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ПУБЛІЧНИЙ ВИСТУП: ПРОБЛЕМИ ВИЗНАЧЕННЯ, КВАЛІФІКАЦІЙНИХ ОЗНАК, ФУНКЦІЙ У КОМУНІКАЦІЇ

Публічний виступ є однією з ключових форм сучасної усної комунікації, що забезпечує поширення інформації, формування переконань, регулювання соціальної взаємодії та підтримку професійної діяльності в різних сферах. Його актуальність посилюється у зв'язку зі зростанням ролі цифрових і гібридних форматів спілкування, що ускладнюють комунікативні процеси та висувають нові вимоги до мовця. У статті здійснено комплексний аналіз публічного виступу як багатовимірного явища, що поєднує лінгвістичні, риторичні, психологічні та соціальні компоненти. Розкрито основні проблеми визначення поняття «публічний виступ», окреслено його структурні та функціональні характеристики, а також відмінності від інших типів комунікації. Особливу увагу приділено кваліфікаційним ознакам ефективного публічного мовлення, зокрема мовній і риторичній компетентності, невербальній експресії, психологічній готовності та стратегічній орієнтації на аудиторію. Показано, що результативність виступу визначається здатністю мовця інтегрувати вербальні й екстралінгвістичні засоби, адаптуватися до ситуації спілкування та враховувати когнітивні й емоційні особливості слухачів. Окреслено основні комунікативні функції публічного виступу: інформаційну, переконувальну, освітню, соціальну та психологічну, які забезпечують його вплив на індивідуальному та суспільному рівнях. Зроблено висновок про необхідність міждисциплінарного підходу до дослідження публічного виступу, що поєднує методи лінгвістики, риторики, педагогіки, психології та комунікативістики. Перспективними визначено напрями аналізу трансформацій публічного мовлення в умовах цифрової комунікації, вивчення кроскультурних риторичних моделей та застосування штучного інтелекту для підвищення ефективності підготовки й оцінювання публічних виступів.

Ключові слова: публічний виступ, риторика, комунікація, лінгвістична компетентність, невербальна комунікація, психологічна готовність, переконування, комунікативні функції, аудиторія, стратегічна комунікація.

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PUBLIC SPEAKING: PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION, QUALIFICATION FEATURES, FUNCTIONS IN COMMUNICATION

Public speaking is one of the key forms of contemporary oral communication, serving to disseminate information, shape beliefs, regulate social interaction, and support professional activity across diverse fields. Its relevance has increased due to the growing significance of digital and hybrid formats of communication, which complicate interaction and introduce new demands for speakers. This article provides an integrated analysis of public speaking

as a multidimensional phenomenon that combines linguistic, rhetorical, psychological, and social components. It examines the main definitional challenges, identifies structural and functional characteristics, and outlines distinctions between public speaking and other types of communication. Special attention is devoted to the qualification features of effective public speaking, including linguistic and rhetorical competence, non-verbal expressiveness, psychological preparedness, and strategic audience orientation. The study demonstrates that the effectiveness of a public speech depends on the speaker's ability to integrate verbal and extralinguistic means, adapt to communicative situations, and consider the cognitive and emotional characteristics of listeners. The article also outlines the key communicative functions of public speaking – informational, persuasive, educational, social, and psychological – which operate on both individual and societal levels. The conclusions emphasise the need for an interdisciplinary approach that integrates methods from linguistics, rhetoric, pedagogy, psychology, and communication studies. Promising avenues for further research include the analysis of public speaking transformations in digital environments, the study of cross-cultural rhetorical models, and the use of AI-based tools for improving the preparation and assessment of public speech performances.

Key words: *public speaking, rhetoric, communication, linguistic competence, non-verbal communication, psychological preparedness, persuasion, communicative functions, audience, strategic communication.*

Public speaking occupies a central role in modern communication practices, serving as a crucial tool for disseminating knowledge, influencing public opinion, shaping social norms, and facilitating professional interaction. In contemporary society, where information flows rapidly across national and cultural boundaries, the spoken word often acquires greater immediacy and persuasive power than written communication. Public speaking allows individuals to articulate ideas, construct narratives, and engage audiences in ways that are emotionally resonant and intellectually stimulating. Its significance is further magnified by the increasing reliance on communication technologies, which enable speakers to reach audiences not only in traditional physical settings – lecture halls, conference rooms, political forums – but also across digital platforms such as webinars, online courses, livestream broadcasts, and social media channels.

With the expansion of digital communication, the expectations placed on speakers have evolved. They must now be capable of adapting their rhetorical strategies to multimodal environments that integrate verbal, non-verbal, and visual forms of expression. This shift has transformed public speaking into a hybrid communicative practice that requires a sophisticated understanding of how linguistic and extralinguistic factors interact to shape audience perception. As scholars argue, public communication is a synthesis of cognitive, linguistic, psychological, and social variables that together determine the speaker's effectiveness (Hamova, 2019, pp. 156–158). The multidimensional nature of public speaking thus calls for an integrated theoretical framework that accounts for its diverse structural, functional, and contextual dimensions.

Furthermore, public speaking is closely linked to broader cultural and societal processes. It plays a pivotal role in the formation and dissemination of public opinion, the negotiation of shared values, and the articulation of collective identities. Historically, public speaking has served as a foundational instrument of democratic participation, enabling citizens to debate issues, defend positions, and contribute to civic life. In professional settings, it facilitates leadership, enhances organisational communication, and supports knowledge transmission within expert communities. These functions highlight the capacity of public speaking not only to convey information but also to shape social realities and influence action.

Against this background, the theoretical and practical study of public speaking remains an essential area of inquiry within communication sciences, rhetoric, pedagogy, psychology, and linguistics. The present article addresses three key aspects that structure current scholarly understanding of public speaking: the definitional challenges involved in distinguishing public speaking from other forms of communication and establishing its conceptual boundaries; the qualification features that characterise an effective speaker, including linguistic competence, rhetorical strategy, psychological readiness, non-verbal expressiveness, and audience orientation; and the communicative functions that public speaking performs in interpersonal, institutional, and societal contexts. Together, these components form the conceptual core of public speaking theory and provide a foundation for its empirical investigation. By examining these aspects, the article seeks to contribute to the development of a comprehensive framework

that captures the complexity of public speaking in contemporary communicative environments.

Relevance of the problem. The relevance of studying public speaking lies in its universality, interdisciplinarity, and steadily increasing importance within the communication-driven landscape of the 21st century. Public speaking today extends far beyond traditional political addresses or academic lectures; it forms a foundational component of professional activity in business, education, law, healthcare administration, public relations, media, and leadership. In contemporary professional environments – academic, political, legal, educational, economic, and managerial – public speaking is not merely a desirable skill but an essential competency that determines career advancement, organisational effectiveness, and the clarity with which ideas are transmitted and negotiated within society.

Pedagogical literature stresses that modern specialists are expected to master linguistic norms, apply expressive means of language, and communicate logically, coherently, and persuasively in order to meet the increasingly complex demands of professional discourse (Haiovych & Prykhodko, 2014, pp. 76–77). The capacity to present information clearly, structure arguments convincingly, and maintain audience attention is now recognised as a core dimension of communicative competence. As industries become more globalised and interdisciplinary collaboration intensifies, the need for specialists who can articulate their expertise to diverse audiences – both professional and lay – grows exponentially.

The relevance of studying public speaking is also reinforced by its significant psychological dimension. Fear of public speaking, or glossophobia, remains one of the most widespread and debilitating social anxieties worldwide. Psychological studies demonstrate that a considerable proportion of individuals experience heightened physiological arousal, cognitive distortions, avoidance behaviours, and emotional discomfort when faced with the prospect of speaking before an audience (Khomenko, 2025, pp. 130–131). This fear undermines communication efficiency, limits the expression of professional competencies, constrains leadership potential, and hinders personal development. Given that many career paths require frequent presentations, negotiations, or public communication, unaddressed anxiety may severely impede professional growth.

At the same time, the intensification of digital communication has expanded the contexts in which public speaking is required. Remote work, online conferences, webinars, virtual classrooms, and livestream presentations have made public speaking a daily activity for millions of individuals. This shift amplifies the relevance of mastering rhetorical strategies not only for in-person communication but also for technologically mediated forms of interaction, where the absence of immediate feedback and the increased cognitive load can further challenge the speaker's communicative effectiveness.

From a broader societal perspective, public speaking contributes to civic discourse, democratic participation, and the shaping of public opinion. Effective public speakers play a crucial role in mediating social debate, advancing collective values, addressing misinformation, and facilitating dialogue between institutions and communities. Consequently, the study of public speaking has implications not only for individual development but also for the resilience and inclusivity of democratic societies.

In sum, the relevance of public speaking arises from several interrelated factors: its cross-disciplinary impact and applicability in professional life; its significant psychological implications for personal and professional growth; its expanding role in digital and hybrid communication environments; its social and civic importance in fostering informed, participatory public discourse. These factors collectively underscore the necessity of developing a robust theoretical and practical framework for understanding public speaking as a key component of contemporary communication.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Research on public speaking spans a broad spectrum of disciplines, including linguistics, rhetoric, psychology, sociology, pedagogy, communication theory, and media studies. As a result, scholarly discussions on public speaking integrate methodological approaches from humanities, social sciences, and behavioural sciences. This interdisciplinary foundation demonstrates the complexity of public speaking as both a theoretical construct and a practical communicative activity.

Within Ukrainian academic discourse, significant attention has been devoted to the linguistic and rhetorical foundations

of public speech. H. Hamova (2019, pp. 157–158) emphasises the multidimensional nature of public communication, highlighting how cognitive, linguistic, ethical, psychological, and social factors converge to determine communicative outcomes. Her research demonstrates that the effectiveness of a public speech depends not only on linguistic accuracy but also on the speaker's ability to strategically employ rhetorical devices, structure information logically, and adapt to the communicative context. Similarly, H. Haiovych and O. Prykhodko (2014, pp. 76–78) underscore the centrality of rhetoric in professional communication. Their work focuses on rhetorical tools such as metaphors, comparisons, repetitions, rhetorical questions, and structural devices that enhance expressiveness and clarity. They also draw attention to speech etiquette and audience-centred communication, which ensures that speakers maintain relevance, clarity, and emotional resonance with listeners. This perspective highlights the need for speakers to balance linguistic correctness with stylistic expressiveness and pragmatic appropriateness. The psychological dimension of public speaking has also been widely explored. L. Bobko (2019, pp. 255–256) investigates psychological factors that shape communicative success, including mechanisms of attention, emotional regulation, motivation, and persuasion. Her findings suggest that effective communication depends on the speaker's capacity to influence cognitive and emotional processes in the audience through structured, emotionally relevant, and context-sensitive messages. Such studies illustrate that persuasion in public speaking is not merely informational but deeply psychological and affective. Pedagogical research further enriches the field. O. Krasnytska (2024, pp. 1–4) stresses the importance of developing oratorical competence in teacher training. She argues that systematic analysis of professional speeches – academic lectures, presentations, conference reports – helps future educators refine their rhetorical style, analyse their own communicative behaviour, and cultivate reflective practice. In another study, O. Krasnytska (2025, pp. 357–359) conceptualises public speaking as a multilayered process involving five levels of influence: informational, cognitive, emotional, psychological, and behavioural. This framework positions the speaker as an agent capable of shaping not only audience knowledge but also attitudes, beliefs, and actions.

International English-language research presents complementary perspectives that further broaden the theoretical foundation of public speaking studies. S. Lucas (2020) outlines comprehensive strategies for structuring speeches, developing clarity, and enhancing speaker credibility. His work serves as a foundational reference for understanding the organisation of public discourse, audience adaptation, and ethical considerations in speechmaking. R. Cialdini's influential research on persuasion (2018) provides a behavioural framework for understanding how principles such as authority, reciprocity, social proof, and consistency can be strategically employed in public speaking contexts. This framework helps explain why certain speeches are more persuasive than others and how speakers can guide audience decision-making. J.C. McCroskey (2015) contributes a psychological dimension, particularly through his studies on communication apprehension, rhetorical sensitivity, and audience perception. His theoretical models clarify how anxiety influences speaker performance and how rhetorical flexibility can improve communicative outcomes. G. Reynolds (2019) introduces a design-focused perspective, highlighting the role of visual communication and multimodality in contemporary public speaking, especially in digital contexts. His work underscores the importance of integrating text, imagery, and design principles to enhance message clarity. S. Beebe and S. Beebe (2021) reinforce the significance of audience-centred communication, establishing that effective public speaking must be grounded in an understanding of audience demographics, expectations, cultural norms, and psychological needs.

Collectively, these national and international studies illustrate that public speaking remains a multifaceted, dynamic, and interdisciplinary field. Its theoretical development continues to be shaped by insights from linguistics, rhetoric, psychology, pedagogy, communication studies, and behavioural sciences. The breadth of existing scholarship underscores the need for an integrative analytical approach, which this article aims to provide.

Research objective. The objective of this article is to develop an integrated understanding of public speaking as a multifaceted

communicative phenomenon. Public speaking encompasses linguistic, rhetorical, psychological, and social components, and therefore requires an interdisciplinary analytical approach. The study aims to summarise current scholarly perspectives and clarify the essential elements that determine its effectiveness. More specifically, the research focuses on three key tasks: 1) clarifying definitional and conceptual boundaries (this includes identifying how public speaking is understood in academic literature, determining its core features, and distinguishing it from other forms of communication); 2) identifying qualification features of effective public speaking (the article systematises the competencies necessary for successful performance, including linguistic accuracy, rhetorical strategies, non-verbal expression, psychological readiness, and audience orientation, based on both national and international research); 3) analysing communicative functions of public speaking (the study examines the informational, persuasive, educational, social, and psychological functions that public speaking performs in various communicative contexts, emphasising its significance for professional and public interaction).

Presentation of the main research material.

1. Problems of definition

Public speaking is commonly defined as a monologic form of oral communication aimed at informing, persuading, or motivating an audience. However, contemporary scholarship shows that this definition cannot be reduced merely to the act of speaking before a group. Public speaking is regarded as a complex communicative process that integrates linguistic, cognitive, psychological, and social components. Its distinguishing features include intentionality, the structured organisation of content, the speaker's responsibility for message clarity, and the active participation of the audience, which interprets, evaluates, and responds to the speech both consciously and subconsciously.

Scholars emphasise that public speaking involves the transformation of thoughts and intentions into verbal and non-verbal symbols that can be decoded by listeners. This requires the speaker to construct meaning through lexical choice, syntactic organisation, intonational patterns, gesture, and facial expression. As R. Daft notes, communication is effective only when the message encoded by the speaker aligns with the meaning decoded by the audience (Daft, 2008, pp. 648–649). In this sense, public speaking is a reciprocal meaning-making activity rather than a one-directional monologue.

Moreover, public speaking differs from informal conversation in several critical ways. It involves a higher degree of preparation, more deliberate rhetorical choices, and heightened responsibility for accuracy and ethical clarity. It also typically occurs in institutional or public contexts – educational, political, organisational, civic – where the expectations for coherence, logical structure, and stylistic appropriateness are substantially higher. Finally, public speaking requires continuous adaptation: speakers must read audience reactions, adjust their pace, tone, or examples, and ensure that communication remains relevant and accessible. Thus, public speaking should be understood as a dynamic, situationally embedded process characterised by feedback loops, strategic decision-making, and co-construction of meaning.

2. Qualification features of public speaking

Effective public speaking requires mastery of a set of interrelated professional competencies. These competencies reflect both linguistic proficiency and psychological readiness, combining technical, rhetorical, and interpersonal skills.

A. Linguistic and rhetorical competence

The foundation of effective public speech lies in the speaker's ability to use language purposefully and accurately. This includes: adherence to literary and professional language norms; clarity and precision in message formulation; logical structuring of arguments; the use of cohesive devices and transitions; stylistic flexibility and expressive variation; thoughtful selection of vocabulary and tone.

A crucial component of rhetorical competence is the ability to employ expressive means such as metaphors, antithesis, parallelism, hyperbole, rhetorical questions, and repetition. These devices enhance vividness, strengthen emotional appeal, and facilitate memorability. As shown in the taxonomy by H. Haiovych and O. Prykhodko (2014), rhetorical tools support the communicative impact of a speech by activating auditory imagery, intensifying emotional resonance, and reinforcing logical cohesion.

B. Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal cues play a decisive role in how audiences perceive the speaker's credibility, confidence, and message consistency. They include the speaker's posture, gestures, facial expressions, gaze behaviour, movement in space, and vocal qualities such as pitch, pace, rhythm, and volume. According to O. Bashynskyi (2020, pp. 1–2), empirical studies show that audience perception depends overwhelmingly on visual and paralinguistic cues: approximately 60% of impressions are formed through appearance and body language, 30% through vocal dynamics, and only around 10% through verbal content. This highlights the importance of congruence between verbal and non-verbal channels and the necessity for speakers to cultivate conscious physical expressiveness.

C. Psychological preparedness

Public speaking also requires psychological competence. Speakers must regulate emotions, maintain concentration, respond constructively to stress, and adapt to unexpected disruptions such as audience disagreement, technical challenges, or communicative misunderstandings. Psychological preparedness includes: managing performance-related anxiety; maintaining emotional stability; sustaining audience engagement over time; demonstrating resilience and flexibility; cultivating an internal sense of control and confidence.

N. Khomenko (2025, pp. 131–135) identifies several strategies that contribute to psychological readiness: cognitive-behavioural techniques (challenging irrational beliefs about failure), relaxation and breathing methods, exposure-based practice, and communication-based training aimed at improving spontaneous responses in live settings.

D. Strategic orientation and influence

In addition to technical skills, speakers must understand the strategic nature of communication. Public speaking is inherently goal-oriented: messages are designed to inform, inspire, persuade, or mobilise audiences. O. Krasnytska (2025, pp. 357–359) conceptualises strategic communication as a triadic system:

WHY – the speaker's intention, purpose, and underlying motivation;

HOW – the rhetorical structure, style, organisation, and communicative tactics;

WHAT – the substantive content and evidence presented.

This "circle of influence" clarifies how speakers achieve communicative effect. When intention, method, and content are consistently aligned, the speech becomes more coherent, persuasive, and meaningful. Strategic competence also includes audience analysis: understanding demographic, psychological, situational, and cultural characteristics that shape listeners' expectations and interpretive frameworks.

3. Communicative functions of public speaking

Public speaking fulfils a range of communicative functions, each contributing to its relevance in educational, professional, and civic contexts.

A. Informational function

Public speaking serves as a medium for disseminating knowledge, explaining concepts, and presenting data. This function is especially prominent in academic, scientific, and organisational settings, where clarity, accuracy, and structure are essential.

B. Persuasive function

One of the most powerful functions of public speaking is its ability to influence beliefs, attitudes, emotions, and behaviours. Persuasion relies on a combination of logical reasoning, ethical appeals, and emotional engagement. R. Cialdini's behavioural principles (2018) – such as authority, social proof, consistency, and reciprocity – provide valuable insights into how speakers can guide audience judgement and decision-making through structured, ethical influence.

C. Social and ethical function

Public speaking contributes to social cohesion by promoting shared values, ethical norms, and civic responsibility. It fosters public dialogue, encourages participation in community life, and supports democratic processes by enabling informed debate, public deliberation, and social reflection.

D. Educational function

Public speaking stimulates intellectual development by encouraging analytical thinking, reflection, and active learning. It is central to pedagogical communication, allowing teachers, lecturers, and trainers to guide learners through structured knowledge and to cultivate critical engagement. As shown by O. Krasnytska (2024, pp. 3–4), well-designed public speech supports both the speaker's professional growth and the audience's cognitive advancement.

E. Psychological function

Finally, public speaking plays an important psychological role. For speakers, it strengthens confidence, self-efficacy, and emotional resilience. For audiences, it reduces interpersonal distance, fosters empathy, builds trust, and promotes a sense of connection and shared experience. Effective public speaking thus contributes to healthier interpersonal communication and improved psychological well-being in group settings.

Conclusions and prospects for further research. Public speaking is a multifaceted communicative practice that integrates linguistic, rhetorical, psychological, and social dimensions. The analysis conducted in this article demonstrates that effective public speaking relies on a combination of well-developed language competence, strategic use of rhetorical techniques, awareness of audience dynamics, and psychological preparedness. These components function together to shape the clarity, persuasiveness, ethical integrity, and overall communicative impact of a speech.

The reviewed national and international scholarship confirms that public speaking performs a broad spectrum of functions in modern society. Beyond the transmission of information, public speaking facilitates persuasion, fosters intellectual development, supports professional advancement, and contributes to the formation of social values and collective meanings. It also plays a significant role in building interpersonal trust, shaping public opinion, and enhancing civic engagement. As digital communication environments continue to evolve, public speaking increasingly operates across hybrid formats that combine oral, visual, and technological elements, further expanding the competencies required of modern speakers.

The findings underline the importance of a holistic approach to studying public speaking – one that integrates insights from linguistics, psychology, pedagogy, rhetoric, management, and media studies. Such an interdisciplinary perspective allows for a deeper understanding of both the structural features of public speech and the mechanisms by which it influences audiences.

Future research on public speaking may focus on several key directions. First, the rapid expansion of digital and hybrid communication environments necessitates deeper analysis of how public speaking practices are transformed by online formats, multimedia tools, and virtual interaction. Second, interdisciplinary models that synthesise insights from linguistics, psychology, media studies, and communication theory could provide a more comprehensive understanding of speech effectiveness. Third, comparative cross-cultural studies may clarify how rhetorical norms and communicative expectations differ across societies. Finally, the growing use of artificial intelligence in education and training opens new possibilities for developing technologies that support speech preparation, delivery, and feedback.

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