „Nyilvános szereplés? Inkább a halál!” – Így szelídítsd meg a lámpalázad. Viewed on 31 May 2022. <https://pszichoforyou.hu/lampalaz-lekuzdese/>
- T. Molnár István. 1993. *A magyar beszédhangok szubjektív elemi szimbolikája*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Varga Katalin–Diószeghy Csaba. 2001. *Hűtésbefizetés, avagy a szuggesztiók szerepe a mindennapi orvosi gyakorlatban*. Budapest: Pólya Kiadó.
- Varga Katalin. 2013. *Helyzet+oldások. Kommunikációs stratégiák kiélezett orvosi helyzetekben*. Budapest: Medicina Kiadó.
- Varga Katalin. edited 2008. *Szuggesztív kommunikáció a szomatikus orvoslásban*. Budapest: VL Sugár.
- Varga Katalin. edited 2011. *A szavakon túl. Kommunikáció és szuggesztió az orvosi gyakorlatban*. Budapest: Medicina Kiadó.
- Vecsey Katalin. 2010. „Transzszexuális „hangterápia” *Gyógypedagógiai Szemle* 38/3: 193–203.