

**THE ART OF PUBLIC SPEAKING: AN ACCOUNT OF THREE SELECTED
NAMIBIAN PUBLIC SPEAKERS, PEYA MUSHELENGA, SAM SHIVUTE AND
NDANGI IILEKA**

Justina M. L. Amakali¹

University of Namibia

ABSTRACT

A good speech is given when a speaker knows and understands the needs of his/her audience. When a speaker fails to have effective oral communication with an audience, they are unlikely to achieve their communicative purposes. Literature shows that successful public speakers use rhetoric to persuasively convey their messages to their audiences. In this study, persuasive strategies in public speaking are investigated through rhetorical analysis by interviewing orally these three participants: Peya Mushelenga, Sam Shivute and Ndangi Iileka. The study used Burke's (1969) theory of identification by outlining the possible occurrences of identification. This theory claims that whenever a speaker tries to persuade, identification takes place. The study's findings, through the different experiences and narratives of these three participants, revealed that listeners are persuaded when speakers use literary devices based on the communicative purposes of their speeches. The main purposes of these participants' speeches are often to inform, motivate and to entertain, respectively. The conclusions drawn from this study points to the relevance of Burke's theory of identification regarding the addressees and audiences which young, rising public speakers should bear in mind.

Keywords: public speaking, persuasion, Burke's identification theory, public speakers, Namibia

¹Justina Amakali is a senior lecturer of Academic Literacies in the Department of Language Development at the University of Namibia. She is also a professional language editor. Dr Amakali holds a PhD in English Studies, Master of Philosophy in Second Language Studies, Bachelor (Honours) in Education, Training and Development, a Diploma in English Language Teaching, and a Diploma in Proofreading and Copy-editing. She has a wide teaching experience of over twenty years. Her academic interests are oratory, rhetoric, and sociolinguistics in general. Email: latendamtuleni@gmail.com
Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Justina Amakali, Department of Language Development, University of Namibia. Email: latendamtuleni@gmail.com

Communication through speaking is more powerful than through writing. This is because in speaking, the tone of the speaker makes a strong impression. Speaking in public requires one to have good communication skills to convey their message effectively. Possessing good communication skills also allows the speaker to persuade the audience that he or she addresses.

Since time immemorial, good speakers studied their audiences before addressing them. This helped them to know what to say and how to say it. It would be absurd to address an angry audience using aggressive words and tone as this can infuriate them further. It would also be, for instance, unreasonable for a Member of Parliament to convince his or her fellow parliamentarians to support a vote without reasoning logically (*logos*). These three proofs in the art of rhetoric were coined by the Roman philosopher Aristotle. The use of these proofs is commonplace in public speaking. It is for these reasons that appropriate skills for public speaking are a necessity for successful speeches.

While it is true that public speaking skills are necessary, not everyone thinks these skills are needed. Generally, almost everyone at some point would find him or herself in a situation that they have to speak in public. For instance, one could be requested to speak before an audience at workplaces, family gatherings, church functions, academic settings, sports gatherings, just to mention a few. Furthermore, students at universities are required to be good communicators to operate effectively in their future careers.

In the Namibian context, public speakers in the past had been mainly politicians, church leaders, and top government officials. However, recently a considerable number of young Namibians have enrolled to be coached in public speaking and have engaged in the career of public speaking in different disciplines such as spiritual, motivational, educational, entrepreneurial disciplines, etc. Some of the Namibian public speakers are, Saarah Shatumbu of Mindshifting Talk, Foreversun Haiduwa of Foreversun Motivations, Esperance Luvindao (Poet and humanitarian), Nelago Johannes (the youngest Namibian motivational speaker), Slick (Comedian) and Hermien Elago (Inspirational speaker), to mention a few.

Besides, people in careers are becoming interested in these skills to perform well at work. For example, postgraduate students at the Namibia Business School of the University of Namibia have shown interest in public speaking skills when they were introduced to these skills by Erika Gatawa, a public speaker and coach for public speaking in March 2019. Although the number of public speakers in Namibia is increasing, it is only appropriate for them to possess

and apply appropriate skills for effective speeches. The concern in this study is the possible knowledge gap regarding effective strategies on public speaking among those who would want to pursue or are interested in public speaking. It is for this reason that this study aims at:

- discovering strategies for effective speeches from three selected and renown Namibian public speakers.
- aligning these strategies with identification which is interpreted as an effective process of persuasion.

These strategies may be useful to those who would like to pursue public speaking as a career or a hobby.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Conceptualising public speaking

Public speaking, in other words, oratory, is speaking in front of a live audience. It is believed that the art of speaking was first established in ancient Greece and was commonly used by orators who wanted to be successful in politics, court, or daily social life (Gatawa, 2019). According to Nikitina (2011), public speaking is a procedure, an act and art of creatively crafting a speech to an audience. Keith and Lundberg (2014) claim that “success is achieved when the audience understands the speaker correctly, and the aim in teaching this tradition is to overcome the obstacles to clear transmission/understanding” (p. 144).

According to Keith and Lundberg (2014), “the social science tradition which dates back to the 1930s sees public speaking as communication – the transfer of ideas from the speaker to the audience through the medium of speech” (p. 144). Public speaking is essential especially when the speaker wants to quickly transfer ideas directly to his or her audiences. Children’s confidence needs to be boosted while they are young and vibrant so that when they become adults they can speak confidently. Gatawa (2019) claims that the ability to speak appropriately in front of an audience brings significant rewards in life.

Furthermore, Gatawa (2019) explicitly defines public speaking as a practice of oral communication with an audience in an organised or considered manner to inform, persuade, influence or entertain (p. 9). The communicative strategies that the speaker uses are determined by the purpose of the speech that they give. For instance, if a politician’s purpose is to campaign for votes, then she/he is most likely to appeal to credibility (*ethos*) in order to appear and sound

trustworthy. Moreover, if the purpose of a comedian is to entertain, he/she is likely to narrate a funny anecdote which creates humour at the beginning of his show. This strategy is known as *pathos*, an appeal to the audience's emotions.

Oratory serves three purposes; namely, to inform, to persuade and to entertain. To ensure all these goals are achieved, the speaker has to use some strategies. The audience is informed to get some knowledge about something, it is persuaded to take some actions, and it is also entertained to have fun. Speakers apply different strategies for each purpose of speaking. For a speaker to entertain an audience, she or he should be able to exhibit humour. Beeman (1999) claims that "humour aims at creating a concrete feeling of enjoyment for an audience, most commonly manifested in a physical display consisting of displays of pleasure, including smiles and laughter" (p. 103). Laughter induces interest and attention among the audience. Considering that laughter is a spontaneous human reaction, it is difficult to accept its function in classical oratory (Beeman, 1999).

In ancient times there was a system that prominent speakers used to successfully carry out their oratories. This system is based on the five canons of rhetoric and has survived to date. The five canons of rhetoric were coined by the Roman rhetorician, Cicero. These are invention (*inventio*), Disposition (*dispositio*), Delivery (*pronuntiatio*), Style (*elocutio*), and Memory (*memoria*). According to Crowley and Hawhee (1999), "the five cannons deal in turn with the activities that the rhetors perform as they compose and present a piece of discourse" (p. 30). This study aligns revelations from the study participants with these cannons.

Burke's Theory of Identification

This study is based on Burke's theory of identification. This was regarded as the best framework for this study as public speaking is all about communicating and being communicated to. There is a thin line between the speaker and the audience, hence the need to connect during public speaking. Burke (1969) claims that identification is a process which is central to being a person and to communicating (as cited in Quigley, 2009). The theory suggests that the need to identify occurs out of division, thus, people seek to identify through communication to overcome this division. Burke further asserts that humans perform by using language that is purposeful and that carries our attitudes. It is from this point that Burke (1969) draws his definition of rhetoric as "the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or induce actions in other human agents" (as cited in Quigley, 2009, p. 2).

Identification is simply a feeling of connection between an audience and a speaker. This occurs when the speaker acts or speaks by appealing to his audience's emotions (*pathos*). Speakers use pathos to appeal to their audience's emotions for pity or unity. These appeals may be negative or positive. They prompt the audience to feel somewhat connected, by having endured the same sufferings, had the same interest or experience, and being at the same level as the speaker. Burke argues that the differences between the speaker and the audience make the audience feel guilty, hence satisfaction through identification. This identification has to be brought about by some kind of persuasion action or speech.

After identification has occurred, then the audience becomes consubstantial with the speaker. Consubstantiality is the process of associating, whereby individuals persuade others, or themselves, that they have similar qualities (Quigley, 2009). According to Burke (1969), to be consubstantial with something is to be identified with it, to feel connected with it; yet concurrently, to be different from what it is identified with. This theory is significant in this study for two reasons. First, often in public speaking, the speaker is not at the same level as the audience. Second, identification occurs on either party; the speaker or the audience.

Methodology

A qualitative research method was used to carry out this study. Oral interviews were suitable for this study as they allow the participants to elaborate, hence data was collected using these interviews. The interviews were conducted face-to-face and were guided by the following questions: 1) What is the importance of public speaking? 2) Why did you choose to often convey your messages via public speaking and not mainly other modes of communication? 3) What makes a good speech? 4) What speaking register do you use for your speeches? 5) What specific persuasive strategies do you use in your speeches? 6) What possible indications do you notice about the audience being persuaded? (Based on Burke's theory of Identification) 7) What informs you that you have achieved your communicative purpose? (Based on Burke's theory of Identification) 8) What are the challenges that you encounter when preparing or delivering your speech? 9) What is the role of code-switching in your speech (optional and it is also associated with Burke's theory of Identification) 10) What are the key public speaking skills that you recommend for other public speakers and those who would want to pursue public speaking? In Namibia, there are several politicians, motivational speakers, and comedians, however, only one participant was selected from each category: Politician, Motivational speaker and Comedian. The researcher recorded the interviews with an audio recorder. The

data collected from this study were transcribed and interpreted for analysis. Convenient sampling was used to select the participants because they are regarded as public speakers based on their profiles as outlined below.

Peya Mushelenga is a renowned Namibian politician, a poet, a minister and a Member of Parliament; needless to say, he belongs to the ruling party. He was selected as a participant in this study because he often campaigns, gives public speeches as official duties and public lectures to the general public. He participates in parliamentary debates and also sepaaks at election campaigns.

Sam Shivute is a renowned Namibian motivational speaker and a transformational coach. In 2015 he founded *A Night of Inspiration* which has since become the most highly anticipated inspirational event in the Namibian calendar. His motivational speaking career requires him to address various groups of people from all walks of life. He addresses and gives talks to civil servants, corporate organisations staffs, youth groups, schools, etcetera. He is currently a Director at the Bank of Namibia.

Ndangi Ileka is a renowned Namibian Stand-up comedian and influencer. He is known especially by the youths as the majority of attendees of comedy shows are the youth. He performs stand-up comedy shows at theatres and other public gatherings. He also performs at numerous corporate events as well as international events.

Findings

In this section, the three participants' responses to the interview questions are presented. The responses comprise details about why the participants choose to put across their messages via public speaking; the register they use; the reactions of their audiences, indications of having reached their communicative goals; challenges they experience when delivering speeches; and their recommendations of effective skills for public speaking. Despite the researcher not asking them directly, she sought possible literary devices that are used during speeches.

Political point of view. Often, according to Participant 1, when people hear the word *politician* they are quick to think about the president, ministers and people who hold high positions in government. While it is correct to think that way, it should also be clear that a politician is anyone who is involved professionally in politics regardless of how high or low his or her position is. Politicians are known for debating, making laws, campaigning, informing

and addressing the electorate at rallies of their political parties or the general public. The aforesaid activities involve using language through public speaking.

This brings the researcher to the point of unravelling the kind of language and register that politicians use when addressing their audiences. This revelation helps to highlight the key guide to persuade an audience during rallies, campaigns and other informative speeches that politicians may engage in. Politicians address their audiences tactfully so they can win them over to their way of thinking and eventually get them to take some actions. De Wet (2017) illustrates that “political persuasive messages may range from an ordinary plea to an electorate to vote for particular issues or candidates, to a call for violent action on behalf of the suffering of opposed people” (p. 121).

Participant 1 says that public speaking is important because it enables him to convey his message. He puts his message across in a manner that does not offend his audience. On the question of why he chooses to convey his messages via public speaking and not via other forms of communication, Participant 1 responded that when writing for publication, it does not give one guarantee that the audience reads everything he has written. He further states that, however, about 90% of the time of the audience will be dedicated to listening to him when he is in front of an audience.

Participant 1 says to give a good and convincing speech, one has to possess very good language use. He believes that the use of proverbs and metaphors makes the audience willing to listen. He added that figurative expressions are catchy words or phrases. He further said the audience is likely to pay more attention when catchy phrases are used. He gave a practical example of his speech at the farewell function of the late and former Speaker of the Namibian National Assembly, Theo-Ben Gurirab, when he said: “You emptied the calabash of wisdom before this august house.” He stressed that it could have not been interesting in the ear of the listener if it was said literally. According to Participant 1, the literal meaning is simply to say, you have advised us properly in this august house.

Participant 1 agreed that it is necessary to adjust the speaking register when giving a public speech depending on the discipline from where the topic is derived. He said that since the language of diplomacy is international or universal, he applies it. He also believes that catchy phrases are likely to be similar in one way or the other, globally.

Concerning effective strategies for persuasion that he uses in his speeches, Participant 1 clarified that in rhetoric, first, one has to consider the type of words they are using in their rhetoric, which is the most important part and then the type of audience. He illustrated that if one is in parliament and he or she has opponents whose political affiliation differs from theirs, they aim to win, therefore, they should apply rhetoric with attractively crafted words. This may include the use of antithesis where opposing views are presented. In political rhetoric, the speaker may use blaming and praising as an antithesis. Considering the language and how to use it, one applies style (*elocutio*) which enables the speaker to choose the appropriate register of speaking.

Participant 1 indicated that one of the indications that the audience is persuaded or concurs with what the speaker said is when they interrupt him with applause. He believes that if no one is applauding, then something is wrong with the speech. He also mentioned that when one writes a speech, the speech must have a rhythm. Another indication is when the audience gives gestures such as nodding. He further exemplified that, when one has an audience of academics, he looks at the most senior academics, because when they nod, he knows he is making a good point. Often, this gesture is regarded as giving consent or agreeing with the speaker.

Regarding what informs him that he has reached his communicative purpose, Participant 1 indicated that the comments and questions posed to him thereafter, especially in public lectures, give him a sign that he has reached his goals or not. He stated that in most cases if the audience had a few questions or none, that could mean he has made himself clear. He further said phone calls and follow-up queries could be an indication that the audience is interested in his speech.

About the challenges he encounters during public speaking, he stated that challenges may arise when one underestimates the audience. For instance, the speaker may have good rhetorical skills but the level of the audience may not appreciate his catchy phrases because they are below their level, in this case, he has to adjust to their level of understanding.

Participant 1 also mentioned code-switching while giving a speech. He said that one must first figure out what the audience wants to hear, specifically the type of words. This is crucial as the language use may be offensive to them while others might not find it offensive. Before giving a speech, one may wish to speak to one or two people. He stated that, as a politician, he usually researches about one or two phrases from the audience's vernacular

beforehand. This is crucial so that when he speaks English he could code switch about two or three times as this makes the audience identify with him. The latter is based on Burke's theory of identification. According to Andres (1992), "Burke suggests that you persuade or communicate with a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his" (p. 53).

Participant 1 stressed that each person needs presentation skills. He added that one may have good words and may be articulate but it is the manner she or he presents them that matters the most. Keeping eye contact with the audience and the intonation used are also important. Similarly, Gatawa (2019) reasons that although eye contact is not easy to maintain, it is an influential way to connect with the audience. Another skill is to use exclamation and discourse markers, such as, *ou yes, believe me, or you know what!*

Motivational speaker's point of view. According to Participant 2, his primary goal in his speeches is to inspire his audience to excel and succeed in their endeavours hence he adopts a positive attitude and persuasive language to motivate his audience. This implies that he chooses his words carefully. In this section, the language and the register used in delivering public speeches will be discussed from the perspective of motivational public speaking. Participant 2 stated that public speaking is important because it inspires, persuades and compels people to act.

Similar to Participant 1, Participant 2 believes that public speaking is more effective than writing, as not everyone will read the message one puts across. He argues that, for instance, if one sends a note or a letter to a school to encourage students, there is no guarantee that everybody will read it or understand it. He further emphasised that when one addresses an audience face-to-face, the impact is huge and one can feel it as she or he can see how the audience reacts and responds to the message. Participant 2 feels that this helps the speaker evaluate whether the audience understood the message or not.

According to Participant 2, his choice of words during a public speaking engagement is determined by the audience. Before he meets them, he often likes to study his audience. He calls it "audience analysis". He takes into consideration the language spoken by the audience, demography, age, the type of people, industry, etcetera, so he can decide to use the register that the audience will be able to follow. He stated that he does not necessarily use complex vocabulary but applies the plain language concept.

Participant 2 plans his talk and delivery. This could allude to one of the five canons of rhetoric, delivery (*Pronuntiatio*). He stated that it is important to clarify one's purpose. He said that he realised that if one talks about what matters to the audience then the audience is likely to be interested. So far, he has not noticed an audience that was uninterested in his speeches. He also stressed the aspect of being relevant as a crucial strategy in public speaking. Instead of stating the facts, he said that it is always worthy of the speaker to tell a story that is relevant to what he is talking about. Participant 2 referred to the latter as unpacking relevant things. He illustrated that one should tell a story recounting their own experiences so as to gain the audience's trust. This could also allude to the character of the speaker (*ethos*) and identification as stated in Burke's theory. When an audience perceives credibility in the speaker, then they are likely to believe them.

Participant 2 said that one of the important gestures to connect with your audience is eye contact. The reactions of his audience and the continuous invitations that he gets to give speeches both locally and internationally have assured him that his audiences are interested. He said the body movements can communicate the reaction of the audience and some gestures like the sitting manner and eye contact can tell whether they are bored or interested. The only challenges that he mentioned is that of technical problems that may arise during his speeches, or perhaps when he misses a scheduled speech because of unforeseen circumstances such as being sick.

Participant 2 believes that to have a positive attitude and to know one's audience is a starting point but one must also plan the speech carefully as the introduction, body and conclusion are critical to successful delivery. He also suggested that people should not burden themselves about accent as it is not a key skill in speaking. He re-emphasised that a speaker should be authentic and tell his or her story, as the audience would want to know more about them. Most importantly, speakers should not look down on their audience. Participant 2 does not often use proverbs or idioms (figurative expressions) in his speeches, however, at times he utilises quotes from prominent speakers when necessary.

Comedian point of view. Participant 3 finds comedy fascinating since he is talented in humorous performances. According to Participant 3, public speaking engagement is important because it provokes some thoughts among the audience which allows them to think about critical and contemporary issues and it also drives social change. He believes comedies make people happy.

Regarding the choice of words that Participant 3 uses in his comedies, he stated that it depends on the audience he is addressing since he does not always use English in his speeches. Similar to Participant 2, Participant 3 believes that it is important to first write, prepare, and thereafter, present the speech. This is supported by the canons of rhetoric that advise speakers to accurately prepare (*inventio*) before the speech and deliver (*pronuntiatio*) on the stage. He also mentioned that the choice of words also depends on the subject matter. Because of the broader audience he addresses, he does not use swear words and he tries by all means to avoid profanity.

Participant 3 believes that one of the most important strategies to persuade the audience is to simply tell a good joke, thereafter, they will be kept entertained throughout. Another strategy is to tell interesting stories in interesting ways. He emphasised that in comedies, one has to keep the audience entertained all the time. He made it clear that one of the most obvious indications that the audience is persuaded in comedy shows is laughter. Hence, he stressed the importance of writing down one's thoughts and going to different towns to perform before the main performance.

Participant 3 agreed that there are some challenges in public speaking regarding comedy shows. He said that they do their shows in venues where people might be drunk and start shouting: "You're not funny or you suck." Another challenge is that it is somewhat difficult to get new jokes. In addition to that, one is always kept on his toes and the reactions by the audience might make him reverse course. For example, someone in the audience might become emotional and may suddenly start crying.

Participant 3 stated that filling up the stage with one's presence is the key to effective delivery as the speaker is the sole focus of the audience. He added that the speaker should be well informed; should not talk of things they have little knowledge of; should be prepared, smart and flexible as the situation might change and; should ensure that they have everyone's attention.

Participant 3 admitted that he code-switches a lot in his performances. He stated that he tries to figure out what makes his audience laugh by considering what is trending at that specific time and place. If he can speak the language that the audience speak, then he would codeswitch between English and that language. He emphasised that comedians talk about general things and must know what is currently happening. He illustrated that comedians, politicians,

witchdoctors and prophets fall in the same category regarding adoption of persuasive strategies in their delivery and that this comes with practice.

Discussion

Regardless of their communicative purposes, all speakers' goal is to give a persuasive speech. As a result, speakers use various strategies, appeals and tactics. Each speaker would want to win the hearts of his or her audience. From this study's findings, it is clear that in their speeches, politicians want to gain trust and votes; motivational speakers want their audience to be inspired and get motivated by what they tell them; while comedians want to elicit laughter from their audience. Having said that, it does not always mean that once the speakers give their speech, their communicative goals are achieved. This section closely analyses the findings of the study.

All three participants highlighted the significance of public speaking as a crucial communicative tool than the other communication modes such as writing etc. Speaking creates a strong bond between the audience and the speaker and it allows them to connect while listening. All participants' views point to the essentiality of conveying messages through speaking than in writing. This implies that speaking is a powerful tool of communication. While it is true that a lot can be said in writing, such as through books, articles, documents, magazines, and other materials, it is critical to consider the audience in this regard. For example, the culture of reading was not previously instilled in Namibian learners, thus, reading is still slowly becoming commonplace among Namibians. Recently, there have been initiatives that encourage Namibians to read. This indicates that many people do not read. At one of the launches of the 'Let's read Project', Gwen Lister, the chairperson of the Media Trust said that until Namibians cultivate the reading habit, they will not make progress (Amukwaya, 2014). This might indicate that a lot of people are interested in listening to speeches and performances than reading.

Although not all speakers use figurative language such as idioms, proverbs, metaphor, etc., it is believed that these are decorative persuasive tools that speakers can use to change the audience's mood and mind towards their messages. Since Participant 1 is the only one who mentioned the use of figurative expressions, this could mean it is more popular in political rhetorics than in other types of rhetoric. It is believed that some metaphors are commonly used daily so much so that we do not recognise their metaphoric quality any longer (Crowley & Hawhee, 1999). Mbenzi (2014) as cited in (Amakali, 2016) defines metaphors as persuasive

tools that are used to stir up emotions. Aristotle states that metaphors give us pleasure because they enable us to acquire new knowledge, and learning is obviously pleasant to humans (as cited in Crowley & Hawhee, 1999). According to Participant 1, the audience pays more attention to him when he uses figurative language. Figurative expressions are good sounding words, phrases and sentences. The listeners may find them interesting to listen to as they look forward to figuring out their literal meanings. In his speech of the hand-over of houses ceremony dated 17 September 2019 in Oshakati, Participant 1 used figurative language when he was introducing the president to the audience as follows:

You have often heard him talking about the Namibian House; that's because he is its principal draughtsman and civil engineer; a talented architect and notable designer; a skilled bricklayer and founder expert; a cornerstone master and renowned constructor; an acclaimed builder and distinguished craftsman; an accomplished artisan and superior painter of the Namibian House (Mushelenga, 2019).

He used these embellishments to portray the president's action, commitment and dedication to the Namibian cause. These are positive and good sounding expressions for the audience which also befit the occasion.

Research reveals that metaphor has been a central tool in rhetorical sets. This is supported by Crowley and Hawhee (1999) as they emphasise that "Aristotle, like other ancient rhetoricians, was more interested in metaphor than he was in other tropes of figures, and metaphor has received more attention from modern rhetoricians and literary critics than has any other trope of figure" (p. 260). Based on this assertion, metaphor is a powerful tool in speeches, regardless of the communicative purpose.

Catchphrases are known for making messages memorable, hence their significance in public speaking (Gatawa, 2019). They are common in motivational speeches, i.e., *I am a winner, I am free*; and in campaign speeches i.e. *Harambee, One Namibia one nation*. Catchphrases can be used as slogans and have to be well crafted to suit the audience. Some catchphrases have become buzzwords. Participant 2 uses catchphrases such as, *Be unlimited, Unpack your story*, etc. In his TEDx Windhoek 2015 talk, participant 2 used catchphrases such as *I believe in the Namibian dream, I believe in having energy, I believe in energising those around me, I believe in playing beyond and I believe in executing* (Inspiring with care, 2015). These are usually used to empower and motivate his audiences. The phrase *Be unlimited* has become a buzzword among his audience.

While *logos*, *ethos* and *pathos* are the basic proofs of persuasion, they are all applicable to the branches of rhetoric; namely, deliberative, forensic, and epideictic. De Wet (2017) claims “although these proofs overlap in the sense that they often work together in persuasive oratory, *logos* is most concerned with the speech, *ethos* with the speaker and *pathos* with the audience” (p. 35). Participant 2 believes in testimonies. He believes that people should share their stories with their audience. While sharing stories may appeal to the audience’s emotions (*ethos*), De Wet (2017) acclaims *logos* and says “it relies on the audience’s ability to perceive information, such as statistical data, examples and testimony, in logical ways to arrive at some conclusion” (p. 35). Often people get inspired by stories that others share, such as, stories of hardships, sufferings, successes, miracles and biographies. Considering this, it is crucial that a speaker uses anecdote as a tool for persuading his/her audience. Besides, Kenneth Burke’s (1969) theory of identification somewhat promotes rhetorical tools that propel listeners to identify with the speaker. He further claims that identification occurs when there is a feeling of similarity between the speaker and the listener. Jackson (2013) defines identification as “the feeling of relating to a person, issue or organisation” (p. 6).

It can be concluded that the use of anecdotes within speeches is an effective way of persuading audiences. During Participant 2’s motivational speeches and especially when he unpacks his life stories, some audience members tend to relate their experiences with his. While the audience might have a feeling that they have similar experiences hence they are one, he might have reached his communicative goals through this identification.

Using appropriate language for a specific audience is crucial and all participants indicated that it is necessary to use the kind of language that best suits the audience. The participants highlighted that their style of speaking is based on the kind of audience they address. Their views could be associated with one of the canons of rhetoric, style (*elocutio*). In linguistic terms, this is known as the register, which simply means style. Participant 3 indicated that it is important to research what is currently trending. This helps a speaker’s delivery. Participant 1 indicated that he considers etiquettes of the audience he will address, such as in foreign countries. This helps a speaker to choose a suitable register. It is important to use the appropriate register to enable one to connect with the audience.

Kinds of the register could be formal, informal, technical, non-academic or academic. Once the speaker determines the kind of register she or he will use, it will be easy to choose the words to be used in their speeches. For instance, if one’s speech is an academic lecture,

which is likely to be formal, then they should use academic terms while in other registers, figurative expressions may be used. Furthermore, in a campaign speech, the speaker is likely to adopt propaganda style and strong words which might have negative or positive connotations by way of shaming, blaming or praising.

However, in comedies, the language use focuses more on the most humorous words such as slang, colloquialisms, and figurative language. Participant 3 mentioned that it is important to find out what makes people laugh. A comedy-show entails the most informal language due to its nature because it aims at humorous delivery. Code-switching is also common in comical speeches and some speakers often code-switch between languages that the audience is most familiar with. This is why it is necessary to do research on the type of audience that one will address. This includes their language, culture, and also the current trends among the audience. Participant 3 also indicated that code-switching excites the audience. The audience seems to identify easily with the person who speaks their language, dress up in their attire, or speaks of their cultural beliefs, etc. Research shows that one needs to consider the content to code switch; for example, the greetings, metaphors, concluding phrases, etc. It is apparent that “you persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his” (Hamam, para. 16).

One way to identify with your audience is to let them know that you are aware of their presence. In one of his stand-up comedies in Windhoek, Participant 3 commended the ladies for their attendance as follows: It’s good that you guys really came out, because it’s raining and stuff but you guys came out, in this economy, and ladies who came out, because you know ladies and their weave, then it rains ... (Iileka broke and famous, 2017). He humorously says this because he knows ladies do not like their weaves being soaked in the rain as the hairstyle will be ruined. He wants to show the audience that he is considerate about it and thankful that they came, anyway.

All three participants indicated that they do brief research about their audience before their speeches. According to Gatawa (2019), those who make jokes in their speeches should be cautious not to make jokes that will turn off their audience or make them laugh at him as this can interfere with the speaker’s credibility. Despite the participants’ reasoning, their style includes many artefacts such as accuracy, clarity, evidence, propriety and ornateness (Mckay & Mckay, 2011).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed at unravelling the persuasive strategies used by public speakers during their speeches. The study also focused on how these strategies allude to rhetorical theories. All three participants highlighted important aspects of carrying out an effective and persuasive speech. These include both the preparation stage and the delivery stage. Most of the essential tools drawn from this study allude to identification as they have a great impact between a speaker and an audience.

From the findings, some viable persuasive strategies could be used as suitable tools for effective public speaking and are proven by literature. They are as follow: conducting a little research about the audience and familiarising oneself with them as this will help the rhetor address the needs of the audience; the rhetor should also consider the kind of register to use as this will help the audience understand the context; the use of figurative expressions, such as, metaphors plays a role in public speaking as they entail catchy words and information which may enrich the audience's knowledge; sharing one's story (anecdote) during a speech gives relevance and also room for the audience to identify with the speaker; eye contact is one of the primary bonds between a speaker and an audience, hence it is advisable to keep eye contact; and; lastly, code-switching is essential for identifying with the audience and vice-versa.

It should be noted that although public speaking requires a range of communicative skills, the ones mentioned in this study are based on persuading the audience. It can be concluded that the three participants possess qualities of effective public speakers since their responses and examples from their speeches are a true reflection of the identification process which from the literature is an effective process of persuasion. Identification in public speaking creates a good chance of closing the gap between the audience and the speaker. This gap is filled with fear, insecurities, low self-esteem, nervousness and lonesomeness. Once the gap is closed, both parties (speaker and audience) have something in common.

References

- Amakali, J. (2016). Persuasive speech acts in the Namibian national assembly. *Journal of Advances in Linguistics*, 7(2), 1205-1217.
- Amukwaya, Y. (2014, November 25). Promoting a youth reading culture. *The Namibian*. p. 2.
- Andres, L. G. (1992, September 1). Kenneth Burke's Theory of Identification: An essential for business communication. *The Bulletin*. p. 53.

- Beeman, W. O. (1999). Humor. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 9(1). 103-106.
- Burke, K. (1969). *A rhetoric of motives*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Crowley, S., & Hawhee, D. (1999). *Ancient rhetorics: For contemporary students* (2nd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- De Wet, J. C. (2017). *The art of persuasive communication: A process* (4th ed.). Cape Town, South Africa: Juta and Company (Pty) Ltd.
- Gatawa, E. (2019). *It's your turn to speak: Building a repertoire for ingenious speaking*. Windhoek, Namibia: Loud 'n' clear Public Speaking.
- Hamam, M. (2014). If one language is not enough to convince you, I will use two: Burkean identification/dissociation as a key to interpret code-switching. *The Journal of Kenneth Burke's Society*, 10(1).
- Ileka Broke and Famous (2018, November 2). Retrieved from [www.https://youtu.be/wA6gDcEbryk](https://youtu.be/wA6gDcEbryk)
- Inspiring with care (2015, April 28). Retrieved from [www.https://youtu.be/yBBBnPwLlk](https://youtu.be/yBBBnPwLlk)
- Jackson, C. Y. (2013). *The use of rhetoric in public relations: Kenneth Burke's Theory of Identification and Consubstantiality. Dissertations. Theses and Capstone Projects. Paper 56*. Kennesaw State University, Georgia, USA.
- Keith, W., & Lundberg, C. (2014). Creating a history for public speaking instruction. *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, 17(1), 137-146.
- Mckay, B., & Mckay, K. (2011). *Classical rhetorical 101: The five canons of rhetoric-delivery*. Retrieved from <http://www.artofmanliness.com/2011/05/04/canon-of-delivery/>
- Mushelenga, P. (2019, September 17). The hand-over of houses ceremony. Retrieved from <http://www.murd.gov.na/what-we-do>
- Nikitina, A. (2011). *Successful public speaking*. Retrieved from https://www.isbtweb.org/fileadmin/user_upload/successful-public-speaking.
- Quigley, B. L. (2009). Identification as a key term in Kenneth Burke's Rhetorical Theory. *AC Journal*, 1(3), 1-5.