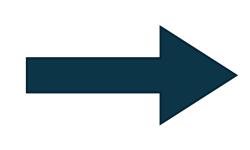
Virtual Reality as a Tool for Public Speaking Training

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Speaking in public is an essential soft skill in both private and professional life, yet it is highly feared

Public speaking skills can be acquired through training



Limitations of traditional training approaches



Product presentation School project School





AUDIENCE DESIGN



Perceptive studies guide audience design

Validated library of nonverbal behaviors (Etienne et al., 2023)

Behaviors Posture, head movement, and facial expression combinations that vary in valence and arousal^{1, 2}

---- Valence

How positively of negatively the audience feels toward the speaker or the presentation²

Arousal The level of alertness of the audience²

Perception of virtual audiences

Influence of agents' **gender** and **nonverbal behavior** on the perception of valence and arousal

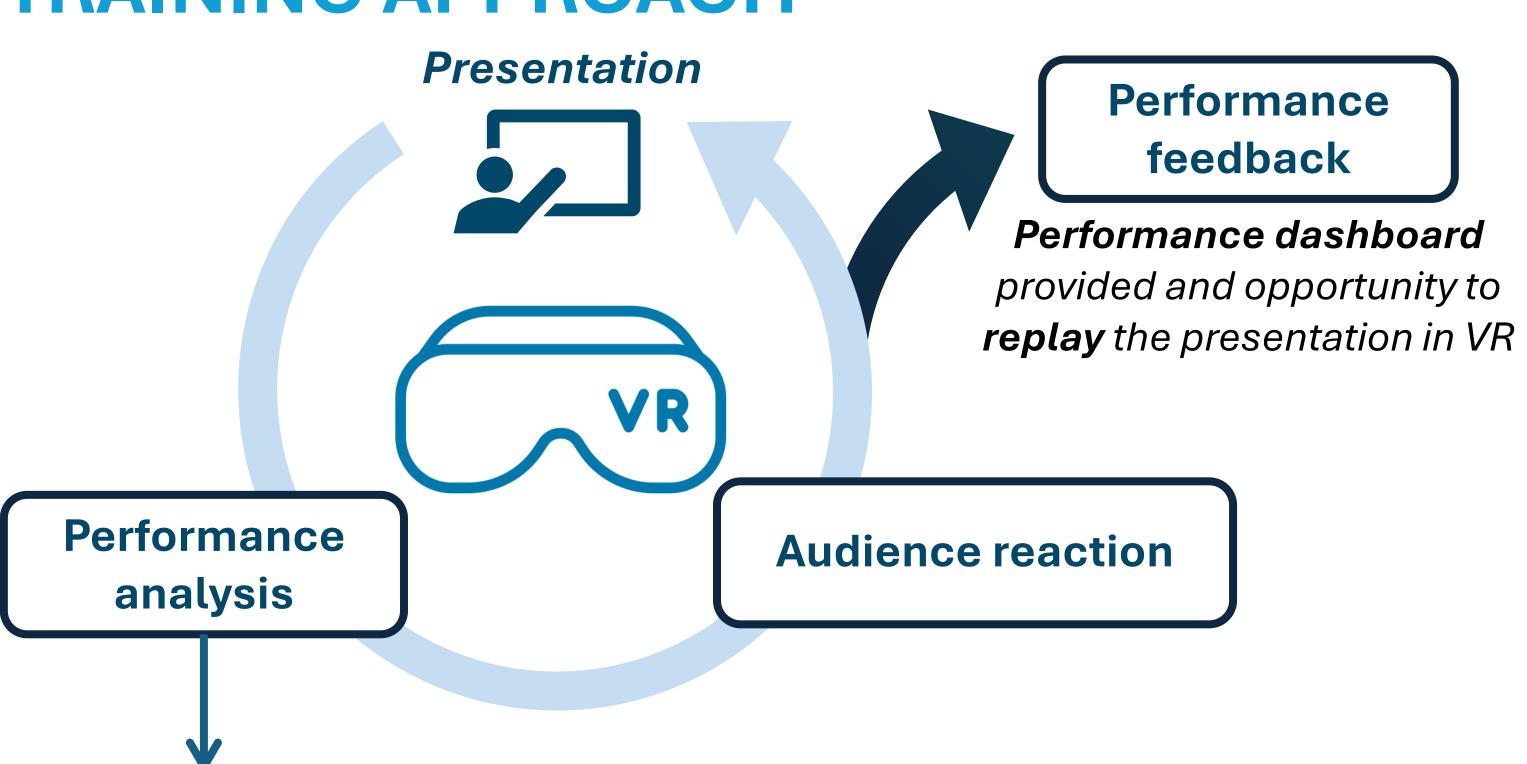
Events and contextual behaviors

Events and behaviors based on the simulated public speaking context

Appearance

- Photo-realistic agents of various age, ethnicities, and genders
- ➤ No uncanny effect observed¹

TRAINING APPROACH



Multimodal cues are better predictors of performance^{3, 4}

Linguistic

- ✓ Word count
- ✓ Words used✓ Language
- diversity metrics

Paralinguistic

- ✓ Fundamental
- frequency (pitch)
- ✓ Voice intensity✓ Speech rate

✓ ...

Nonverbal

- ✓ Stage usage
- ✓ Hand movements
- ✓ Gaze✓ Body language
- ✓ ...

CONCLUSION

- Training solution applicable in multiple domains and contexts
- Validated nonverbal behavior library
- Validated photorealistic virtual agents
- Virtual rooms validated in terms of presence⁵
- Next steps:
 - ✓ Enrich the performance dashboard
 - ✓ Automatic reaction of the audience
 - ✓ Effectiveness assessment

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