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## **Effects of Job Stereotype, Applicant Gender, and Powerful and Powerless Speech Styles on Telephone Interview Outcomes**

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EFFECTS OF JOB STEREOTYPE, APPLICANT GENDER, AND  
POWERFUL AND POWERLESS SPEECH STYLES  
ON TELEPHONE INTERVIEW OUTCOMES

by

Heather DeAnna Palmer McFarland

A Dissertation  
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December 2007

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## ABSTRACT

### EFFECTS OF JOB STEREOTYPE, APPLICANT GENDER, AND POWERFUL AND POWERLESS SPEECH STYLES ON TELEPHONE INTERVIEW OUTCOMES

by Heather DeAnna Palmer McFarland

December 2007

By examining the effects of powerful and powerless speech styles, gender stereotyped jobs, and gendered voices during the employment interviewing process, this study sought to further the research of Parton (1996); Parton, Siltanen, Hosman, and Langenderfer (2002); and Juodvalkis, Grefe, Hogue, Svyantek, and DeLamarter (2003). This study was designed to further explore the possibility of longitudinal changes within acceptable communicative expectations during telephone job interviewing. Participants (undergraduate and professional) listened to two audio taped interviews manipulated by speech style, stereotyped job title, and interviewee gender. Variables were evaluated on semantic differential scales following the previous work of Parton (1996). Similar to those of Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002), results indicated that powerful speech style suggested positive attributions of overall impression and employability; and gender significantly interacts with speech style and attribution of similarity and within several multiple variable interactions. Results further indicated that undergraduate and professional participants continue to evaluate speech styles differently. However, the current study found significance for control-of-self within multi-variaded interactions that were previously not found. Therefore, theoretical outcomes and implications within the associated research were addressed.

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## DEDICATION

To my grandmother, Joyce Nell Tribble, and my great-grand mother, Mary Blanche Lowery, two women that taught me the importance of courage, adventure, and determination.

And, for our future daughter, Robin Cordelia McFarland, I love you so much even though we have not met. I hope you have loved listening to all those journal articles while I have carried you.

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## CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

Almost from the beginning, speech communication scholars have recognized that certain characteristics of speakers make them successful communicators (Aristotle, trans. 1954; Cicero, trans. 1959; Richards, 1936; Burke, 1950; Ehninger, 1968; Hamilton, 2001; Lucas, 2004; Perloff, 1993). For example, classical scholars identified five essential components of successful persuasive speaking: (1) source credibility via the creation of persuasive arguments, (2) speech style with eloquence via the careful selection of words in the messages, (3) organization of arguments, (4) memorization, and (5) the delivery of a message (Aristotle, trans. 1954; Cicero, trans. 1959; Richards, 1936; Burke, 1950; Ehninger, 1968; Hamilton, 2001; Lucas, 2004; Perloff, 1993). As Ehninger (1968) posited in his seminal article, historically, speech communication scholars have focused on the varying components. Specifically, he argued that classical scholars such as Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Cicero studied characteristics of the speaker such as ethos, believability, and education; in the 1700-1800's, scholars such as Ogilvie, Campbell, and Priestly studied characteristics of the audience such as size, location, background, age, and education; and in the 1900's, scholars such as Richards, Dewey and Burke, focused on characteristics of the message, such as word usage, arrangement and emotional response (Ehninger, 1968, p. 16-20).

While these components have historically been studied independently, as pointed out by Parton (1996), contemporary researchers recognized their interdependence and studied the combined effects of speaker and message characteristics. For example, Johnson and Vinson (1987) found that speech style may have the ability to affect one's credibility. Consequently, several contemporary scholars have explored the

interdependence of speaker credibility, message characteristics, and speech style (Bradac, Mulac, & Thompson, 1994; Carli, 1990; Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Siltanen, 1994; 2006; Vinson & Johnson, 1989).

Contemporary research has identified and demonstrated the persuasive effects of various components of source credibility such as: (1) competency often communicated via speech style, (2) believability and trustworthiness, (3) energy and charisma of the speaker, and (4) similarity or consubstantiality between speaker and audience (Bradac, 1990; Bradac & Mulac, 1984a; Bradac et al., 1994; Parton, 1996; Hosman & Siltanen, 2006; Parton, Siltanen, Hosman, & Langenderfer, 2002).

Likewise, researchers have identified and demonstrated the persuasive effects of specific components of a powerless speech style such as (1) clarity, (2) intensity, (3) politeness, and (4) power (Bradac & Mulac, 1984a; Hosman, 1997; Hosman, Huebner, & Siltanen, 2002; Hosman & Wright, 1987, Wright & Hosman, 1983). Furthermore, researchers have investigated the interaction effects of source credibility and speech style, finding that powerful speech style enhances source credibility (perceived competency, believability, and charisma) of a speaker (Hosman, 1997; Hosman, Huebner, & Siltanen, 2002; Hosman & Siltanen, 2006; Hosman & Wright, 1987; Parton et al., 2002; Wright & Hosman, 1983).

Interviewing continues to be an area of extensive concern for communication scholars and thus creates a need for study (Adler, 1992; Arvey & Campion, 1982; Bauer, Truxillo, Paronto, Weekley, & Campion, 2004; DeGroot & Motowidlo, 1999; Harris, 1989; Juodvalkis, Grefe, Hogue, Svyantek, & DeLamarter, 2003; Schmidt & Rader, 1999; Stewart & Cash, 1994; Straus, Miles, & Levesque, 2001; Silvester & Anderson,

2003). As discussed by earlier researchers, interviewing is considered an integral part of the employment process (Carli, 1994; Parton, 1996; Silvester & Anderson, 2003). This process, though conversational in style, often consists of a circular interaction utilizing questions and answers to gain knowledge and thus make inferences about the communicators involved. The recognized importance of interviewing continues within almost all aspects of educational, societal, and professional settings (Hamilton, 2005; Tengler & Jablin, 1983; Silvester & Anderson, 2003; Straus et al., 2001).

As shown by the research of Parton (1996), employment interviews are important for personal success, and thus further research is imperative for greater understanding. Furthermore, as companies expand into global markets, “many companies are now screening candidates through interviews from remote locations and saving money and time in the process” (Lehman & DuFrene, 1999, p. 540). Schmidt & Rader (1999) explain that the initial employment interview, also known as a screening interview, is a measurement procedure for evaluating education and experience, biographical data, and individual assessment centered upon these elements. Tengler and Jablin (1983) posited that the employment interview is a central component within the selection procedure for most organizations. Currently, several comprehensive reviews of the employment interview research indicate that many variables contribute to successful employment interview outcome (Ployhart & Ryan, 1998; Bauer et al., 2004), applicant behavior and perceived intentions (Bauer et al., 2004), and speech styles (Adler, 1992; Gallois, Callan, & Palmer, 1992; Parton, 1996; Juodvalkis et al., 2003; Parton et al., 2002; Wiley & Eskilson, 1985).

The focus of this dissertation is to assess the available research on powerful/powerless speech styles, gender and expectancy of stereotypes within speech, and speech styles within employment interviewing with the goal of generating hypotheses about the effect of job stereotype, applicant gender, and speech styles on telephone interview outcomes.

### Literature Review

The research reviewed in this section is divided into three areas: (1) foundational studies (Bradac & Mulac, 1984a; Bradac & Mulac, 1984b; Erickson, Lind, Johnson, & O'Barr, 1978; Lakoff, 1973; Newcombe & Arnkoff, 1979; O'Barr & Atkins, 1980; Wright & Hosman, 1983), (2) studies of gender and power in speech communication (Blankenship & Craig, 2007; Bugental & Lewis, 1999; Bradac et al., 1994; Carli, 1990; Dovidio, Heltman, Brown, Ellyson, & Keating, 1988; Geddes, 1992; Gibbons, Busch, & Bradac, 1991; Holtgraves & Lasky, 1999; Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Siltanen, 1994; Hosman & Wright, 1987; Johnson & Vinson, 1987; Ruvu & Bryant, 2004; Smith, Siltanen, & Hosman, 1998; Thimm, Rademacher, & Kruse, 1995), and (3) studies on speech styles and power in an employment interview context (Fragale, 2006; Gallois et al., 1992; Juodvalkis et al., 2003; Parton et al., 2002; Wiley & Eskilson, 1985).

#### *Foundational Studies*

In her seminal works, Lakoff (1973, 1975) argued that men and women are acculturated to speak differently: men are taught and expected to use what she labeled a “powerful speech style” while women use what she called a “powerless speech style”. Her work explored aspects of speech with regard to lexicon, syntax, intonations, and referential meanings. Within her research, Lakoff made three main arguments: (1)



Language by women was reflexive of the way they were taught to speak; (2) Language used about women leads to a secondary weakness; and (3) If women or men use the language style for the other, then they violate expectations and are penalized within society. She also asserted that language used to describe women suggested their powerlessness compared to men. With these claims, Lakoff suggested two varying perspectives for understanding the differing styles: (1) The Difference Perspective and (2) The Dominance Perspective. The difference perspective suggested that men and women are socialized differently and as a result learn to speak differently during the developmental years. Lakoff claimed that it is expected within society for appropriate women's speech to express uncertainty and be void of any strong expression of feeling. Additionally, expression of subject matter deemed "trivial" to the "real world" is favored over subject matter considered more serious in nature. The dominance perspective suggests that "woman's language" is a result of dominance men hold over women within society. Lakoff claimed that the personal identity of women is linguistically submerged, and thus language works in contradiction to the treatment of women as serious people with individual views. Women who display this style of speech do so because men dominate their lives.

Erickson et al. (1978) argued against Lakoff's claim and suggested that the use of a differing speech style may affect certain perceptions of the speaker and the influence of his or her communication. These researchers posited that "woman's language" was actually reflexive of the powerless position generally held by many women within American society. Erickson et al. (1978) asserted that Lakoff's idea of "woman's language" was not incorrect, but would be better represented if "termed 'powerless

language,' a term which is more descriptive of the particular features involved, of the social status of those who speak in this manner, and one that does not link it unnecessarily to the sex of the speaker" (p. 275). They hypothesized that listeners regarded a powerful speech style as representative of high status and thus predicted powerful speakers would be seen as more attractive, having greater confidence, and having higher credibility (Erickson et al., 1978). Thus, the terms "powerful" and "powerless" were developed for the purpose of research.

Researchers found that linguistic variables used by communicators during their courtroom testimony could be indicators of power via their social status. Erickson et al. (1978) suggested that those in low-power positions, such as non-professionals, would display increased gestures, questioning forms, hedges, hesitations, hypercorrect grammar, intensifiers, and excessive polite forms (p. 267). Therefore, the research would further support the assumption that high-status speakers such as lawyers and judges would display a more powerful style of speech and therefore would not utilize the low-power position linguistic variables.

Erickson et al. presented one hundred and fifty-two undergraduate students at a mid-sized university with trial testimony differentiated by speech style and gender of the witness. The questionnaire asked participants their impressions of the witnesses based on the dimensions of speaker attractiveness and credibility. Both written and oral transcripts were recreated representing actual court transcripts with power of the speaker and gender being manipulated.

Participants were told that a critically ill patient involved in an automobile-ambulance crash died on the way to the hospital and that the patient's family was suing

the ambulance company. The researchers developed an 11-point semantic differential scale for rating action, competence, gender, intelligence, likability, power, strength, and trust and a second scale to measure believability, similarity, sympathy, and witness qualification. The questionnaire was coupled with questions that asked the participants to determine the ambulance company's level of responsibility for the patient's death. The researchers also asked each participant to recommend compensational amount to be awarded for damages.

To determine which dimensions affected participants' ratings of the witnesses, Erickson et al. performed a factor analysis of the questionnaire data that revealed three significant dimensions: attractiveness, credibility, and speaker sex. The study revealed powerful speakers to be considered more credible and attractive than their powerless counterparts. A significant main effect was found only for witness sex in which male witnesses were rated as more masculine (p. 275). This study not only examined speech style and sex of the speaker, but also manipulated the format in which the communication was presented. One group of the participants listened to audio recordings while the other group read transcribed text of actual testimony delivered during a courtroom trial.

Erickson et al. expected the audio recordings, rather than the limited features of the written form, to have a gender influence, but this was not the outcome of analysis. The female witness was determined to be more attractive than the male in the oral format, and the male was determined to be more attractive than the female in the written testimony.

Additionally, Erickson et al. found a significant main effect for credibility within speech styles, as well as an interaction effect for speech style, sex of witness, and sex of research participant. This means that participants perceived powerful witnesses as being

more credible than powerless witnesses, and the effect was greater when the participant and witness were of the same sex. Attractiveness analyses also yielded a significant main effect for speech style. In other words, powerful speakers were found to be more attractive than powerless speakers. Thus, Erickson et al. found that speech style affected credibility and attractiveness as well as acceptance in communication, and the findings of this study raised questions of modality. Specifically, female speakers were rated significantly more attractive in the spoken mode, while males were rated significantly more attractive in the written mode.

Regarding the attribution of responsibility and damages, the analysis revealed that regardless of gender, participants recommended higher damages if the witness's speech style was powerful and orally recorded, but if the testimony was written, participants only recommended higher damages if the witness was female. Other analyses revealed that the speech style manipulation also affected the participants' acceptance of the information communicated to them through the speaker's testimony. The authors contended that this acceptance may have been due to participants' perception of an individual's powerless speech style as a lack of confidence and therefore as less credible. Conversely, a powerful style may serve as a "marker" of the speaker's status and indicate certainty and confidence that leads to perceived believability and credibility because the succinct display of the powerful linguistic style is easier to discern (Erickson et al., 1978, P. 268). Therefore, the researchers concluded that the powerful speech style was more persuasive than the powerless speech style because the powerless speech style has associated costs that are attached to it, such as increased confusion and listening barriers.

In an effort to address the limits within Lakoff's earlier publication, Newcombe & Arnkoff (1979) developed a two-part study that utilized both undergraduate and adult female secretaries as participants. They felt that Lakoff could have been correct in several of her earlier assumptions, but that she also could have overlooked several important variables due to her lack of empirical evidence to support the claims set forth.

Because of this lack of empirical evidence, Lakoff made three assumptions based on intuition, and Newcombe & Arnkoff (1979) seek to address Lakoff's claims. The assumptions their study focuses on are: (1) the frequency differences of usage in words or phrases that she labeled as "woman's language," (2) the difference of perception of influence based on linguistic differences, and (3) how style of speech can affect perception of a person (p. 1294).

The study was broken into two experiments that utilized two male and two female audio recordings of eight versions of a 48-item simple assertions script developed to address three linguistic variables: tag questions, qualifiers, and compound requests. Each linguistic variable had 16 items included in the script. Participants were told that they would be participating in a study about "effective telephone communication" in order to control for nonverbal cues.

The first experiment utilized 138 undergraduate-only participants (75 males and 63 females). The participants were randomly assigned to one of 13 mixed-sex groups in order to listen to one of the eight script versions. The groups were between 6 and 15 students. Results found significance for tag questions, qualifiers, and compound requests. However, the research did not find significance for sex of subject within the tag questions analysis, and sex of speaker was only found significant for the assertiveness ratings

within the analysis for qualifiers. Therefore, the male speakers were perceived as more assertive regardless of their utilization of qualified or non-qualified speech (p.1298).

Based on the results, the researchers admitted that Lakoff was correct in several of her assumptions based on intuition in regard to perceptions due to speech style; however, they continue to question the sex of speaker on ratings because the rate of significance was minimal in their first experiment. Newcombe & Arnkoff stated that they held reservations for their findings because of the exclusive utilization of undergraduate students as participants, and they questioned whether age and level of education could have been factors. The researchers believed that an older or less educated sample population might show stronger sex stereotypes in their outcome.

Therefore, the second experiment utilized a representative sample of older and somewhat less formally educated participants. The sample consisted of female secretaries employed at the researchers' university and were recruited via cordial networks across campus. The second experiment's method was replicated from that of the first, except for the removal of sex of subject from the design. The researchers also collected age and educational background information on the participants for comparison purposes.

Again, limited significance was found for each of the three variables. The outcomes found a trend for tag questions to be rated less assertive than non-tag questions, and compound requests were rated less assertive than simple requests. However, similar to the undergraduate participants, significance was not found for sex of speaker and, therefore, the researchers contend that the stronger sex stereotypes that they thought might be revealed due to lack of education or age were not supported.

Newcombe & Arnkoff (1979) agree that Lakoff's initial assumptions have some merit, but that their findings are only the beginning and further empirical research should be done to address dimensions within language such as speech style and status, contexts of messages, and the relationship of sex and status on pattern variations of speech. The researchers continued to question Lakoff's assumption of the "double bind" experienced by women because they will either be labeled as unfeminine or unlikeable depending on the speech style they exhibit. Lakoff did not account for middle ground and, therefore, more research into this assumption is needed.

O'Barr and Atkins (1980) further utilized Lakoff's work as a starting point for further understanding language and sex differences (p. 93). The researchers explored the difference between how women and men speak in courtroom settings. Utilizing the powerful/powerless speech markers discussed by Lakoff (1973) and further researched by Erickson et al. (1978) and Newcombe & Arnkoff (1979), the researchers analyzed 150 hours of courtroom testimony from a North Carolina superior criminal court for the study. Through the utilization of actual trial tapes, the researchers transcribed and edited the message for the specific experiment. Using the edited transcripts, actors played the parts of witnesses and attorneys. Two sets of tapes were made: (1) a powerless version and (2) a powerful version. The researchers included both men and women actors in the experiment to determine if a link existed between sex of speaker and use of speech style.

The study's 96 undergraduate participants were placed in small groups (5-7 participants) and were instructed to listen to one of four taped versions of testimony from an actual trial. The research assistant explained the nature of the case and told participants that they would be asked several questions after listening to the taped

segments. Note taking was prohibited. A questionnaire about their responses was given to each participant.

Results showed that the powerful female witness was determined to be more believable, more convincing, and more trustworthy than their powerless counterpart. The powerful male witness was determined to be more competent, more intelligent, and more trustworthy than their powerless counterpart. Additionally, for the purpose of discerning whether the powerful/powerless speech style was important in additional contexts, the experiment was repeated with written transcripts of the same testimony. With 56 participants, it was found that a clear distinction existed between powerful/powerless speech styles in testimony. Thus, they contended that style was critical and it could be consequential in the legal process (p. 108).

The researchers found considerable variations in the degree with which women exhibited the specific characteristics associated with “woman’s language” (Lakoff, 1973). Thus, O’Barr and Atkins explained their findings on a continuum. Speakers fell into various categories according to the frequency of powerless speech style usage. The continuum ranged from high to low frequencies. The researchers asserted that sex was the key to the usage of high levels of “woman’s language” features because of the social status and experiences of women. This was also found for men who exhibited “woman’s language” in their courtroom testimony. For each speaker, there was a variety in social status and experience, and a correlation was found between the increase of social power/experience and the decrease in frequency of “woman’s language” features.

Thus, the researchers suggested that “woman’s language” is neither gender specific nor characteristic of all women (O’Barr & Atkins, 1980, p. 108). O’Barr and



Atkins (1980) agreed with Erickson et al.'s (1978) previous suggestion that women have a tendency to exhibit "woman's language" features because of the occupation of relatively powerless social positions. Therefore, O'Barr and Atkins agreed that "powerless language" was a more appropriate label for this communication feature than Lakoff's label, "woman's language" (p. 108). Thus, the researchers asserted that modifications about speech style and power should be addressed in the research literature.

Following the earlier research within courtroom settings, Wright and Hosman (1983) investigated sex bias within this specific setting. The purpose of this study was to determine if the sex of participants and witnesses affected the perceived impressions of witness attractiveness, credibility, and blameworthiness. Since previous research indicated the overarching importance of hedges and intensifiers within speech style, Wright and Hosman (1983) argued that the two sub-components would stand alone as independent variables within the study. The dependent variables included attractiveness, credibility, and responsibility for the incident in question.

The study randomly assigned 166 undergraduate student participants (83 males/83 females) to one of four groups representing two levels of the occurrences of hedges and intensifiers. Within the groups, the participants were instructed to read transcripts of actual testimony. The testimony consisted of two levels of occurrences of hedges and intensifiers. The four experimental message conditions contained: (1) high hedges/high intensifiers, (2) high hedges/low intensifiers, (3) low hedges/high intensifiers, or (4) low hedges/low intensifiers (Wright & Hosman, 1983, p. 149). High message conditions displayed 12 to 15 occurrences of hedges and hesitations, and the low message conditions

were void of the sub-components. Following Erickson et al., Wright and Hosman operationalized hedges as words that reduce commitment or allow for exceptions such as “sort of,” “a little,” and “kind of.” Additionally, intensifiers were operationalized as words that increase or emphasize such as “very,” “very definitely,” “surely,” etc. Scales previously utilized by Erickson et al. (1978) and Lind and O’Barr (1979) served as dependent measures for this study.

Results indicated a significant main effect for hedges in that witnesses who displayed few hedges were perceived as more attractive than those who used numerous hedges. Additionally, a significant main effect was found for sex of witness and sex of witness x intensifiers interaction. In other words, when women used more intensifiers, they were perceived as more attractive. Results further indicated that when men displayed a high number of hedges, there were perceived as more credible (Wright & Hosman, 1983, p. 149). On the other hand, when female witnesses used a high number of hedges they were seen as significantly less credible than males.

Thus, this study revealed that confident witnesses who expressed certainty were rated more positively. From these findings, Wright and Hosman (1983) formed several conclusions. First, they concluded that it would be advantageous for women to use intensifiers frequently and to avoid using hedges. Additionally, they concluded that intensifiers may be an excess sub-component of powerful speech style. In presenting courtroom testimony, the person who presented the text and the manner in which it was presented could be as important as the actual content of testimony. Finally, the study revealed that the sex of the speaker is crucial to any conceptualization of powerful/powerless speech in the context of courtroom testimony (p. 149).

Following the research on potential differential effects of components of the powerful/powerless speech style (Wright and Hosman, 1983), Bradac and Mulac (1984a) extended the research with the study of the attributional consequences of mismatching powerful and powerless individual communicators with powerful and powerless speech styles. This interest led to the merging of two lines of research: powerful/powerless speech styles and communication reciprocity. They investigated the aspects of speech that convey information about a communicator's social power. Although previous research found powerful speech styles yielded a high attribution of communicator power, attractiveness, and competence, Bradac and Mulac postulated that the outcome may be situational in nature. In some situations, the use of a more powerless style may yield higher attributions of power, effectiveness, authoritativeness, and sociability than the powerful style by the rater.

Using an interpersonal communication scenario (counselors and clients speaking), Bradac and Mulac hypothesized that both communicators would be rated more affirmatively when they reciprocated the speech style of the conversation partner and less affirmatively when they did not reciprocate the speech style of the partner. It was predicted that both communicators involved would be rated positively when using a high-power speech style and negatively when using a low-power speech style. Finally, it was asserted that expectancy violations would result with an intensified reaction and that a client using a high-power speech style would be rated more positively than a counselor using high-power speech style. Thus, a client using a low-power speech style would be rated more negatively than a counselor using a low-power speech style.

Following prior research, powerless messages were operationalized to contain hedges, hesitations, tag questions, intensifiers, and polite forms (Erickson et al., 1978). The powerful speech style was void of such speech elements. The study was conducted utilizing 107 female and 28 male undergraduate students at a western university. The participants listened to tape recordings of a crisis intervention discussion. The client and counselor were portrayed by an actor and an actress respectively. Both actor and actress recorded the same exchange in both power manipulations while also exchanging roles. The tape recordings yielded eight varying manipulation tapes.

The dependent measures for this study contained the previously developed and tested scale to test effectiveness of power of style – Dynamism Dimension of the Speech Dialect Attitudinal Scales (SDAS) (Mulac, 1976). Within the SDAS, the Socio-Intellectual dimension was utilized to test favorableness, and the Aesthetic dimension portion tested attractiveness. Additional scale items were included to test judgments of client internality, client depression, and empathy of the counselor. A single item was included to rate the counselor's ability to adapt to the client's speech style.

Main effects were obtained for power of style, role, and actor; therefore, none of the hypotheses were supported. However, results were indicative of the idea that power of speech style affected perceived communicator power (Dynamism), socio-intellectual status, and attractiveness. Further, stylistic reciprocity, when one speaker reciprocates the style of the other speaker, was found to diminish these judgments, while non-reciprocity, when one speaker fails to reciprocate the other speaker's style, served to intensify judgments. As a result, Bradac and Mulac (1984a) modified the earlier thought that "power of style is directly related to favorableness judgments under conditions of

non-reciprocity” (p. 16). Therefore, limits are believed to exist to the favor awarded to a speaker for reciprocating the style of another.

The findings of the previous studies by Bradac et al. (1981), Bradac and Mulac (1984a), and Wright and Hosman (1983) led Bradac and Mulac (1984b) to argue that circumstances existed in which low ratings of attractiveness and competence are produced by the use of a powerful speech style. Through the use of two studies, Bradac and Mulac reasoned that in the case of competence or effectiveness judgments, a great deal of outcome relies upon correspondence between a communicator’s intention and his or her display of a powerful or powerless style of speech. An example of a case in which this could be true is employment interviews.

The first study consisted of twenty-one female and ten male undergraduate participants from a western university. This study tested the effects of the seven sub-components of linguistic power on judgments of communicator power and effectiveness. The participants read seven different interviewee message sets composed of different combinations of the powerless speech style components (hedge, tag, intensifier, polite form, hesitation, deictic, and powerful) and rated each message on the two seven-interval scales of effectiveness and power (Bradac & Mulac, 1984b, p. 310).

A MANOVA yielded significant effects for message type and message type by message set. Results further indicated a hierarchy of power for the powerless and powerful speech style elements: powerful, polite forms, intensifier, deictic, hedge, tag questions, and hesitation. Thus, hesitations and tag questions were judged to be fairly powerless in assigning the communicator’s intent, while the powerful message, polite

forms, and intensifiers were rated relatively high in assigning intent. The researchers were unable to find a relationship between sex of speaker and power of style.

The purpose of the second study was to view how various powerless components would accomplish two different speakers' intentions, authoritativeness, and sociability. Similar to the first study, Bradac and Mulac (1984b) attempted to utilize sex of communicator as a variable, and the sub-variables consisted of hedges, tag questions, intensifiers, polite forms, hesitations, deictic forms, and powerful speech. The participant pool consisted of nineteen female and ten male undergraduate students at the same western university. The dependent measure utilized within this study was a seven-interval scale that rated "desired impression" (p. 311).

Data analysis yielded main effects for message type and intention. Results revealed that a listener's perception of the speaker's intent could alter the outcome of a communicator's use of the degree to which they display powerful and powerless speech styles. Again, the researchers were unable to yield strong support for a relationship between sex of speaker and power of speech style. The results of this and other foundational studies furthered the conceptual research of gender and power within speech communication.

#### *Gender and Power Within Speech Communication*

Because of the earlier courtroom research concerning speech style, Johnson and Vinson (1987) was one of the earliest studies to suggest that women witnesses should consider altering their speech style. By presenting three research questions "(1) would evaluations of female witnesses be affected by rater gender, (2) would a witness's credibility increase with the use of powerful speech styles, and (3) would listeners retain

more of a female's testimony if it were delivered in a powerful manner?"—they sought to examine status, power with displayed speech, and evaluations of female witnesses. The researchers hypothesized that women would be more successful if they displayed a more powerful style of communication rather than a more powerless style. A simulated budget-allocation case study between the Student Senate and the Negotiation Club served as the context for the study. Undergraduate participants were randomly assigned to listen to a recorded interview between a female Negotiation Club representative and the Student Senate president. Participants were then asked to determine the allocation of funds and, if so, how much allocation would be appropriate for the Negotiation Club based on the interviews heard.

For the purpose of this study, Johnson and Vinson (1987) manipulated the status of the speaker by providing brief introductions to the participants about the speaker prior to the participants' listening to the assigned treatment. The high-status speaker was identified as a professor in negotiation and bargaining and the low-status speaker was identified as a student. A pre-test for manipulation determined significance for high-status introductions versus low-status introductions. As in previous research, the three linguistic variables of hedges, hesitations, and qualifiers were included in the powerless speech style messages. Their developed questionnaire measured competence, character, dynamism, and persuasive effectiveness. Participants were also given the opportunity to allocate up to \$5,000 to the student organization based on the information provided. An additional thirteen-question questionnaire was administered to assess the participants' short-term memory.

An analysis of variance (participant sex x status x speech style) and Scheffé's range test revealed that high-status speakers were awarded significantly higher monetary awards than low-status witnesses. Higher status speakers were also perceived as more competent. Additionally, a 2 x 2 analysis of variance (speech style x status) yielded a significant main effect for speech style on the issue of monetary amount awarded, on competence, and on dynamism. A female speaker displaying a powerful speech style was found to be more credible and persuasive than her powerless speech style counterpart, and low-status speakers could actually increase their credibility by adopting the more powerful linguistic style. The research also revealed that the high-status powerful witness was no more persuasive or credible than the low-status witness displaying a powerful style. The credibility dimension analysis found that high-status, high-power witnesses were perceived as significantly more credible than low-status, high-power witnesses. Therefore, Johnson and Vinson felt that women speakers could in fact benefit from adopting a powerful speech style.

These findings advanced powerful and powerless speech research and reiterated the need for more research on the specific components of powerless speech style. Accordingly, Hosman and Wright (1987) investigated the differential effects of the components of powerless speech that should be studied. Unlike their previous study (Wright & Hosman, 1983) that looked at hedges and intensifiers, this study examined hedges and hesitations. The researchers tested the effects of hedges and hesitations for three reasons: (1) both components occur frequently in powerless speech, (2) both components make similar contributions to the evaluative reactions of the speech style, and (3) both components are important to understanding how speech style affects



impression formation of witness's credibility and the trial's outcome (Hosman & Wright, 1987, p. 178). Again, respondent sex was a key variable. The rationale for this study was that hedges and hesitations occur often in powerless speech and lead to similar perceptions of the speaker evaluation. Since the legal court process is a test of credibility, then the understanding of how these two components affect that credibility is important.

The study asked 120 randomly assigned undergraduate student participants from a southeastern university to read one of four versions of testimony that was reflective of either high or low numbers of hedges and hesitations. The independent variable consisted of a set of six witness verbal response messages. Hedges were operationalized through the use of "sometimes," "sort of," "maybe," and "kind of." Hesitations were operationalized by the use of ellipses or filled pauses and ellipses (e.g. – er. . . , um. . .). The high version of the message condition contained 17 to 19 instances, while the low version of the message condition was void of such instances. The dependent variable was a questionnaire consisting of seven interval scales that assessed evaluations of the defendant's character, competence, social attractiveness, and guilt.

A factor analysis of participants' evaluations of the defendant yielded three dimensions of research concern: authoritativeness, character, and social attractiveness. A mixed-effects ANOVA yielded a significant main effect for hesitations on character. Thus, character evaluations were found to increase with the absence of hesitations. Additionally, it was found that high hesitations yielded greater perceptions of guilt than the absence of hedges. A significant interaction effect was found to exist between hesitations and hedges on authoritativeness and social attractiveness. Authoritativeness evaluations increased in the absence of hedges and hesitations. The social attractiveness

dimension yielded the most positive evaluations in the low hedges/low hesitations condition with high hedges/high hesitations, high hedges/low hesitations, and low hedges/high hesitations following respectively.

Hosman and Wright (1987) felt that the previous research of Bradac and Mulac (1984b) might have overlooked the independent functioning of hedges and hesitations. The research of Bradac and Mulac (1984b) suggested a hierarchy of power for linguistic variables including hedges and hesitations together. However, the later research of Hosman and Wright showed that perceived cognitive activity could occur when utilizing hesitations and through intentional pausing, whereas, hedges may be indicative of cognitive uncertainty. It was within this study that the notion of an “additive effect” or “threshold of acceptance” was first suggested. Hosman and Wright cited several implications for future research in legal communication. Examples of such were impression formation of the defendant on the outcome of the trial and guilt of the defendant based on exhibited hesitations in his or her testimony (1987, p.186). Therefore, it was suggested by the researchers that further study in the area was necessary in order to fully understand why the contradiction occurred and to understand the true implications associated with the additive effect.

Through the examination of hesitations, hedges, and intensifiers, Hosman (1989) developed two studies to determine the level of internal effect. The findings from Study 1 led to the development of Study 2 and both were later published together for clarity. For Study 1, Hosman (1989) developed five versions of witness testimony about a standard automobile accident. The dimensions of authoritativeness, character, and sociability resulted from the factor analysis of the dependent variables. Additionally, the

dimensions of authoritativeness, character, and sociability also resulted from a factor analysis of dependent measures; however, attractiveness was not found to be significant across the analyses.

A 2 x 2 x 2 (high/low hedges x high/low hesitations x subject gender) ANOVA revealed a significant interaction effect for hedges with hesitations, and it was found that participants rated low hedges as significantly more authoritative than high hedges or low hesitations. Additionally, the researcher found a significant main effect for hesitations and sociability.

High hedges were evaluated as less trustworthy on the character scale than the use of low hedges, and participants rated the low intensifiers/low hedges/low hesitations as significantly more authoritative. These findings led Hosman to conduct a replication study to address potential shortcomings to content message variables. Thus, Hosman's Study 2 included new message conditions with speaker status variables built in and eliminated gender as a variable. The messages within the Study 2 also differed from Study 1 in content alone (Hosman, 1989). Each undergraduate participant was randomly assigned to experimental conditions and instructed to read one of five versions of the message used in Study 1. The manipulation of status in Study 2 was achieved through an instruction describing the status of the two speakers. The high-status speaker was described as "a well-respected community member who owned a successful company and contributed to charities," and the low-status speaker was described as "a janitor who had not received a high school diploma and was considered on welfare."

As in Study 1, a significant main effect was found for both hedges and hesitations with regard to authoritativeness. Additionally, no significant interactions were found in

Study 2, but there was a triple interaction among status, intensifiers, and hesitations with regard to sociability. On character, a significant main effect was found for hesitations with regard to status/intensifiers interaction and similarity. As a result of these findings, Hosman drew several conclusions. The first of these was that the presence of hedges decreased perceptions of speaker authoritativeness. Second, the display of hesitations decreased perceptions of speaker authoritativeness and sociability. Hosman also argued that intensifiers could be part of powerful speech when not accompanied by hedges and hesitations, and that a sociable speaker should avoid hesitations.

In 1990, Carli began to question how varying sex-dyads could affect perception of the speakers involved in such communication encounters. The researcher introduced the argument that gender schemas play an important role in language differences and that gender differences in language are more apt to occur in opposite-sex dyads than in the same-sex dyadic counterpart. The study instructed 120 undergraduate participants to listen to one of three recorded conversations: male single-sex dyad, female single-sex dyad, or a mixed sex-dyad. Each conversation displayed variables of a powerful or a powerless message. Using 11-point scales, the participants were asked to evaluate speaker attributions including competence, confidence, intelligence, likability, tentativeness, and trustworthiness.

In single-sex dyads it was found that women are perceived as more persuasive when displaying a powerful speaking style. However, the analysis of participant gender and speech style interaction effect also suggests that this level of persuasiveness is directly indicative of the gender of the receiver. The interaction effect revealed that women were persuaded more often by powerful speakers, whereas men were persuaded

more often by powerless speakers. According to the study's outcomes, tentative speech was shown to increase a woman's ability to persuade men, but not women. The researcher explained that these findings could have resulted in status inequalities when communicating in mixed-dyads, and female speakers may be attempting to demonstrate noncompetitive speech styles in regard to status positions in those interactions.

Furthermore, it was suggested that women displaying a powerless style of speech may be a result of the expectation of the receiver. Interestingly, participants did not appear to consider speech style when rating competence and knowledge for the men speakers, and men participants perceived tentative women as more trustworthy and likable than their powerful, assertive counterparts. Additionally, women participants perceived powerful women as less likable and trustworthy also.

Arguing that the previous research, though extensive concerning power and powerless speech styles and impression formation, lacked focus on the effect of power of speech style on persuasive outcomes, Gibbons, Busch, and Bradac (1991) examined the effects of power of speech style in communication contexts in which impressions play a major role. Through the utilization of the Elaboration Likelihood Model or ELM (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) as a theoretical framework, Gibbons et al. (1991) attempted to test several opposing findings on attitudes and persuasion. The researchers argued that power of speech style, when the speaker's motivation is considered low, might serve as a peripheral cue inhibiting or facilitating persuasion. Conversely, when processing motivation is high, argument strength may overshadow power of speech style as a determinant of persuasion. Therefore, the researchers postulated six hypotheses grouped into sets of two resulting in the following predictions: (1) power of speech style serves as

peripheral cue, (2) power of speech style may be processed centrally, and (3) the effects of argument strength will be intensified by topical relevance.

The study asked 263 student participants to assess perceptions of a speaker by reading a written transcript that argued for comprehensive final exams to be given to seniors. The independent variables included motivation to process, argument strength, and power of speech style. The dependent variables included persuasion measures rating the position supported in the message using four seven-point semantic differential scales: (1) good/bad, (2) wise/foolish, (3) harmful/beneficial, and (4) favorable/unfavorable. Participant agreement with the position was measured using a seven-point Likert scale from 1 (very strongly agree) to 7 (very strongly disagree). While reading the speech, the participants were asked to list all of their thoughts in order to measure cognitive response. Evaluation of the communicator was measured through the use of eight seven-point semantic differential scales – four rating competence/status and four rating sociability. Lastly, several Likert scales were included to measure control of the communicator.

The analysis yielded significance for argument strength, power of style, and relevance manipulations. Additionally, significance was found for the interaction between argument strength and power of style. None of the six hypotheses postulated by Gibbons et al. were supported. The researchers concluded that power of speech style had no effect on persuasion. These findings called the ELM into question and raised concerns about the role language variables play in persuasion.

Although the earlier research suggested that power of speech style had no effect on persuasion, Geddes (1992) desired to further the research in the area of speech style and its effects within managerial contexts – specifically unions. She felt that the earlier

research had only focused on the stereotypical masculine (powerful) and the stereotypical feminine (powerless) styles, but that a mixed gender-power speech style should be considered. Geddes rationale was that it had not been previously explored and that many managerial contexts dictate that individuals employ this style of communication. The study is based on the research of Bem (1974) in psychological sex role orientation and Sargent's (1981) concept of androgyny with regards to management (p. 591).

Geddes' (1992) study consisted of 87 union workers attending a summer training program. The group consisted of 72% male and 28% female participants with most completing high school. Most of the participants had been with their present job for over 11 years and almost all were considered leaders within their union.

Each participant was asked to listen to a basic script spoken by a manager while on the phone to a subordinate. The managers were portrayed by both male and female actors. The participants could only hear the manager's portion of the script. Each message was approximately one minute in length and contained one of three versions of the developed message – powerful, powerless, or mixed (p. 595).

An ANOVA was conducted to measure the power of the language being utilized in each message type. This test indicated the level at which participants should be able to distinguish between the speech styles. The analysis found the powerful message to be significantly more powerful than the other two types and that the mixed style was more powerful than the powerless style.

Based on the outcome of the message analysis, the researcher then asked the participants to perform a repeated measures evaluation for each of the three recorded speech styles. The researcher's focus was on the raters' perceived levels of satisfaction

and effectiveness as it pertained to the speech style and manager's sex. Results indicated significant main effects for speech style on perceived effectiveness and satisfaction, but the researcher did not find significance for the dependent variables in relation to sex of manager. Although no significance was found for the interaction effect of sex of manager and speech style for perceived effectiveness, perceived satisfaction was found to be significant for the interaction. Therefore, both male and female managers displaying the powerless speech style were perceived similarly in satisfaction; however, it should be noted that the male manager displaying the powerless speech style was rated higher on the satisfaction scales.

The result further indicated that the mixed speech style was rated significantly higher on satisfaction scale than the other styles regardless of sex of manager. Thus, Geddes (1992) suggests further research into the areas of speech styles and how the utilization of varying styles based on context could in fact help or hinder someone in a managerial role. Additionally, since this study is one of the first of its kind, the researcher further states that replication of the study's model will need to be performed before generalizations can occur (p.602).

Extending the work of Gibbons et al. (1991), Hosman and Siltanen (1994) tested competing explanations that suggested that a powerless speech style is evaluated negatively and that a powerful speech style is evaluated positively. It was postulated that "control-over-others" and "control-over-self" had been tested previously. Because the issue of control had previously been overlooked, the researchers explored the relationship between control attributions and evaluative consequences. This was achieved through two studies.



In the first study, Hosman and Siltanen (1994) included messages of auto accident witnesses answering questions posed by an attorney. The researchers utilized two messages with one version manipulated to be void of any components of powerless speech style. Each of the remaining four contained one of four components: hedges, hesitations, intensifiers, or tag questions. The study asked 141 undergraduate volunteer participants to read one of the messages and then evaluate both the control elements and evaluative consequences. The items measuring evaluative consequences of the message had been drawn from prior research. The dependent measures included five scales that measured control-over-others and seven items that measured two aspects of control-over-self, overall self-control and control of speech style.

The study yielded significance for the speech style main effect of control-over-self, control-over-others, authoritativeness, and sociability. A 5 x 2 (speech style components x message type) MANOVA yielded a significant main effect for speech style component and a significant main effect for message replication. No interaction effect could be determined at the time of the study. Further analysis indicated that speakers using tag questions were perceived as having the least amount of control-over-others and self. Speakers that hedged were perceived as having moderate control-over-self and others, and speakers displaying a powerful message style and intensifiers were perceived as having greater control-over-self and others.

For a second study, researchers Hosman and Siltanen (1994) replicated the variable messages from Study 1, but limited the components of powerless speech style to only three: intensifiers, hedges, and hesitations, because the three components appeared most frequently in usage. This suggested an importance for examining their effect on

attributional consequences in unusual combinations. As a result of this, the dependent variables remained the same as Study 1, but with the addition of an uncertain/certain item for self-control. The study also recruited undergraduate participants, and the same procedures from Study 1 were followed. A factor analysis yielded the same results for the dependent measure as in the first study.

Significant main effects for hedges, hesitations, and message replications were yielded via a 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 (high/low intensifiers x high/low hedges x high/low hesitations x message replication) fixed-effects MANOVA. Significant effects for self-control, control-over-others, and for authoritativeness were found for speakers displaying low hedge messages. Similarly, a significant effect was found for hesitations on the same three dimensions. Significant main effects for message replication on self-control, control-over-others, and authoritativeness were also yielded in this study.

The complexities and discrepancies within the research until this point were further researched by Thimm et al. (1995). These researchers argued that in previous studies the effects of the components of powerless speech were not always the same with regard to the speaker's perceived competence, influence, or attractiveness. Therefore, Thimm, Rademacher, and Kruse presented a method of study more dependent on context than the actual speaker exchange. Due to this rationale, the purpose of their study was to examine the effects that perception of partner capability and behavior have on speech styles. In addition to power-related talk (PRT) and context, the researchers attempted to examine control and speaker intent. Thimm et al. developed two hypotheses: (1) verbal strategies used to achieve goals are determined by partner information and (2) partner personality and expectation influence negotiation strategy.

The study consisted of German participants. Each was given a version of the California Personality Inventory (CPI) and then placed into a participant group based on his/her personality: dominant, submissive, and neutral. The pairs of participants engaged in two conversations: one with a partner who they had been told had an opposing personality, but who actually had a similar personality, and the other with a partner who they had been told had a similar personality. The neutral participants were placed in control pairs. Following the conversations, participants were interviewed to document perceptions of the conversations and for their assessment of their conversation partner. Each stage of the research was recorded and transcribed for analysis.

The transcripts were coded by two independent coders and 119 dependent variables were analyzed. Time spent speaking, speech rate, and silent passages were noted as important dependent variables. To measure time, the coders measured the conversation in seconds and in number of speech acts. The rate of speech was determined by dividing the number of words by the overall length of conversation. The researchers operationalized pauses as either less than or equal to three seconds or more than three seconds.

The hypothesis that verbal strategies used to achieve goals are determined by partner information was supported in the findings. It was also found that neutral partners talked more to a partner assumed to be shy, and they also spoke faster to those partners believed to be submissive than those believed to be dominant. The researchers concluded that the high amounts of control-claiming moves displayed by neutral partners with submissively labeled partners supported their second hypothesis that expectations and personality would influence stability.

Smith et al. (1998) examined the effect of three varying levels of speaker expertise along with powerful and powerless speech styles. For this study, the researchers examined the effect of hedges and hesitations on impression formation and attitude change. Specifically, the study addressed the issue of whether powerful and powerless speech styles differed in their persuasive impact. The researchers developed a research question addressing whether speaker expertise, hedges, and hesitations affected or interacted to affect evaluations of a speaker's authoritativeness, sociability, similarity to the receiver, and attitude change.

The study was conducted using 120 undergraduate student volunteers composed of fifty-six male and sixty-four female students ranging in age from 18 to 25 years. The independent variables were message and expertise. Each independent variable was manipulated according to the varying levels. A witness's account of a personal injury incident from actual court documents served as the kernel message (Smith et al., 1998). Three additional manipulated messages were created containing varying levels of hedges and hesitations. Expertise was manipulated by varying the witness's level of education. This manipulation was verified by asking participants to rate the witness's expertise on a seven-interval Likert-type scale prior to reading any testimony. The dependent measures for this study were the witness's authoritativeness, sociability, and similarity. These were measured on 22 Likert-type seven-interval scales. Participants were asked to evaluate the witness's guilt and blameworthiness on two seven-interval scales.

The study found that the varying levels of expertise interacted with the presence or absence of hedges to affect impressions of speaker authoritativeness. Speaker expertise also was found to interact with the presence or absence of hesitations to change

attitudes toward the speaker's message. These findings showed that power of speech style features have a persuasive impact. Speaker expertise was determined to interact with hesitations to affect attitudes toward the speaker's guilt. The researchers suggested that expectancy violation theory could be a viable reason for explaining power of speech style effects.

To gain an understanding of the effects of linguistic power on persuasive outcomes, Holtgraves and Lasky (1999) sought to study the level of persuasion through peripheral or heuristic processing as opposed to the previously studied central or systematic processing. The researchers considered the role that gender plays in such processes. The rationale for this study was based on previous research findings that revealed the importance of the inclusion of gender and the ability to process the message as an area of study.

Considering linguistic power as a peripheral cue, Holtgraves and Lasky (1999) argued that linguistic power has a greater effect on persuasion when listeners are distracted. They further suggested that linguistic power could act as a central cue and would affect persuasion, notwithstanding listeners' processing ability. Interestingly, the researchers did not include gender in any research questions or hypotheses. The study consisted of 190 student participants (94 males and 96 females). A group of participants was instructed to listen to a message without distractions, while the other group of participants was instructed to listen and simultaneously carry out an assigned task that would impede their ability to fully process the message. Following the message presentation, the participants were asked to complete a questionnaire and a thought-listing measure.

Researchers performed a 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 (linguistic power x distraction x speaker gender x respondent gender) factorial analysis. The stimulus message was a 400-word essay supporting comprehensive exams at another university. The researchers developed a message with linguistic power by adding hedges, hesitations, and tag questions to create a powerless version. The powerful message manipulation was void of all hedges, hesitations, and tag questions. To achieve gender manipulation, the researchers taped one male and one female reading the powerful and powerless versions. A distraction manipulation was created by projecting an X every three seconds on a screen at the front of the room. The participants in the distraction group were instructed to count the number of X's that flashed in each quadrant of the screen while listening to the recorded message. The no-distraction group was instructed to only listen to the recording because they were the control group.

This study was developed using dependent measures consisting of a 21-item seven-point scale, a four-item semantic differential scale, and a single question that rated participant agreement with the message. The argument's quality was evaluated using four questions determining soundness, strength, logic, and reasoning. To determine perception of speaker, five questions were developed to rate intelligence, liability, competence, trustworthiness, and knowledgeability. Linguistic power was measured to the extent that the speaker was heard stammering, adding questions, or using "kinda" and "sorta". The participants were further asked to indicate the level at which they felt distracted. The final portion of this study asked participants to list their thoughts during the study and to rate each thought in relation to the message or speaker as positive, negative, or irrelevant.

No significant effect for the linguistic power on distraction manipulation was found. Regardless of distraction, the participants assigned to the powerful version of the message favored the proposal more than those participants exposed to the powerless message version. Consequently, a significant effect was found for linguistic power on participant thoughts. Positive thoughts were generated more during the powerful manipulation than in the powerless message manipulation. No significant main effect was found for either speaker or participant gender. Because participants rated speakers higher in the powerful manipulation, the researchers postulated that perceptions of speakers were found to mediate the effects of power of speech style. Additionally, it was revealed that perceptions of arguments mediate the effects of power of speech style on persuasion.

Holtgraves and Lasky concluded that linguistic power could greatly affect persuasion regardless of gender or the cognitive processes while mediated by perceptions of the speaker. These results are contradictory to the previous research of Gibbons et al. (1991) that found that linguistic power had no effect on persuasion. The researchers contended that the discrepancies within the studies were due to the varying usage of components of powerless speech style.

Bugental and Lewis (1999) wanted to further explore the varying usage of components of powerless speech style. They specifically addressed how speakers utilize powerless speech variables of pausing or hesitation when attempting to persuade others. The research focused on speakers who were socially recognized as having a particular level of authority but held a self-perceived notion of being powerless and thus displayed their self-perceptions via their chosen communicative patterns. Such patterns

traditionally would have been considered powerless, and thus Bugental and Lewis (1999) refer to the phenomenon as “the distorted reversal of power” (p. 52).

The researchers recruited 160 mothers for this study. All were from the Santa Barbara, CA, area and responded to a publicly placed ad for the study. The reason for this specific participant group was because the researchers had previously considered courtroom situations, but realized that the study of powerful and powerless speech could also be realized in other conversational situations – specifically that of educational settings.

Through the Parent Attribution Test, each participant was pre-assessed to be of either high or low perceived power or control. Therefore, the groups were assigned based on these assessments with the purpose of counterbalancing one another. Then, each participant group watched one of twenty manipulation videos of elementary school-aged boys attempting to learn and play a game together. This viewing was followed by a thought-listing exercise that was used to obtain measures for greater understanding of the “nature of teacher’s thoughts” (p. 57). These thought lists were coded into either a descriptive thought or a regulatory thought. Scores were then determined based on the varying levels of thoughts in the lists.

The researchers also measured for speech production deficits by coding the types of pauses during the instruction periods of the games in the video. Through the utilization of a computer speech analysis software, the researchers were able to measure all pauses with a duration of 100 milliseconds or greater. In the event that the speech was not discernable due to recording anomalies, the non-definable speech occurrences were eliminated for the purpose of this study.



The data indicated that women that were pre-determined to be “powerless” spoke with a more powerless speech style when paired with an unresponsive child than adults who were pre-determined to possess a higher level of power. The researchers suggest that this data revealed “the exaggerated reactivity of ‘powerless’ women to power-relevant cues” (p. 60). Additionally, it was found that these same women would become reoccupied with control-oriented thoughts that were later found to lead to conflict and misunderstanding. The researchers also noted that although this study specifically addressed women participants, the findings could and should be considered applicable to others – especially those that operate within education settings. Although the data did not support the previous notion that control-oriented cognitive activities and observed speech non-fluencies were connected, the researchers offered three reasons for why the outcome was unfounded. They postulated that the reasons could be due to effect size, time period, or observed speech non-fluencies. Therefore, the researchers suggest further research be done into each of the three potential limitations.

In conclusion, the researchers pointed out that currently we are unable to determine the reasoning for a specific vocal pattern, but suggestions through the research indicate learned powerless styles, reflections of conflicted cognitive demands, or a form of “repairing” due to loss of control or power themselves. However, this research does support the notion that such power forms of communicative patterns can be manifest within close relationships such as parent and child or teacher and child. Therefore, it is suggested that powerlessness is not always something that is created naturally within children, but that powerless patterns can manifest in and be perpetuated by children due to parent or teacher display. Additionally, the researchers warned that power of speech

style research should not be limited to adults, but that greater understanding of speech style variables across age groups should be considered.

The notion of age and power of speech style was further investigated by Ruva and Bryant (2004). Their study involved a courtroom murder trial with witnesses that were aged 6, 10, or 22 years. This study further sought to understand the significant effects of power of speech style on credibility of each of the age groups. Because the raters in this specific study were adults, the researchers posed the argument that society is conditioned to expect a particular speech variable when judging credibility regardless of age.

Therefore, the study method was organized accordingly. The study consisted of 276 participants enrolled at a large state university with ages ranging from 18 to 65 years ( $M=25.7$  years) (p.1923). Each participant was asked to read written court transcripts from courtroom testimony involving a robbery/murder trial. These transcripts had been modified from the earlier research of Leippe and Romanczyk (1989). In each transcript, the witness was named Willie Saunders, and the researchers manipulated the age so that he was either 6, 10, or 22 years old. The transcripts were further manipulated to include or exclude speech style variables including verbal hesitations, verbal hedges, and false starts. The researchers also took steps to adjust the manner in which the prosecuting attorney was portrayed – either through open-ended or closed-ended manners of questioning.

The researchers pointed out that the various manipulations were important to the research because as found from previous research, “the way a question is asked can influence or even determine the answer given” (Shuy, 1993, p. 174). Therefore, the open-ended question form included questions such as “What happened after the party?”

and the closed-ended question form included questions such as “What time did you get home from the party?” (p.1924). Measures for this study included credibility ratings of the witness, guilt ratings as to the level of assurance of a specific verdict, and memory questions to assess the level of transcript recall. All participants that failed to recall at least 77% of the information were eliminated from the study (p. 1925). The study utilized a 3 x 2 x 2 test (Witness Age x Question Type x Speech Style) (p. 1926).

To create the most accurate trial possible, the researchers integrated additional testimonies from the eyewitness’ mother, the police officer, a detective from the case, the defendant’s neighbor, and the defendant (p.1924). The participants were then grouped and randomly assigned to a condition. They were instructed to read the general experiment instructions and then their assigned trial transcript. Following the reading of the trial transcript, they were instructed to proceed with the questionnaire. The final question on the response form was for the participants to indicate their verdict in the case and the length of sentence they would support. This was followed by an additional questionnaire that measured credibility and additional witness accuracy (p. 1926). The order of the presentations was randomized to protect against researcher bias.

The results indicated a significant interaction for age by speech style in that the witness speaking in the powerless style was found to be significantly more harmful to the adult witness’ credibility than that of the child witness’ credibility. A significant interaction was also found for Age x Question Form, specifically that of the 6 year –old-witness age condition. The final outcome of this study found significant correlation for witness’ credibility in the interaction of verdicts, guilt ratings, and length of sentence.

The findings of this study further suggest that power of speech style has a multi-level nuisance that needs to be addressed through the research. The utilization of speech style by various ages indicates that raters will determine various levels of credibility based on the expected level of appropriateness of a speaker's speech display.

The original research in the area of Expectancy Theory was performed by Burgoon (1990) and is supported by the outcome of this study. An example of this was that the 22-year old witness has the least credibility of all the child witnesses. The researchers stated that this was in part due to the fact that 22-year old individuals are often viewed as adults and therefore have a different level of appropriateness of display than that of a 6 year old (p.1936). Therefore, speaking in a powerless manner is considered detrimental to adult witness credibility.

The researchers noted that the study might be limited by the written transcripts utilized – but only minimally. O'barr (1982) found that mode of information presentation has an effect on the outcome of results; however, the researchers noted that Bradac, Hemphill, and Tardy (1981) found little to no effect on outcome due to mode of presentation. The researchers pointed out that their study examined non-deliberating jurors and the focus was on the mindset of entering jurors and age of witness. Thus, the results indicated that jurors take into account numerous variables when determining outcome, and age can be one important factor in that determination.

An additional component of speech style research that emerged from previous research was the issue of tag questions and their impact on speech. For this reason, Blankenship and Craig (2006) focused their research on the utilization of tag questions in conversations. The researchers built on the previous research of Hosman (1989),

Holtgraves and Lasky (1999) and Ng and Bradac (1993). The earlier research had deemed tag questions to be powerless. Blankenship and Craig further noted that Ng and Bradac (1993) asserted that tag questions are the most common markers of powerlessness in speech (p. 112). However, based on observation and research in status and positioning, the researchers questioned whether this should always be the case. They contended that tag questions could in certain contexts be perceived as powerful.

Therefore, they developed a study to investigate tag questions and source credibility. Their study not only took into account the basic issues surrounding powerlessness, but also sought to measure the degree of persuasion that could accompany such speech variables. The study consisted of 154 introductory psychology students that were asked to read and make comments concerning an editorial about comprehensive finals for all graduating seniors at their university. The editorials were accompanied by a brief description of the advocate writer.

By manipulating credibility, argument quality, and language, Blankenship and Craig (2006) were able to present two advocate types, three varying levels of arguments, and two differing message types. The advocate types were a high school senior and a dean at the university. The editorials contained varying levels of argument-based messages utilizing the three developed arguments and the two language types. The tag question version contained five tag questions, and the control version was absent of tag questions (p. 114).

The participants were asked to read an editorial that was accompanied by a brief description of the advocate author. Following this, participants were instructed to rate their attitude toward the idea of comprehensive final exams. This was accomplished via

a 9-point semantic differential scale with dimensions such as harmful/beneficial, foolish/wise, bad/good, etc. (p.114). At the end of the scaled items, they were asked to mark a '+' sign to indicate support for the exams or a '-' sign in opposition of the exams. Neutrality was indicated with an '0'. Credibility of speaker was measured via an item instructing the participants to indicate their perceived credibility of the speaker on a 9-point scale from not at all credible (1) to very credible (9). The manipulation of language was assessed with an item measuring whether the speaker added questions to the message or not (p.114).

The dependent variables of attitude, cognitive response, and manipulation checks of credibility and language all proved to be successful. The researchers found the high credibility conditions as being more credible. Participants also rated the strong messages stronger than the weak argument conditions. Additionally, main effects were found for argument quality and language (p. 115).

Interestingly, the researcher found that the tag question paired with the high credibility source (Dean of the university) led to a higher level of message processing within the participants, but outcomes did not indicate that language use was the reason for cognitive response and attitude relation. Therefore, the researchers concluded that tag questions, though powerless in most contexts, could in fact have differing effects depending on the level of source credibility that is involved. However, Blankenship and Craig (2006) noted that these findings could be impacted by the selection of the message channel. The current study utilized written editorials instead of the previously tested forms of audio-based messages (p. 117). Therefore, more research is necessary for full understanding.

Fragale (2006) developed two additional studies to further the understanding of power of speech style and status conferral. Since the early research had focused on various parts of speech that may or may not be deemed powerless, Fragale (2006) sought to uncover whether speech style had any effect on task interdependence and eventual status conferral. This research questioned the earlier notion that one could in fact be taught to “sound like a leader” through the display of “power talking” (p. 243).

The researcher pointed out that it was logical to infer that powerful speech and status attainment were correlated; however, at the time of the study, little research was available to support such claims. Therefore, Fragale (2006) developed a research initiative to test the observation. This led to six hypotheses that addressed power of speech style, interdependence within groups, and status conferral.

The study consisted of 124 university members recruited from a mailing list available from the university. The research was performed in laboratory rooms containing computer terminals. For the purpose of this study, the participants were told they would be participating in a conversation via a computer-mediated channel, but in actuality, they were conversing with “a scripted computer program” (p.247). Each participant would take part in a series of group-based activities via the computer module with varying levels of task interdependence. The speech styles of the conversation partner were manipulated throughout the exercise. By leading the participants to believe they were working with additional participants via the computer, the researcher was able to measure task interdependence. Interestingly, only 12 of the participants suspected that they were conversing with a computer program, and thus that data were removed from the final analysis.

Manipulation checks resulted in the powerful speech condition being rated as significantly more assertive and the powerless speech condition being rated as significantly friendlier by the participants. Additionally, a significant interaction effect was determined to exist between speech style and task interdependence. The participants in this study indicated that they felt a greater level of status should be conferred upon those partners displaying a powerful speech style; however, the researcher pointed out that the same outcome was not consistent when the level of task interdependence was altered (p. 250).

The second study within this research piece was an extension of the first study. This study introduced normative organizational behavior through the utilization of cultural descriptions. It again had participants interact with computer-mediated partners to accomplish a task activity; however, this time, the conversation focused on a discussion between employees, Robert and Michael, and an impending deadline they were working towards. The researcher moderated the levels of task interdependence and speech style combinations in order to test the outcomes of the original study. The outcomes of this study were consistent with the first study and found support for speech style and task interdependence, but no main effect for powerful speech was observed.

Interestingly, the findings of this study further indicated that level of task interdependence has greater impact on conferral of status than initially thought. Fragale (2006) determined that those using a powerful speech style in a low task interdependent situation would result in more conferred status than when they displayed a powerless speech style under the same conditions. However, the reverse occurred when the level of



task interdependence was high. This led Fragale (2006) to conclude that powerless speech might not always be powerless within specific contexts.

Following up on earlier research in the area of powerful and powerless speech styles, Hosman and Siltanen (2006) investigated the effect of hedges, tag questions, intensifiers, and powerful messages on speaker evaluation, control-of-self and control-of-others attributions, cognitive responses, and message memorability. The researchers sought to address the following hypotheses and research question: (H1) a high-power speech style will be regarded more positively than a low-power speech style in terms of its perceived competence, status, and dynamism; (H2) a speaker using a high-power speech style will be perceived as having more control-of-self and more control-of-others than a speaker using a low-power speech style; and (RQ1) do high- and low-power forms of talk differ in the types of numbers of cognitive responses they generate and in how well they are remembered? (Hosman & Siltanen, 2006).

The study consisted of 148 undergraduate student participants from a southern university who were representative of a wide range of academic majors. The kernel message was an excerpt of a transcript from an actual criminal trial. Representative of a powerful speech style, this excerpt was a description of a defendant's involvement in a burglary and his attempts at restitution. From this transcript, three low-power messages were constructed: one with hedges, one with intensifiers, and one with tag questions (Hosman & Siltanen, 2006).

The participants were asked to respond to questionnaires measuring three sets of dependent measures. The first set consisted of 12 seven-interval items assessing perceptions of control-of-self and control-of-others. The second set of 12 items measured

the speaker's intellectual competence, status, and dynamism. The final question was designed to measure the participant's cognitive response. Each participant was given three minutes to write down "any and all thoughts you had while reading the witness's testimony. These can include anything related to what the witness said, the witness himself, his personality, your feelings and reactions to the witness's testimony and its presentation, or anything else you might have been thinking about" (Hosman & Siltanen, 2006, p. 37). Two days following the first three questionnaires, the participants were asked to complete a recognition memory task questionnaire. This questionnaire consisted of ten statements that may or may not have been spoken by the speaker. The participants had to indicate their confidence that the utterance was present in the original transcript. Their responses were recorded on a six-interval scale ranging from absolutely certain the statement was made to absolutely certain the statement was not made.

The findings indicated that the four message types differed across measures of dynamism, control-of-self and control-of-others attributions, and three cognitive response categories. Thus, the two hypotheses were supported to some degree. It was also found that for the speaker-evaluation and control-attribution variables, intensifiers were evaluated most positively and hedges were evaluated most negatively. The cognitive-response measures yielded a more mixed pattern of results; however, the analyses did not find the message types to vary in their memorability. Thus, consistency with the thought-unit analysis was determined. The results offered some evidence that a mediating relationship between the message types, the cognitive-response categories, and the speaker-evaluation dimensions existed.

This study found that speaker-evaluation dimensions mediate the impact of the messages on the cognitive-response categories. Furthermore, message types were found to have direct effects on speaker-evaluation measures. Additionally, the results revealed hedges to be evaluated relatively negatively, to produce more cognitive responses, and to generate relatively neutral to positive cognitive responses. Conversely, intensifiers were evaluated positively, but produced relatively negative cognitive responses. Powerful messages were found to be generally intermediate in terms of evaluative consequences and cognitive responses generated. As a result of these findings, the researchers suggested future research (1) to focus on the cognitive processing of powerful and powerless styles and their components and (2) to investigate how listeners cognitively process combinations of the various components of a powerless speech style.

#### *Speech Styles and Power in an Employment Interview Context*

Wiley and Eskilson (1985) developed a study to test their hypotheses on organizational success, including the variables of speech style and gender stereotypes: (1) the socialization hypothesis and (2) the identity hypothesis. The socialization hypothesis states that women who behave more like men will experience greater corporate success and power equal to that of a man, whereas the identity hypothesis states that status characteristics will affect an individual's expectations of an individual's behaviors. The researchers further examined the effects of a participant's gender on evaluations of managerial interviewees and whether the differences within the speech styles affected one gender more than the other.

Utilizing written interviews displaying powerless speech style variables and written interviews void of the language features, the researchers asked undergraduate

student participants to role play as an interviewer taking into consideration the applicant appearance via attached photographs and two written-response interviews on the “closed end questionnaire.” The participants had to indicate if the interviewee should be hired; probability of promotion, if hired; probable effectiveness; likability among coworkers and superiors; and how much respect, cooperation, support, and power the applicant would have when hired.

Three dimensions emerged from the factor analysis of the 13 scales: success, acceptance, and liking. An ANOVA on each of the three dimensions were further tested for each hypothesis. Similar to earlier research, the independent variables were speech style, interviewee gender, and interviewer gender. Significant effects for interviewee gender or participant gender were not found, but a significant main effect for speech style emerged. Interviewees displaying a powerful speech style received a higher rating on the success scale than their powerless speech style counterparts. Additionally, speech style and participant gender revealed a significant interaction effect. Due to these findings, a follow-up ANOVA was conducted for participants based on gender. The results of these analyses showed that, for women participants, a significant main effect with speech style existed.

Results did not reveal a significant main effect for interviewees’ or subjects’ gender for the acceptance dimension; however, a significant main effect resulted for speech style. Participants rated the powerful speech style interviewees more positively on acceptance than the powerless speech style interviewees. Results also showed a significant interaction effect for speech style and subject gender. On the acceptance scale, a follow-up ANOVA revealed that women participants rated the speech styles in

significantly different ways. Additionally, it was revealed that on the success dimension, women participants evaluated the powerless speech style interview version significantly higher than the men participants on acceptance.

Further analyses revealed a significant three-way interaction effect for speech style, interviewee gender, and subject gender, but no significant main effect for acceptance. However, follow-up analyses indicated that the participants did rate the speech styles in different ways. Male participants appeared to rate female interviewees using the powerless speech style more positively than female interviewees displaying the powerful style, but the same did not hold true for male interviewees. Speech style did not appear to be the basis for the rating of male interviewees by male participants. Notably, female participants did not consider speech style when rating male interviewees, but rated the female interviewee displaying a powerful speech style more favorably than the female interviewee displaying a powerless style of speech.

In the second part of the study, Wiley and Eskilson furthered the research to address the socialization hypothesis. Experience and qualifications were identified as relevant interviewee traits. Additionally, being perceived as hardworking, intelligent, and responsible was also found to be important (Wiley & Eskilson, 1985). When analyzed with the independent variables speech style, managerial applicant gender, and subject gender, a significant main effect for interviewee gender and an additional significant main effect for speech style emerged. Interestingly, it was noted that the participants found interviewees displaying powerful speech styles as having more situational relevant traits than powerless speech styles. Female participants judged the powerful speech style interviewees more positively on the situation-relevant trait scale; however, male

participants did not appear to judge interviewees differently based on speech styles, but the analysis showed that female participants were more likely to judge the powerful speech style interviewees more favorably on the situational relevant trait scale than the powerless speech style interviewees. Thus, it is suggested that an interaction effect for speech style and participant gender might exist.

Through the research of Wiley and Eskilson (1985) it was concluded that stereotyping has an interactional role in the evaluations of interviewees. Female interviewees were evaluated at a higher rate of warmth and as possessing more traits of effective managers when displaying a powerful speech style. The researchers suggested that this finding was due in part to the ideas that females are more attuned to differences in speech style than males, thus supporting the socialization hypothesis.

Gallois et al. (1992) desired to expand on the previous research within the area of communication style and interviewing. Their study examined the influence that gender and communication style of position applicants, as well as the gender and sex-role stereotyping of interviewers, had on hiring decisions. The study consisted of fifty-six personnel officers who were asked to view videotapes of simulated employment interviews in which male and female candidates used aggressive, assertive, or nonassertive styles of communication. The participants rated the job candidates on likeability, similarity to themselves, and hireability.

The researchers predicted that participant interviewers would prefer assertive candidates over other job applicants, and that these applicants would be rated as more likeable, more similar to themselves, and more suitable for the job. They also focused on the gender and the level of sex-role stereotyping of the participants because they believed

that this could influence their responses to the applicant's impression management and would thus alter the participant's perceptions concerning the applicant's overall abilities. The interviewer's judgments of the similarity of candidates to themselves were predicted to influence their judgments of the likeability of candidates, and these in turn would influence their hiring decisions.

This study was designed using a pre-test to measure sex-role stereotyping, followed two weeks later by the viewing of six videotaped interviews. In addition to completing the shortened version of the Sex-Role Stereotyping Questionnaire (SRSQ), each participant viewed six employment interviews for the position of administrative officer. At the end of each interview, the participants were given three minutes to complete an assessment of the candidate. At the end of the six interviews, the participants were asked to also fill out a recommendation form about which candidate they would select for the position.

Because of the expectation that similarity ratings would significantly predict likeability ratings for all three communication styles, four-way ANOVAs, using a  $2 \times 3 \times 2 \times 3$  design, were conducted for similarity, likeability, and hireability ratings. In these analyses, between-subject variables were interviewer sex and interviewer sex-role stereotyping ratings. Sex of job candidate and displayed communication style were considered within-subject variables.

Gallois et al. found the participants were most likely to employ applicants displaying an assertive communication style. For these assertive candidates, judgments by the interviewers of the perceived similarity of the candidate to themselves and their liking for the applicant both influenced their decision to hire the candidate. As expected,

similarity ratings and likeability ratings were significant for all three communication styles. The findings further revealed that for aggressive and nonassertive candidates, the participants' liking the candidate mediated the relationship between perceived similarity and hiring decisions; however, no direct paths from similarity to hireability were found to exist. Contrary to the researchers' expectations, the participants rated both assertive male and female candidates positively, and aggressive and nonassertive males and females more negatively.

Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) examined the effects of powerful versus powerless speech styles on employment interview outcomes. The purpose of this study was to extend and refine the previous research presented by Wiley and Eskilson (1985). Parton et al. suggested that Wiley and Eskilson (1985) may have confounded the results of the study due to the combining of hedges, hesitations, and intensifiers to form a powerless interviewee message. Thus, the researchers chose to develop a powerless interviewee message that only contained hedges and hesitations. Additionally, the previous research of Carli (1990) suggested that gender differences in speech occur primarily in mixed-sex dyads and are displayed less in same-sex dyads. Therefore, it was the desire of Parton et al. to further investigate how men and women evaluate speech styles differently. The final limitation seen within previous research was the extensive utilization of undergraduates as participants. To combat this problem, in addition to undergraduate respondents, Parton et al. utilized professional respondents from industry.

From this study, the researchers posed two hypotheses and one research question. The first hypothesis asked if interviewees displaying a powerful speech style would be rated as more employable than interviewees using a powerless speech style. The second



hypothesis sought to determine if professional respondents would rate interviewees lower on dynamism, social attractiveness, competence, and employability than the undergraduate respondents. The research question posed whether interviewees' powerful and powerless speech styles would be evaluated differently on dynamism, social attractiveness, competence, and employability in mixed-sex versus same-sex interview situations.

The study, which was a publication resulting from the work of Parton's (1996) dissertation, was composed of 185 undergraduate student participants and 153 professionals. The students were from a mid-sized public university, and the professionals were individuals that routinely interview others for employment. They worked at such places as local hospitals, employment agencies, banks, public schools, universities, professional associations, and businesses.

Following the dictates of previous research, the researchers developed a primary message consisting of a 460-word, 3.5-minute audiotape of an interviewee applying for an entry-level banking position. The first version did not contain hedges or hesitations. A second, powerless version was created by adding 15 hedges and 15 hesitations to the interviewee's responses. The entire message set consisted of eight message conditions. The researchers presented the messages in a 2 x 2 x 2 (Interviewer gender x interviewee gender x speech power) between-subjects design. Gender manipulation was achieved by using one man and one woman who each interviewed a male and female interviewee, and these manipulation samples were utilized within both respondent pools (undergraduate students and professionals).

In order to address interviewees' dynamism, social attractiveness, superiority, control-over-self, control-over-others, and employability, the researchers used 18 Likert-type 5-point scales organized on the Speech Evaluation Instrument. Using Hosman and Siltanen (1994) scales, control-over-self and control-over-others were measured. The researchers developed a scale for the purpose of measuring employability.

Parton et al. factor analyzed the data sets using a principal components analysis with varimax rotation. On dynamism, it was found that undergraduates evaluated the interviewees higher than did professionals. Results indicated that female respondents evaluated the powerless style significantly higher on dynamism than did their male counterparts. Univariate tests revealed that female interviewees using a powerless speech style were evaluated more highly on the dimension of social attractiveness than when powerful speech styles were displayed. Male interviewees were not evaluated differently with respect to social attractiveness, regardless of speech style. Concerning the realm of competence, results showed that interviewees using a powerful speech style were rated as more favorable on competence than interviewees displaying a powerless speech style. Additionally, it was found that undergraduates evaluated the interviewees more positively on competence than did the professional respondents. An interaction effect was also observed in that professional interviewers evaluated a powerless speech style as less competent than a powerful speech style. However, the undergraduate assessments across styles did not produce the same results. On employability, the results showed that interviewees displaying a powerful speech style were considered to be more employable than speakers displaying a powerless style. Again, the undergraduate

participants rated the interviewees more positively on employability than did the professional respondents.

Based on these findings, the authors argued that messages affect judgments. Hypothesis 1 was supported in that interviewees displaying a powerful speech style were evaluated more favorably than the interviewees displaying a powerless speech style. Undergraduates rated interviewees displaying a powerful speech style higher on dimensions of competency than did professional respondents, thus supporting Hypothesis 2. The professionals regarded the powerful speech style as being more competent, while the undergraduates did not distinguish between the speech styles. The researchers contended that this further supported the argument that professional respondents should be used for employment interviews in powerful and powerless speech research.

The analysis found no significant difference for the research question examining whether men and women evaluate interviewees using powerful and powerless speech styles differently depending upon whether there are in a same- or mixed-sex dyad. The researchers concluded that the relationship between the variables of gender, language, and power is too complex to be understood in the current study.

Although the utilization of professional respondents increases the cost, the results suggested that such research is necessary in order to gain better insight into the way in which professionals evaluate powerful and powerless speech styles. Additionally, the researchers point out that it is becoming increasingly clear that a powerful speech style results in attributions of competence and employability and that impression formation is vital to outcome success for interviews. Therefore, interviewees should be counseled to adopt a more appropriate style.

Arguing that there are inconsistencies and lack of research in the areas of job stereotype, applicant gender, and communication styles on screening interview outcome, Juodvalkis et al. (2003) investigated the interactions between the variables during a telephone interview. The researchers argued that the increasing prevalence of pre-screening telephone interviews supports the argument that we should investigate the aspects of speech styles in context. The focus of this study investigated the relationships between and among gender-stereotyped jobs, gender of an applicant, and communication style displayed by the applicant. The goals of the researchers were to determine if interaction among the three factors existed, and to provide further insight into the nature of possible interactions and the potential effects that they could have on telephone interviews.

To manipulate the effect of a gender-stereotyped job, two positions were chosen. The first was of an English teacher at an all-male private high school and the second was an English teacher in an all-female private high school. The researchers postulated that a main effect for job stereotype would be found. Secondly, the researchers disseminated female and male applicant information in order to manipulate the gender of the applicants. The authors hypothesized that there would be a main effect for gender of applicant. On communication styles, the researchers were interested in the effects of the influence of dominant (powerful) and submissive (powerless) communication styles. With the exclusion of nonverbal qualities, it was hypothesized that there would be significant main effects for communication styles, with a dominant style (powerful) being perceived more favorably than a submissive (powerless) style.

The final point of interest for the researchers was the interaction between the variables. It was hypothesized that several interactions would occur: (1) communication style and job stereotype would affect ratings given to interviewees, (2) applicants would receive more positive ratings of competence, likeability, hireability, sociability, and overall impression if they conformed to the job stereotypes (e.g. a woman applying for a position perceived to be feminine and men applying for perceived male positions), (3) applicant gender and communication style would affect ratings given to interviewees when they conformed to an expected style (i.e. a woman displaying a more powerless style and a man displaying a more dominant style), and (4) communication style, job stereotype, and gender of applicant would display a three-way interaction effect.

The study consisted of 68 undergraduate students from introductory level psychology courses at a private university. The sample consisted of 16 male students and 52 female students. Participants were randomly assigned to four different groups.

A 2 x 2 x 2 (job stereotype x gender applicant x communication style) mixed analysis design was employed. The job stereotype variable and the gender of the applicant variable was a between-subjects design, while communication style was a within-subjects condition. Each participant was instructed to listen to three interviews exhibiting different communication styles (powerful, powerless, and neutral). The researchers counterbalanced the order of the communication style tapes so that some of the respondents heard the powerful interview first, the neutral interview second, and the powerless interview third. The other half of the respondents heard the powerless interview first, the neutral interview second, and the powerful interview third. Regardless of tape, the neutral interview was always played second. The tapes were

produced using actors in the following roles: (1) a consistent interviewer, (2) a male interviewee, and (3) a female interviewee. The communication style was manipulated through voice recordings of prepared scripts read by the actors.

The data collection took place in a test room. The participants were provided a packet containing a job description, three rating forms, and one recommendation form. The student groups testing in the same session received the same job description. The dependent variables for this study were the ratings of likeability, competence, sociability, overall impression, and desire to hire. The scale of measurement was a seven-point Likert scale with a seven signifying that the interviewee possessed a great deal of a particular quality and a score of one indicating that the interviewee was deficient on the quality being rated. One of the forms received by the participants assessed whom they would most likely hire for the position.

The researchers performed manipulation checks for aggressiveness, confidence, enthusiasm, motivation to be hired, and responsiveness during the interview. Using the 2 x 2 x 2 mixed design ANOVA, the researchers analyzed the dependent variables. Using an f-test, significance was found for job stereotype and competence and for communication style and competence. Additionally, overall impression was found to be significant with job stereotype and communication style. Concerning the desire to hire, gender and communication style were found to be significant. The interaction of gender and communication style produced significant results in likeability, sociability, overall impression, and desire to hire, but was not significant for competence. No significance was found for the three-way interaction among job stereotype, communication style, and gender.

The researchers concluded that studies such as this are critical for understanding the interview process. They argued that the findings of this study clarified the connection between gender stereotypes and job interviews. Although more research is necessary, the authors felt that these findings suggested that communication style combines with other information, such as stereotypes, during the interviewer's decision-making process and that interviewer's gender stereotypes blend with style of communication to affect ratings of interviewees. Joudvalkis et al. further suggested that it could be beneficial to a job applicant to employ a communication style matching his or her gender or matching the position for which he or she is applying.

### Critique

The purpose of this section is to identify variables in powerful/powerless speech style interviewing contexts that require replication and additional research. Specifically, the four gender limitations discussed by Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) still exist and are identified as (1) a lack of a consistent research on the powerful/powerless speech context (Bradac & Mulac, 1984a; Fragale, 2005; Geddes, 1992; Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Silatanen, 1994; Hosman & Siltanen, 2006; Wright & Hosman, 1983), (2) measurement inconsistencies in the associated research of powerful/powerless speech (Blankenship & Craig, 2006; Bradac et al., 1981; Carli, 1990; Geddes, 1992; Gibbons et al., 1991; Hosman, 1989; McMullen & Pasloski, 1992; Mulac & Bradac, 1994; Parton et al., 2002;), (3) a lack of consistent labeling of variables (Hosman & Wright, 1987; Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Siltanen, 1994; Hosman & Siltanen, 2006; Johnson & Vinson, 1987; Smith et al., 1998), and (4) the continued sole reliance on undergraduate participants as raters (Bradac et al., 1994; Carli, 1990; Gibbons et al., 1991; Hosman,

1989; Hosman & Wright, 1987; Hosman & Siltanen, 1994; Hosman & Siltanen, 2006; Johnson & Vinson, 1987; Juodvalkis et al., 2003; Ruva & Bryant, 2004; Smith et al., 1998).

### *Theoretical Inconsistency*

The first limitation found with the current research is the continued need for explication of the varied speech style effects. Findings suggest that society regards one speech style more favorably than another; however, the reasons why this is the case still elude researchers. Therefore, research dealing with the phenomena of control-over-others and control-over-self should be addressed. The question of when powerful speakers are perceived to have control-over-self and others has yet to be fully answered. Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) attempted to address this weakness, but the outcomes from that study were inconclusive and therefore further research is still warranted.

As stated by Parton (1996) about telephone screening interviewing, it is believed that an interviewee displaying a powerful speech style would be selected for hire over that of an interviewee utilizing a powerless style. This assumption is because it is believed that upon hearing a powerful speech style, the interviewer would attribute a higher level of control to the interviewee and perceive that interviewee as being similar in power to self, therefore leading to a more a positive perception of the interviewee and thus a positive hiring outcome.

The need for further research to examine the specific components of speech style was previously discussed by researchers such as Bradac and Mulac (1984a), Wright and Hosman (1983), Hosman and Siltanen (1994 & 2006). Several research groups discussed



limitations associated with powerless speech style and called for greater reflection on the reasoning for previous outcomes. This call was put forth following contrary outcomes among previous studies. An example of this was the original perception of hedges and hesitations as being powerless and later studies finding intensifiers to be both powerful and powerless depending on the situational context (Bradac & Mulac, 1984a; Wright & Hosman, 1983, Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Siltanen, 1994, Hosman & Siltanen, 2006). Therefore, these compounding multiple components such as hedges, hesitations, and intensifiers could produce confounded results. Ruva and Bryant (2004) also noted the need to further understand the potential utilization of the components in association with age of speaker and outcome. Furthermore, the work of Wiley and Eskilson (1985), Parton (1996), and Parton et al. (2002) again showed that these components could lead to problematic outcomes and thus should be replicated for consistent outcome knowledge.

#### *Measurement Inconsistency*

A second limitation within the current research emerges from the multitude of measurement scales currently existing within the research. These inconsistencies result in the inability to generalize to varying groups and situations. As pointed out by Parton (1996) and then again by Parton et al. (2002), the types of measurement scales vary greatly from 11-point semantic differential scales (Carli, 1990), 9-point semantic differential scales (Bradac et al., 1981), 7-point semantic differential scales (Gibbons et al., 1991; Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Wright, 1987), and 5-point Likert scales (Geddes, 1992; Parton, Siltanen, Hosman, & Langenderfer, 2002). Additionally, varying types of measurement instruments have been developed and discarded throughout the research

history. Examples include McMullen and Pasloski (1992) and Mulac and Bradac's (1994) employment of the Speech Dialect Attitudinal Scale.

Unfortunately, as Parton notes, inconsistency within the discipline has led to multiple labels emerging for the same linguistic variable or dimensions of powerful/powerless speech styles such as acceptance (Wiley & Eskilson, 1985), attractiveness (Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Wright, 1987; Parton et al., 2002), authoritativeness (Hosman, 1989), character (Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Wright, 1987; Johnson & Vinson, 1987; Vinson & Johnson, 1989), competence (Newcombe & Arnkoff, 1979; Carli, 1990; Gibbons et al., 1991; Hosman, 1989, Hosman & Wright, 1987; Johnson & Vinson, 1987; Juodvalkis et al., 2003; Parton et al., 2002; Vinson & Johnson, 1989), control (Hosman & Siltanen, 1994; Parton et al., 2002), confidence (Juodvalkis et al., 2003), dynamism (Johnson & Vinson, 1987; Parton et al., 2002), effectiveness (Bradac et al., 1981; Geddes, 1992), guilt/blameworthiness (Bradac et al., 1981; Geddes, 1992; Ruva & Bryant, 2004), impression formation (Blankenship & Craig; 2006); likeability (Carli, 1990; Juodvalkis et al., 2003; Wiley & Eskilson, 1985), persuasiveness (Bugental & Lewis, 1999; Johnson & Vinson, 1987; Ruva & Bryant, 2004), power (Bradac et al., 1981; Bugental & Lewis, 1999; Carli, 1990), satisfaction (Geddes, 1992), similarity (Hosman, 1989), sociability (Gibbons et al., 1991; Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Siltanen, 1994), success (Wiley & Eskilson, 1985), and trustworthiness (Carli, 1990). These results suggest that the labels are situational depending upon researcher and discipline area. These inconsistencies could be to blame for the inconsistent results of the effects of components of these speech styles. Therefore, this study seeks to replicate the

measurements tested earlier by Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) to bring about greater consistency within the discipline.

### *Situational Diversity*

The third limitation of powerful/powerless speech style research has resulted in a limited generalizability due to the limited situational context. The primary research context has traditionally been courtroom testimony (Johnson & Vinson, 1987; Hosman & Wright, 1987; Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Siltanen, 1994; Smith et al., 1998; Hosman & Siltanen, 2006; Juodvalkis et al., 2003; Parton et al., 2002; Wiley and Eskilson; 1985).

The previous limitations with the situational context of courtroom testimony led to a greater importance being placed upon the question-and-answer sessions of employment interviews (Wiley & Eskilson, 1985; Parton et al., 2002; Juodvalkis et al., 2003). The knowledge of effects of verbal variables, perceived speaker characteristics, and job interviewing should lead researchers to the important issues of situational contexts, gender communication, applicant gender, and job stereotypes. Do situational contexts affect the evaluation of speech style? Does someone displaying a powerful speech style during a telephone interview experience the same outcome as a person displaying a powerful speech style in an in-person interview? Can an individual experience a more positive outcome by adjusting their speech style to match that of the interviewer? The understanding gleaned from research needs to be more complete. Thus, it is necessary to continue the current research and expand it to include a variety of situational contexts.

### *Research Participants*

As pinpointed by Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002), the research convention in the discipline is to use university undergraduates. Even upon revisiting this research almost 10 years following the initial research period of Parton (1996), the current researcher has witnessed this trend continue. As discussed by Parton et al. (2002) and Juodvalkis et al. (2003), it is believed that this type of convenient sample significantly limits the generalizability of the results to the greater population. Because previous research has suggested that undergraduate participants are situationally different from their professional counterparts, it has been shown to be problematic to generalize research outcomes based on research that only utilized undergraduate participants (Bugental & Lewis, 1999; Hosman & Siltanen, 2006; Johnson & Vinson, 1987; Parton, 1996; Parton et al. 2006; Ruva & Bryant, 2004). Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) found that undergraduates rated interviewees higher on dynamism and more positively on competence than did the professional respondents. The explanation of these findings is that professional managers have experience and know what they are looking for in an employee, while undergraduates, who do not have the equivalent amount of experience, tend to regard all information about the interviewee, whether it is relevant to the job position or not. As a result of these findings and current limitations in this area of study, more research being done with professional and undergraduates is warranted to protect against confounding effects.

### Summary

Though the original focus of speech communication was on creation of shared meaning, scholars quickly recognized the components of successful persuasive speaking

and the need for greater understanding of these elements: (1) source credibility, (2) speech style, (3) organization of arguments, (4) memorization, and (5) the delivery of a message (Ehninger, 1968; Hamilton, 2001; Lucas, 2004; Perloff, 1993).

Due to extended research in the areas of persuasion and speech styles, researchers coined the terms “powerful” and “powerless” speech styles to explicate the features Lakoff previously labeled “woman’s language.” Examples of linguistic variables associated with positions of low power are increased intensifiers (“so,” “very”), hedges (“I think,” “kinda”), hesitations (“uh,” “you know”), hypercorrect grammar, gestures, questioning forms (use of rising question intonation in declarative contexts), and polite forms (“please,” “thank you”) (Erickson et al., 1978; Lakoff, 1973, 1975; O’Barr & Atkins, 1980).

Further research in the area of powerful/powerless speech styles led contemporary researchers to identify varying components of source credibility such as (1) competency, (2) believability and trustworthiness, (3) energy and charisma of the speaker, and similarity between speaker and rater. Furthermore, researchers have identified and demonstrated the persuasive effects of specific components of a powerless speech style such as (1) clarity, (2) intensity, (3) politeness, and (4) power. Researchers have further considered the interaction effects of source credibility (perceived competency, believability, and charisma) of a speaker (Bradac, 1990; Bradac & Mulac, 1984a, 1984b; Hosman & Siltanen, 1994; 2006; Parton, 1996; Parton et al., 2002).

In general, while the powerful speech style is the most effective in forming positive impressions, little is understood as to why the powerful/powerless speech styles have aforementioned effects. Through research separating the components of

powerful/powerless speech, it has been found that intensifiers occur more frequently than hedges or hesitations, and that females were found to utilize more intensifiers and males to utilize more hedges (Wright & Hosman, 1983).

Interviewing has become an acceptable form of gaining valuable information about a person of interest for an organization. Through a series of questions much can be gained and understood about the ones speaking. Therefore, it is not surprising that this communication context is studied across varying disciplines and throughout history. Though a great deal of communication research has focused on interviewing in the courtroom setting, the area of employment interviews within organizational communication, as of late, has received greater attention (Adler, 1992; Juodvarkis et al., 2003; Parton et al., 2002; Tengler & Jablin, 1983; Wright & Eskilson, 1985). Scholars and professionals within industry continue to recognize the importance of such a communication context and the communicator's competence. It is important to point out that employment interviews are especially crucial and are gaining attention because they are essential to acquiring a job. Currently, several reviews of employment interview research exist considering such variables as résumés and credentials, participants' mood, perceived involvement, interview structure, and numerous nonverbal characteristics; however, these reviews further indicate that verbal messages are more important to interview outcomes (Schmidt & Rader, 1999).

Findings from earlier studies have shown that employment interview studies have done little to address speech style effects. The studies that have considered speech style effects on employment interview outcomes suggest that people displaying a powerful speech style are evaluated more positively than people displaying a powerless speech

style (Johnson & Vinson, 1987). Additionally, these communicators are perceived as having control-over-others and control-over-self (Hosman & Siltanen, 1994; 2006; Smith et al., 1998). It is to this end that Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) further studied these perceptions and outcomes, and it is because of their findings concerning the differing perceptions of speech style effects on interview outcome dependant upon the participant type that this study sets to replicate that work. Additionally, this study will take into consideration the previous situational context, but will further expand to include issues associated with gender-stereotype labeling.

Within the context of employment interviews, one issue worth considering is the perceived effects of similarity in speech style between communicators on the interview outcome. One study found a participant, gender, and speech style interaction effect. This study also showed that females could be more persuasive with males while displaying a powerless style of speech, but when communicating with females, the same speakers were less persuasive utilizing the powerless style (Carli, 1990; Ruva & Bryant, 2004).

Additional researchers also took into consideration similarity of speaking style of the communicators within the courtroom, educational, and union settings (Bradac et al., 1981; Bugental & Lewis, 1999; Erickson et al., 1978; Ruva & Bryant, 2004). These researchers found evidence supporting the hypothesis that style features affect persuasiveness and suggested that expectancy violation theory could be a viable reason for such effects. The issue of expectancy violation on interview outcome was addressed by studying gendered stereotyped positions along with communication style (Burgoon, 1994; Johnson & Vinson, 1987; Juodvalkis et al., 2003). An additional study suggested that gendered stereotypes associated with job positions would dictate the style of

communication an interviewee would be expected to display. The display of expected style of communication could affect ratings of interviewees reported by interviewers (Juodvalkis et al., 2003).

In summarizing the current literature on power of speech style, gender and power of speech style, and the limitations found in this literature, several clear areas for future research emerge. Those areas include: (1) the need to examine the effects of varying speech styles on telephone interview outcomes, (2) the need to compare the perceived speech styles exhibited by the rater and interviewee within the interview context, (3) the need to examine the effects job stereotype and speech style have on interview outcome, and (4) the theoretical contribution based on the outcome of addressing these limitations.

Currently, the literature and research are limited by the lack of a consistent theoretical explication of the effects of powerful/powerless speech. Previous research suggests that powerful speech styles are considered more positively; however, it is still unclear why this evaluation exists. It was argued that the discrepancies within the understanding of this area of study could be due to the differing contexts in which the language variables have been observed (Bradac et al., 1981; Bugental & Lewis, 1999; Erickson et al., 1978; Ruva & Bryant, 2004). Additionally, due to the possibility of threshold of effectiveness, the components of powerless speech style should be studied individually and not as a whole (Hosman & Wright, 1987). Secondly, a lack of consistency in the measurements utilized to study powerful/powerless speech style effects are being employed. The third limitation addressed by this study is a lack of situational diversity in which the styles have been replicated and studied. While some researchers have attempted to address this issue, further study is needed to confirm their initial



findings. The final limitation posed by the research and addressed extensively by Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) is the overwhelming reliance on undergraduate participants for data collection. Therefore, the following section addresses the limitations currently existing within the literature to generate hypotheses for future research.

### Rationale and Hypotheses

As society's perceived acceptance of varying speech styles continues to shift, the research and knowledge currently within the discipline suggests that powerful/powerless speech style research is still inconsistent at best. Therefore, the replication and extension of previous research is necessary to provide a more consistent understanding of the effects of powerful/powerless speech styles in varying contexts. In order to develop a better understanding of these speech styles in telephone employment interview contexts, the replicated research of Parton (1996), Parton et al. (2002) and an extension of Juodvalkis et al.'s study of powerful/powerless speech styles and job stereotypes in the employment interview context (2003) is warranted.

The telephone interview scenario will be used because of the increase in such interviews. Tengler and Jablin (1983) posited that the employment interview is a central component within the selection procedure for most organizations. Bjorkquist (1987) concluded that employers considered a candidate's ability to communicate orally as the most influential variable affecting interview outcome. Juodvalkis et al. (2003) point out that a growing trend exists in human resource management to utilize a telephone interview as a preliminary screening tool for job applicants.

Since Juodvalkis et al. (2003) may have confounded their results by combining job stereotype, gender, and multiple speech styles to produce a powerless interviewee

message, this study seeks to refine their operationalization of powerless speech. As Hosman and Wright (1987) pointed out, hedges and hesitations occur frequently in powerless speech, make similar contributions to the evaluative reactions of the speech style, and are important to the understanding of how speech style affects impression formation of credibility and outcome. This study will replicate the use of only hedges and hesitations to form the powerless interviewee message as demonstrated by Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002). Thus, the first hypothesis is as follows:

H1: Interviewees displaying a powerful speech style will be rated higher on dynamism, social attractiveness, superiority, control-over-self, control-over-others, and employability than will interviewees displaying a powerless speech style.

Since a majority of the powerful/powerless speech style research and the employment interview research has been conducted primarily using undergraduate student respondents, and since the research of Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) exists to support the fact that professionals evaluate interviewees significantly differently from that of undergraduate students, this study seeks to evaluate whether this notion is accurate. Therefore, following the previous research of Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002), the second hypothesis is as follows:

H2: Professional participants will evaluate interviewees significantly differently on dynamism, social attractiveness, superiority, control-over-self, control-over-others, and employability than will undergraduate participants.

However, to extend upon the research of Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002), the research of Juodvalkis et al. (2003) is also being integrated into this study. Juodvalkis

et al. (2003) found that interviewees were rated on the stereotype associated with the specific job they were applying for based on their gender. An example of this is when a female applied for a stereotypical male job (such as a firefighter) or in the instance when a male applied for a stereotypical female job (such as an English teacher at an all girls' private school). Based on these findings, Juodvalkis et al. suggested that it could be beneficial to a job applicant to employ a communication style matching his or her gender or matching the position in which they are applying. Gallois et al. (1992) found limited support for the idea of sex-role stereotyping and employment interview outcomes based on communication styles, and Neuliep, Hintz, and McCrosky (2005) found that perceived overt power could also hold a negative outcome for specific interviewee and managerial groups. Therefore, this study seeks to address the question of matching speech style to the gender-stereotype of a particular position. Therefore, the third hypothesis is:

H3: Interviewees exhibiting a matching speech style to the gender-stereotyped job position will be evaluated significantly higher on dynamism, social attractiveness, superiority, control-over-self, control-over-others, and employability than an interviewee using a speech style incongruous with the gender-stereotyped job position.

The final hypothesis is an extension of the research of Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002). Previous researchers suggested that the difference between the ratings of the undergraduate participants and the professional participants could have been due to the undergraduate participants' perception of similarity with themselves. However, this issue was only a suggestion and was not measured. Gallois et al. (1992) found that similarity ratings significantly predicted likeability ratings for all three communication styles they

addressed: assertive, aggressive, and nonassertive. However, due to utilization of multiple communication style variables and the SRSQ, a confounding of results could have occurred. Even Juodvalkis et al. (2003) suggested that this was an area of concern, but did not address it in their study. Therefore, this dissertation sought to address whether similarity ratings significantly predict likeability and hireability when employing only powerful and powerless speech styles. Thus, hypothesis four is as follows:

H4: Interviewees exhibiting a perceived similar communication style to that of the participants will be evaluated significantly higher on dynamism, social attractiveness, superiority, control-over-self, control-over-others, and employability than an interviewee using a speech style incongruous with that of the participant.

The method used to test these hypotheses will be presented in Chapter II.

## CHAPTER II - METHOD

This study extended the previous powerful/powerless speech style research by addressing participant evaluations of two components of powerful and powerless speech style within an interview setting. The speech style components were hedges and hesitations, and the interview setting was a telephone screening interview. This study asked undergraduate and professional participants to listen to two audiotaped interviews manipulated by speech style, job type, and interviewee gender. The interviewee was evaluated by participants on dynamism, social attractiveness, similarity, and employability on semantic differential type scales. The study and method were approved by both The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board and Arkansas Tech University Human Subjects Committee (See Appendix A & Appendix B). In this chapter, the method and statistical procedures used to test the four hypotheses are presented. This chapter discusses the participants, independent variables, dependent variables, procedures, and analyses.

### Study Design

#### *Participants*

A total of 340 participants, 174 undergraduates and 166 professionals, participated in this study. The undergraduate participants, volunteers from speech communication courses at a mid-sized public university, ranged in age from 18 to 57 years ( $M = 20.72$ ) and consisted of 117 women and 57 men. Of the 174 undergraduate participants, 27 were employed on campus, 67 were employed off campus, and 80 were currently unemployed. Additionally, of the ones employed, 20 served in a managerial capacity and 74 were considered non-managerial.

The professionals, volunteers who interview people for employment, were employed at local hospitals, banks, public schools, universities, professional associations, and businesses. These subjects ranged in age from 20 to 67 years ( $M = 39.12$ ) and included 78 women and 88 men. Of the 166 professional respondents, 89 were employed on campus and 76 were employed off campus. In addition, 96 served in a managerial position, while 69 were non-managerial in nature.

### Independent Variables

#### *Messages*

Following Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002), this study included only message manipulations with hedges and hesitations. The message consisted of a 460-word, 3.5-minute digitally recorded interview of an interviewee applying for an entry-level stereotyped manipulated position (Table 2, 3, 4, 5). The 3.5-minute portion of the telephone interview was approximately midway through the interview and was void of opening and closing remarks. The message for this study was an adaptation of the previous message utilized by Parton *et al.* (2002) which was based on interviews published in a basic business communication text by Adler (1992) and in the research of Wiley and Eskilson's (1985).

Following Hosman and Wright (1987), Hosman (1989), Hosman and Siltanen (1994), and Parton et al. (2002), the researcher created the powerless version of the response message by adding 15 hedges and 15 hesitations (Table 1, 2, 3, & 4).

Table 1

*Powerful Interview for English Teacher*

---

**Employer:** How did you get interested in teaching?

**Interviewee:** Four years ago when I was a senior in high school, I had the opportunity to work as an after-school tutor and more recently I've been in charge of an after school program through the university I attend. Education seems like a difficult yet rewarding career.

**Employer:** How did you learn about Winston Academy?

**Interviewee:** Since I've lived in this area all my life, I've known about you for as long as I can remember. I used to hear your commercials on the television when I was younger. I learned about your educational endeavors through an article in *The Kappa Deltan*.

**Employer:** Where do you see yourself fitting into at Winston?

**Interviewee:** Frankly, I'd like to teach American Literature, British Literature, and Speech. The challenge of dealing with students and their families and the responsibility of making involved decisions with a school like Winston is the type of position I have always wanted.

**Employer:** What skills or background do you have that recommend you for that kind of position?

**Interviewee:** In college, I was an education major with an emphasis in English and British Literature. I was also involved in Delta Kappa Gamma student society and did extensive work with the D.R.E.A.M. adult literacy program. This program taught me how to work in diverse educational situations. All of these experiences, plus my interest in the welfare of children will help me handle the demands of such a position.

**Employer:** Where would you like to be in five years?

**Interviewee:** In five years, I'd like to have had the opportunity to further advance my education and be in a lead teaching position. My goals would be to work towards attaining the rank of Master teacher. I'm also giving some thought to attending a couple of conferences to expand my knowledge of classroom procedures.

**Employer:** How would you describe your strengths and weaknesses?

**Interviewee:** I'm a very hard worker, I'm organized, and I like to see my students succeed. But I do tend to do too much at times – I'm a compulsive worker. I find it hard to say no to an interesting project or to people that come to me with problems – I spread myself too thin.

**Employer:** If you were to pick your boss, what are the important traits that he or she should have?

**Interviewee:** He or she should have lots of follow-up – letting people know where they stand. They should have the ability to give criticism constructively and to compliment good work. Giving people a task and then leaving them alone, without nagging.

**Employer:** But still being there to help if needed, right?

**Interviewee:** Sure. But also giving me the space to teach without staying too close. Being available to help, as you said. Being consistent. And being willing to support new teachers in a new position, letting them grow. And considering the educational goals of the teacher.

**Employer:** What are the factors that motivate you?

**Interviewee:** I like to see student succeed. When a student succeeds, I know I have done my job well. I also like to stay busy. I seem to get more accomplished when I stay busy. I'm also motivated by the chance to grow and take on as much responsibility as I can handle.

**Employer:** Why should we hire you over the others who are applying for this job?

**Interviewee:** I've given the career of education a great deal of thought, and I have no doubts that I can do an excellent job.

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Note: Adapted from Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002).

Table 2

*Powerless Interview for English Teacher*

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**Employer:** How did you get interested in teaching?

**Interviewee:** (Well,) Four years ago when I was a senior in high school, I had the opportunity to work as an after-school tutor and (uh,) more recently I've been in charge of an after school program through the university I attend. Education (sort of) seems like a difficult yet rewarding career.

**Employer:** How did you learn about Winston Academy?

**Interviewee:** (Well,) Since I've lived in this area all my life, I've known about you for as long as I can remember. (I think) I used to hear your commercials on the television when I was younger. I learned (a little) about your educational endeavors through an article in *The Kappa Deltan*.

**Employer:** Where do you see yourself fitting into at Winston?

**Interviewee:** Frankly, I'd like to teach American Literature, British Literature, and (a little) Speech. The challenge of dealing with students and their families and the responsibility of making involved decisions with a school like Winston is (I guess) the type of position I have always wanted.

**Employer:** What skills or background do you have that recommend you for that kind of position?

**Interviewee:** (Let's see-) in college, I was an education major with an emphasis in English and British Literature. (Uh,) I was also involved in Delta Kappa Gamma student society and did extensive work with the D.R.E.A.M. adult literacy program. This program taught me how to work in diverse educational situations. (Well,) All of these experiences, plus my interest in the welfare of children will (kind of) help me handle the demands of such a position.

**Employer:** Where would you like to be in five years?

**Interviewee:** (I guess, ) In five years, I'd like to have had the opportunity to further advance my education and be (well,) in a lead teaching position. My goals would be (you see) to be working towards attaining the rank of Master teacher. I'm also giving some thought to attending a couple of conferences to expand my knowledge of classroom procedures.

**Employer:** How would you describe your strengths and weaknesses?

**Interviewee:** (Well,) I'm a very hard worker, I'm organized, and (uh) I like to see my students succeed. But I do tend to do too much at times – I'm (sort of) a compulsive worker. I find it hard to say no to (maybe) an interesting project or to people that come to me with problems – (I guess,) I spread myself too thin.

**Employer:** If you were to pick your boss, what are the important traits that he or she should have?

**Interviewee:** (Let's see) He or she should have lots of follow-up – letting people know where they stand. They should have the ability to give criticism constructively (sometimes) and to compliment good work. Giving people a task and then leaving them alone, without nagging.

**Employer:** But still being there to help if needed, right?

**Interviewee:** Sure. But also giving me the space to teach without staying (a little) too close. Being available to help, as you said. Being consistent. And being willing (sometimes) to support new teachers in a new position, letting them grow. And (uh) considering the educational goals of the teacher.

**Employer:** What are the factors that motivate you?

**Interviewee:** (Well, ) I like to see student succeed. When a student succeeds, I know I have done my job well. I also like to stay busy. I seem to get more accomplished (I think) when I stay busy. I'm also motivated by the chance to grow and take on as much responsibility as I can handle.

**Employer:** Why should we hire you over the others who are applying for this job?

**Interviewee:** (You see) I've given the career of education a great deal of thought, and I have no doubts (you know) that I can do an excellent job.

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Note: Adapted from Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002)



Table 3

*Powerful Interview for Science Teacher*

---

**Employer:** How did you get interested in teaching?

**Interviewee:** Four years ago when I was a senior in high school, I had the opportunity to work as an after-school tutor and more recently I've been in charge of an after school program through the university I attend. Education seems like a difficult yet rewarding career.

**Employer:** How did you learn about Winston Academy?

**Interviewee:** Since I've lived in this area all my life, I've known about you for as long as I can remember. I used to hear your commercials on the television when I was younger. I learned about your educational endeavors through an article in *The Kappa Deltan*.

**Employer:** Where do you see yourself fitting into at Winston?

**Interviewee:** Frankly, I'd like to teach Chemistry, Biology, and Physics. The challenge of dealing with students and their families and the responsibility of making involved decisions with a school like Winston is the type of position I have always wanted.

**Employer:** What skills or background do you have that recommend you for that kind of position?

**Interviewee:** In college, I was a science education major with an emphasis in Chemistry. I was also involved in Delta Kappa Gamma student society and did extensive work with the National Science Foundation program. This program taught me how to work in diverse educational situations. All of these experiences, plus my interest in the welfare of children will help me handle the demands of such a position.

**Employer:** Where would you like to be in five years?

**Interviewee:** In five years, I'd like to have had the opportunity to further advance my education and be in a lead teaching position. My goals would be to work towards attaining the rank of Master teacher. I'm also giving some thought to attending a couple of conferences to expand my knowledge of classroom procedures.

**Employer:** How would you describe your strengths and weaknesses?

**Interviewee:** I'm a very hard worker, I'm organized, and I like to see my students succeed. But I do tend to do too much at times – I'm a compulsive worker. I find it hard to say no to an interesting project or to people that come to me with problems – I spread myself too thin.

**Employer:** If you were to pick your boss, what are the important traits that he or she should have?

**Interviewee:** He or she should have lots of follow-up – letting people know where they stand. They should have the ability to give criticism constructively and to compliment good work. Giving people a task and then leaving them alone, without nagging.

**Employer:** But still being there to help if needed, right?

**Interviewee:** Sure. But also giving me the space to teach without staying too close. Being available to help, as you said. Being consistent. And being willing to support new teachers in a new position, letting them grow. And considering the educational goals of the teacher.

**Employer:** What are the factors that motivate you?

**Interviewee:** I like to see student succeed. When a student succeeds, I know I have done my job well. I also like to stay busy. I seem to get more accomplished when I stay busy. I'm also motivated by the chance to grow and take on as much responsibility as I can handle.

**Employer:** Why should we hire you over the others who are applying for this job?

**Interviewee:** I've given the career of education a great deal of thought, and I have no doubts that I can do an excellent job.

---

Note: Adapted from Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002).

Table 4

*Powerless Interview for Science Teacher*

---

**Employer:** How did you get interested in teaching?

**Interviewee:** (Well,) Four years ago when I was a senior in high school, I had the opportunity to work as an after-school tutor and (uh,) more recently I've been in charge of an after school program through the university I attend. Education (sort of) seems like a difficult yet rewarding career.

**Employer:** How did you learn about Winston Academy?

**Interviewee:** (Well,) Since I've lived in this area all my life, I've known about you for as long as I can remember. (I think) I used to hear your commercials on the television when I was younger. I learned (a little) about your educational endeavors through an article in *The Kappa Deltan*.

**Employer:** Where do you see yourself fitting into at Winston?

**Interviewee:** Frankly, I'd like to teach chemistry, biology, and (a little) physics. The challenge of dealing with students and their families and the responsibility of making involved decisions with a school like Winston is (I guess) the type of position I have always wanted.

**Employer:** What skills or background do you have that recommend you for that kind of position?

**Interviewee:** (Let's see-) in college, I was a science education major with an emphasis in chemistry. (Uh,) I was also involved in Delta Kappa Gamma student society and did extensive work with the National Science Foundation program. This program taught me how to work in diverse educational situations. (Well,) All of these experiences, plus my interest in the welfare of children will (kind of) help me handle the demands of such a position.

**Employer:** Where would you like to be in five years?

**Interviewee:** (I guess, ) In five years, I'd like to have had the opportunity to further advance my education and be (well,) in a lead teaching position. My goals would be (you see) to be working towards attaining the rank of Master teacher. I'm also giving some thought to attending a couple of conferences to expand my knowledge of classroom procedures.

**Employer:** How would you describe your strengths and weaknesses?

**Interviewer:** (Well,) I'm a very hard worker, I'm organized, and (uh) I like to see my students succeed. But I do tend to do too much at times – I'm (sort of) a compulsive worker. I find it hard to say no to (maybe) an interesting project or to people that come to me with problems – (I guess,) I spread myself too thin.

**Employer:** If you were to pick your boss, what are the important traits that he or she should have?

**Interviewee:** (Let's see) He or she should have lots of follow-up – letting people know where they stand. They should have the ability to give criticism constructively (sometimes) and to compliment good work. Giving people a task and then leaving them alone, without nagging.

**Employer:** But still being there to help if needed, right?

**Interviewee:** Sure. But also giving me the space to teach without staying (a little) too close. Being available to help, as you said. Being consistent. And being willing (sometimes) to support new teachers in a new position, letting them grow. And (uh) considering the educational goals of the teacher.

**Employer:** What are the factors that motivate you?

**Interviewee:** (Well, ) I like to see student succeed. When a student succeeds, I know I have done my job well. I also like to stay busy. I seem to get more accomplished (I think) when I stay busy. I'm also motivated by the chance to grow and take on as much responsibility as I can handle.

**Employer:** Why should we hire you over the others who are applying for this job?

**Interviewee:** (You see) I've given the career of education a great deal of thought, and I have no doubts (you know) that I can do an excellent job.

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Note: Adapted from Parton (1996) and Parton (2002).

The message manipulations were digitally recorded to replicate authentic telephone interviews, thus enhancing the ecological validity of this study. The messages were recorded in a radio sound booth utilizing trained speakers.

### *Gender*

The interviewee gender was controlled through the use of one male and one female interviewee trained for this study. The participant gender was controlled through random assignment to a particular message condition. The interviewer's gender remained constant throughout the interviews.

### *Type of Participant*

Replicating the study of Parton et al. (2002), the researcher manipulated the type of participant by using both undergraduate and professional respondents. This was necessary in order to gain a greater understanding of the differences that may exist between the perceptions of undergraduate students and professionals. Again, the participants consisted of students from a southeastern university, and professional participants were selected from local hospitals, industrial entities, banks, public schools, universities, and businesses.

### Dependent Variables

In an attempt to address the lack of consistency in the measurement scales used to study the speech style effects, this study used reliable scales. Specifically, the scales adapted by Parton et al. (2002) and originally set forth by Hosman & Siltanen, (1994), Zahn & Hopper (1985), and Gallois et al. (1992) were used (Table 6). Dynamism, social attractiveness, superiority, control-over-self, control-over-others, employability, and similarity to rater were measured. Dynamism (items 1 – 3), social attractiveness (items 4

– 6), and superiority (items 7 – 9) were assessed using Zahn and Hopper’s (1985) Speech Evaluation Instrument. Control-over-self and control-over-others was measured using scales previously developed and tested by Hosman and Siltanen (1994) (items 10 – 15). Employability and similarity of speech style to rater were measured using scales developed and tested by Hopper and Williams (1973) and Hosman (1989) (items 16 – 18). Homophily was measured with scales previously tested by Wheelless (1974) (items 19 – 20), and message quality was measured with scales previously tested by Bradac, Desmond, and Murdock (1977) (items 22 – 25).

### *Procedures*

The researcher gathered undergraduate participant information in regularly scheduled classes at the university, and the professional participant information was gathered at their places of business. Replicating the methodology of Juodvalkis et al. (2003), the researcher collected data under the guise that the information was being collected in order to produce telephone interview examples to be utilized by a career services department at a university (see Table 5).

After reading the Institutional Review Board Oral Presentation, the researcher provided volunteer participants with a stereotyped job position and participant packet (see Appendix B). The stereotyped job positions were based on the entry-level stereotyped job position research of Juodvalkis et al. (2003). The first gender-stereotyped position was an English teacher at a high school, and the second position was a science teacher at a high school. The participant group testing in the same room received the same job position.

The participant packet contained two evaluation forms, a recommendation form, and a questionnaire concerning demographics. The recommendation form assessed whom the participants would most likely hire for the position. At the end of each interview example, the participants were given approximately six minutes to rate the interviewee. Following the second evaluation, each participant was asked to submit a recommendation form (see Table 7).

During the data collection, the researcher alternated the order of the communication style interviews so that half of the participant groups heard the powerful interview first and the powerless interview second. The other half of the participant groups heard the powerless interview first and the powerful interview second.

#### *Design and Analyses*

A 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 (job stereotype x gender applicant x communication style x perceived similarity) mixed analysis design and a 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 (speech style x job type x gender x participant type) mixed analysis design were used. A between-subjects design was utilized to place professional and undergraduate subjects in one interview condition and to measure the job stereotype variable and the gender of the applicant variable. A within-subjects design was used to assess communication style and perceived similarity. Random assignments were made through the utilization of individual participants, intact classes, and work groups, i.e., a class of students or group of office managers.

Table 5

*Cover Story I & Cover Story II*

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**Cover Story I**

Thank you for your willingness to help with the following research. We would like for you to take a few moments to listen to two telephone interview examples. The data collected for this project will be used to develop audio telephone interview samples for a university's career services center.

At the end of each interview, you will be given six minutes to answer a few simple responses about the interviewee. Please be as accurate as possible. You may void your participation in this research at anytime. If you wish to do so, please bring your research packet to the researcher and let her know of your wishes to terminate your participation.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board and Arkansas Tech University Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects.

Today, you will be listening to an interview for the position of:

English Teacher at Winston Academy

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**Cover Story II**

Thank you for your willingness to help with the following research. We would like for you to take a few moments to listen to two telephone interview examples. The data collected for this project will be used to develop audio telephone interview samples for a university's career services center.

At the end of each interview, you will be given six minutes to answer a few simple responses about the interviewee. Please be as accurate as possible. You may void your participation in this research at anytime. If you wish to do so, please bring your research packet to the researcher and let her know of your wishes to terminate your participation.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board and Arkansas Tech University Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects.

Today, you will be listening to an interview for the position of:

Science Teacher at Winston Academy

Table 6

*Evaluation Form*

Place one “X” on each of the items according to your reaction to the interviewee’s responses. Remember, the “X” should fall on a line and not on top of a colon. Respond carefully but quickly. Be sure to answer each question!

Part 1. The interviewee seemed:

1. Active	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Passive
2. Talkative	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Shy
3. Aggressive	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Unaggressive
4. Sweet	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Sour
5. Nice	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Awful
6. Good-Natured	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Hostile
7. Literate	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Illiterate
8. Educated	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Uneducated
9. Upper-class	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Lower-class
10. Self-Controlled	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Not self-controlled
11. Composed	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Unplanned
12. Confident	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Insecure
13. An effective leader	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Ineffective leader
14. Influential	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Not influential
* 15. Domineering	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Compliant
16. Intelligent	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Competent
17. Self-Assured	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Timid
** 18. Agreeable	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Disagreeable
19. Like me	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Unlike Me
*** 20. Thinks like me	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Doesn't Think like me
21. Similar to me	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Different from me

Part 2: The interview seemed:

22. Organized	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Unorganized
23. Easy to understand	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Difficult to understand
24. Effective	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Ineffective
****25. Favorable	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	Unfavorable

Part 3: On the next set of scales, place an “X” on each item to indicate your evaluation of the interviewee.

26. I would hire the Interviewee.	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	I would NOT hire the interviewee.
27. I am confident I would hire the interviewee	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	I am NOT confident I would hire the interviewee.
* 28. I would recommend the interviewee for a job.	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	I would NOT recommend the interviewee for a job.

**Note:** \*Items 1-15; 26-28 [Parton *et al.* (2002)]; \*\*Items 16-18 [Hopper & Williams (1973)]; \*\*\*Items 19-20

[Wheless (1974)]; \*\*\*\*Items 22-25 [Bradac *et al.* (1977)]

Table 7

*Recommendation Form I & Recommendation Form II*

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**Recommendation Form I**

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Please circle the interviewee you would most likely recommend for the position.

For the position of **English teacher** at Winston Academy, I would recommend the following interviewee:

Interviewee I

Interviewee II

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**Recommendation Form II**

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Please circle the interviewee you would most likely recommend for the position.

For the position of **science teacher** at Winston Academy, I would recommend the following interviewee:

Interviewee I

Interviewee II

---



## CHAPTER III - RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of the statistical analyses used to test the hypotheses. This chapter is separated into three sections: (1) factor analysis, (2) multivariate analysis, and (3) univariate analyses.

### Factor Analysis

Since the study utilized a within-subjects design, the dependent measures were factor analyzed separately for Evaluation Form #1 and Evaluation Form #2. In order to adequately determine whether the factor was reliable across both sets of dimensions, Cronbach's alpha was determined for both sets of the repeated measures. These findings are discussed in the following section.

Originally, the 28 items were thought to measure seven dimensions; however, the factor analysis yielded 10 dimensions, because three items did not reliably load on any factor. The first dimension, personality traits of the interviewee, included items 1 – 6 [Active (.69), Talkative (.69), Aggressive (.51), Sweet (.65), Nice (.75), & Good-Natured (.65)]. The Cronbach's alpha for set one of the repeated measures dimension was .75, and the Cronbach's Alpha for the second set of the repeated measures dimension was .83. The items literate (.81), educated (.81), and intelligent (.59) measured perceived educational level of the interviewee. The Cronbach's alpha for the first repeated measure dimension for this factor was .78, and the second repeated measure yielded .88. Originally, it was intended for items 10, 11, and 15 (self-controlled, composed, and compliant) to measure control-of-self; however, compliance did not load on this factor or any other. Therefore, self-controlled (.62) and composed (.62) were used to measure

control-of-self. The Cronbach's alpha for the first repeated measure dimension was .76, and the second repeated measures dimension yielded .87.

Fourth, dynamism was measured using confident (.59), an effective leader (.69), influential (.69), and self-assured (.68). The Cronbach's alpha for the first repeated measures dimension was .84, and the second repeated measures dimension was .86. Similarity was intended to be measured using items 18 – 21 (agreeable, like me, thinks like me, and similar to me); however, agreeable did not load on any factor. Thus, similarity was measured using like me (.80), thinks like me (.76), and similar to me (.82). The Cronbach's alpha for the first repeated measures dimension was .92, and the Cronbach's alpha for the second repeated measures dimension was .93.

To assess the overall impression of the conducted interview, items 22 – 25 (organized, easy to understand, effective, and favorable) were included. The items organized (.68), easy to understand (.68), effective (.59), and favorable (.78) yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .82 for the first repeated measures dimension and .87 for the second repeated measures dimension. Finally, on the employability dimension, measured by items 26 – 28, significance was found: "I would hire the interviewee" (.76), "I am confident I would hire the interviewee" (.72), and "I would recommend the interviewee for a job" (.73). Thus, Cronbach's alpha for the first repeated measures dimension was .89, and the second repeated measures dimension yielded .94.

Thus, instead of the seven dimensions of personality traits, perceived educational level, control-of-self, dynamism, similarity, overall impression of the interview, and employability, the factor analysis revealed ten dimensions. This resulted because "upper class", "domineering", and "agreeable" did not load on any factor. Based on these

analyses, the items forming the factors were averaged and used in subsequent analyses. Since the study was organized using repeated measures testing, multivariate analyses were utilized.

### Multivariate Analysis

A 2 (power of speech style – low versus high) X 2 (job type – English teacher versus science teacher) X 2 (participant type – undergraduates versus professionals) X 2 (gender of interviewee – male versus female) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted using the ten dependent variables. Power of speech style was a within-subjects factor. Of the eight multivariate tests, five were found to be significant. A significant interaction effect was found for speech style  $F(10, 287) = .684, p = .00$ . Of the two-way interactions, speech style by job type was not found significant  $F(10, 287) = .05, p = .15$ ; however, there were two significant two-way interactions. Specifically, multivariate tests revealed the following: speech style by gender  $F(10, 287) = .074, p = .01$  and speech style by participant type  $F(10, 287) = .33, p = .00$ .

However, only one of three three-way interaction effects was significant. Speech style by job by gender was found not significant  $F(10, 287) = .059, p = .06$ . Additionally, speech style by gender by participant type was not significant  $F(10, 287) = .044, p = .216$ . On the other hand, speech style by job type by participant type was significant  $F(10, 287) = .083, p = .005$ . The final within-subjects interaction was speech style by job type by gender by participant type. This analysis yielded a significant four-way interaction effect  $F(10, 287) = .073, p = .015$ . The following section will discuss the univariate analyses.

## Univariate Analysis

### *Power of Speech Style*

The power of speech style main effect found significant main effects for nine dependant variables. First, a main effect was found for the dependent variable dynamism  $F(10, 287) = 214.67, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .42$ . The power of speech style main effect on the dependent variable dynamism showed that the powerful speech style was rated more favorably ( $M = 2.18$ ) than was the powerless speech style ( $M = 3.20$ ).

The power of speech style main effect was also found to have significant main effects for the following variables that were also qualified by a higher order interaction: Thus, the importance of these dependent variables will be further shown in the qualified higher order interactions. For the dependent variable education, the power of speech style main effect found a significant main effect  $F(10, 287) = 297.05, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .50$ . Additionally, the power of speech style main effect found a significant main effect for the dependent variable social attractiveness  $F(10, 287) = 172.52, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .37$ . A significant main effect for power of speech style was also found for the dependent variable control-of-self  $F(10, 287) = 525.20, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .64$ .

The dependent variable compliance yielded a significant main effect for power of speech style  $F(10, 287) = 7.30, p = .007, \eta^2 = .02$ . Similarly, the dependent variable agreeableness was found to have a significant main effect for power of speech style  $F(10, 287) = 52.05, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .15$ . The power of speech style main effect also found a significant main effect for the dependent variable similarity  $F(10, 287) = 98.91, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .25$ . The dependent variable overall impression yielded a significant power of speech style main effect  $F(10, 287) = 231.70, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .44$ . The final

dependent variable to yield a significant main effect for power of speech style was employability  $F(10, 287) = 241.80, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .45$ .

#### *Gender of Interviewee*

The gender of interviewee main effect found significant main effects for eight dependent variables: personality trait, education, compliance, dynamism, similarity, agreeableness, overall impression and employability. The dependent variable personality trait yielded a significant main effect with gender of interviewee  $F(10, 287) = 106.78, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .26$ . This main effect showed that the female interviewee ( $M = 2.64$ ) was rated more favorably than the male interviewee ( $M = 2.12$ ) for the dependent variable personality trait.

Similarly, the gender of interviewee main effect produced a significant main effect for education  $F(10, 287) = 15.04, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .26$ . An evaluation of the means indicated the female interviewee ( $M = 1.99$ ) was rated significantly more educated than the male interviewee ( $M = 2.25$ ). The dependent variable compliance also yielded a significant main effect on the gender main effect  $F(10, 287) = 12.76, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .04$ . Results revealed that the male interviewee ( $M = 2.79$ ) was rated significantly more compliant than the female interviewee ( $M = 3.07$ ).

On the gender of interviewee main effect, the final dependent variable that is not qualified by a higher order interaction is dynamism  $F(10, 287) = 40.55, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .12$ . An evaluation of the means indicated that the female interviewee ( $M = 2.43$ ) was perceived to have more dynamism than the male interviewee ( $M = 2.90$ ) for the dependent variable of dynamism.

The gender of interviewee main effect was also found to have significant main effects for the following variables that were also qualified by a higher order interaction: similarity, agreeableness, overall impression, and employability. Thus, the significance of these dependent variables will be further shown in the qualified higher order interactions. The dependent variable similarity yielded a significant main effect on gender of the interviewee  $F(10, 287) = 28.55, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .09$ . The female interviewee ( $M = 2.90$ ) was rated significantly more similar than the male interviewee ( $M = 3.30$ ) for the dependent variable similarity.

For the gender main effect, significant main effects were yielded for the dependent variable agreeableness  $F(10, 287) = 10.23, p = .002, \eta^2 = .03$ . Furthermore, it was found that the female interviewee ( $M = 2.29$ ) was rated significantly more agreeable than the male interviewee ( $M = 2.50$ ). Similarly, the dependent variable overall impression yielded a significant main effect on gender  $F(10, 287) = 14.73, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .05$ . The female interviewee ( $M = 2.15$ ) was rated higher on overall impression than the male interviewee ( $M = 2.41$ ) for the dependent variable overall impression.

The final main effect for gender was the dependent variable employability. The gender of interviewee main effect yielded a significant main effect for the dependent variable employability  $F(10, 287) = 36.87, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .11$ . An evaluation of the means indicated that the female interviewee ( $M = 2.48$ ) was rated more employable than the male interviewee ( $M = 2.92$ ).

#### *Participant Type*

Participant type referred to whether the respondent was an undergraduate student participant or a professional participant. The participant type main effect yielded a

significant main effect for nine dependent variables: education, social attractiveness, control-of-self, compliance, dynamism, similarity, agreeableness, overall impression, and employability. The dependent variables dynamism and similarity both yielded main effects for participant type and were not qualified by higher order interactions.

The participant type main effect produced a main effect for the dependent variable dynamism  $F(10, 287) = 24.75, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .99$ . An evaluation of the means showed that the undergraduates ( $M = 2.53$ ) rated the interviewees significantly more dynamic than the professionals did ( $M = 2.85$ ). Additionally, the analysis for the main effect participant type revealed a significant main effect for the dependent variable similarity  $F(10, 287) = 12.39, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .94$ . Therefore, the undergraduates ( $M = 3.23$ ) rated the interviewees significantly more similar than the professionals did ( $M = 2.97$ ).

Participant type main effect was also found to have significant main effects for the following variables that were also qualified by a higher order interaction: education, social attractiveness, control-of-self, compliance, agreeableness, overall impression, and employability. Thus, the significance of these dependent variables will be further shown in the qualified higher order interactions.

The dependent variable education yielded a main effect on participant type  $F(10, 287) = 50.54, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .15$ . An evaluation of the means revealed that the undergraduate participants ( $M = 1.88$ ) rated the interviewees significantly more educated than the professional participants ( $M = 2.35$ ). Likewise, the participant type main effect yielded a significant main effect for the dependent variable social attractiveness  $F(10, 287) = 44.14, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .13$ . Therefore, the undergraduate participants ( $M = 2.33$ )

rated the interviewees significantly more socially attractive than the professional participants did ( $M = 2.81$ ).

For the dependent variable control-of-self, a main effect was found for participant type  $F(10, 287) = 66.74, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .18$ . It was revealed that the undergraduate participants ( $M = 2.24$ ) rated the interviewees significantly higher on control-of-self than the professional participants ( $M = 2.81$ ). The analysis also yielded a main effect for the dependent variable compliance on participant type  $F(10, 287) = 10.24, p = .002, \eta^2 = .03$ ; however, the evaluation of the means indicated that the undergraduate participants ( $M = 3.05$ ) rated the interviewees less compliant than the professional participants did ( $M = 2.81$ ).

The participant type main effect further yielded a significant main effect for the dependent variable agreeable  $F(10, 287) = 20.88, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .07$ . The means revealed that the undergraduates ( $M = 2.24$ ) rated the interviewees significantly more agreeable than the professionals did ( $M = 2.55$ ). The dependent variable overall impression also yielded a significant main effect for the participant type main effect  $F(10, 287) = 14.50, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .05$ . Therefore, the undergraduate participants ( $M = 2.15$ ) rated the interviewees significantly higher for overall impression than the professional participants did ( $M = 2.41$ ).

The final dependent variable that yielded a significant main effect on participant type was employability  $F(10, 287) = 4.40, p = .04, \eta^2 = .02$ . Again, the undergraduate participants ( $M = 2.62$ ) rated the interviewee significantly more employable than the professional participants did ( $M = 2.77$ ).



*Power of Speech Style by Gender of Interviewee*

The power of speech style by gender of interviewee interaction only yielded significance for one dependent variable – similarity. The dependent variable similarity yielded significant effects for the two-way interaction power of speech style by gender  $F(10, 287) = 4.08, p = .04, \eta^2 = .01$ . Follow-up tests indicated that both male and female interviewees were rated significantly higher when employing a powerful speech style as opposed to when displaying a powerless speech style. Interestingly, similarity was the only dependent measure to be found significant in the power of speech style by gender interaction. Therefore, female interviewees were more rated similar when employing a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.47$ ) than when displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.33$ )  $t(168) = -8.864, p = .0001$ . Likewise, male interviewees utilizing a powerful speech style ( $M = 3.02$ ) were rated more similar than male interviewees displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.58$ )  $t(169) = -5.197, p = .0001$ . The means are reported in Table 8.

Table 8

*Means for Power of Speech Style by Gender of Interviewee  
for the Similarity Dependent Variable*

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		<u>Speech Style</u>	
<u>Gender</u>	Male	Powerful $M = 3.02^a$	Powerless $M = 3.58^b$
	Female	$M = 2.47^a$	$M = 3.33^b$

---

Note: Means with common superscripts within a row do not differ significantly,  $p < .05$ . The lower the score, the higher the evaluation of similarity.

### *Power of Speech Style by Participant Type*

The two-way interaction power of speech style by participant type yielded significant results for seven dependent variables: personality trait, education, social attractiveness, compliance, control-of-self, overall impression, and employability. The dependent variables personality trait, education, social attractiveness, and compliance were only found significant for the two-way interaction power of speech style by participant type. The dependent variables control-of-self  $F(10, 287) = 79.26, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .21$ , overall impression  $F(10, 287) = 11.27, p = .001, \eta^2 = .04$ , and employability  $F(10, 287) = 4.77, p = .03, \eta^2 = .02$  yielded significance for the power of speech style by participant type interaction and were all qualified by higher order interactions.

For the dependent variable personality trait, significance was found for the two-way interaction power of speech style by participant type  $F(10, 287) = 12.21, p = .001, \eta^2 = .04$ . Follow-up tests revealed that undergraduate participants rated interviewees displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.24$ ) as more personable than interviewees utilizing a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.48$ ),  $t(161) = -3.56, p = .0001$ . Conversely, follow-up tests yielded no significant difference for the power of speech style and the professional participants  $t(163) = 1.41, p = .16$ . The means are reported in Table 9.

A significant effect was found for the dependent variable education for the interaction power of speech style by participant type  $F(10, 287) = 17.868, p = .00, \eta^2 = .057$ . Follow-up tests indicated that undergraduate participants evaluated the powerful speech style ( $M = 1.55$ ) more educated than the powerless speech style ( $M = 2.21$ )  $t(169) = -9.01, p = .0001$ . Likewise, professional participants also rated the powerful speech

style ( $M = 1.81$ ) more educated than the powerless speech style ( $M = 2.90$ )  $t(165) = -15.76, p = .0001$ . The means are reported in Table 10.

Table 9

*Means for Power of Speech Style by Participant Type for the Personality Trait Dependent Variable*

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Speech Style</u>	
	Powerful	Powerless
Undergraduates	$M = 2.24^a$	$M = 2.48^b$
Professional	$M = 2.44^a$	$M = 2.34^a$

Note: Means with common superscripts within a row do not differ significantly,  $p < .05$ . The lower the score, the higher the evaluation of personality trait.

Table 10

*Means for Power of Speech Style by Participant Type for the Education Dependent Variable*

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Speech Style</u>	
	Powerful	Powerless
Undergraduates	$M = 1.55^a$	$M = 2.21^b$
Professional	$M = 1.81^a$	$M = 2.90^b$

Note: Means with common superscripts within a row do not differ significantly,  $p < .05$ . The lower the score, the higher the evaluation of education.

Additionally, a significant effect was found for the dependent variable social attractiveness within the power of speech style by participant type interaction  $F(10, 287) = 12.211, p = .001, \eta^2 = .04$ . Follow-up tests indicated that undergraduate participants

evaluated the powerful speech style ( $M = 2.15$ ) as being significantly more socially attractive than the powerless speech style ( $M = 2.53$ )  $t(172) = -4.45, p = .0001$ .

Similarly, the professional respondents evaluated the powerful speech style ( $M = 2.23$ ) significantly more socially attractive than the powerless speech style ( $M = 3.45$ )  $t(165) = -13.66, p = .0001$ , within the power of speech style by participant type interaction. The means for the interaction are in Table 11

Table 11

*Means for Power of Speech Style by Participant Type for the Social Attractiveness Dependent Variable*

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Speech Style</u>	
	Powerful	Powerless
Undergraduates	$M = 2.15^a$	$M = 2.53^b$
Professional	$M = 2.23^a$	$M = 3.45^b$

Note: Means with common superscripts within a row do not differ significantly,  $p < .05$ . The lower the score, the higher the evaluation of social attractiveness.

The final significant effect is for the compliance dependent variable for the power of speech style by participant type interaction  $F(10, 287) = 79.26, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .21$ . Follow-up tests performed for speech style by participant type on compliance yielded a significant difference in undergraduate participant response and the power of speech style utilized by the interviewee  $t(171) = 4.63, p = .0001$ . The undergraduate participants rated the powerful speech style ( $M = 3.36$ ) significantly less compliant than the powerless speech style ( $M = 2.72$ ). The power of speech style by participant type interaction

yielded no significant difference for the professional respondents for the dependent variable compliance  $t(164) = -1.34, p = .183$ . The means are reported in Table 12.

Table 12

*Means for Power of Speech Style by Participant Type  
for the Compliance Dependent Variable*

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Speech Style</u>	
	Powerful	Powerless
Undergraduates	$M = 3.36^b$	$M = 2.72^a$
Professional	$M = 2.75^a$	$M = 2.89^a$

Note: Means with common superscripts within a row do not differ significantly,  $p < .05$ . The lower the score, the higher the evaluation of social attractiveness.

*Power of Speech Style by the Job Type by Participant Type*

For the three-way interaction between power of speech style by job type by participant type, only two dependent variables, control-of-self and agreeableness, yielded significance, and both are qualified by a higher order interaction. First, the dependent variable control-of-self produced a significant effect for the power of speech style by job type by participant type three-way interaction  $F(10, 287) = 11.15, p = .001, \eta^2 = .04$ . Additionally, the dependent variable agreeableness yielded significance for the power of speech style by job type by participant type three-way interaction  $F(10, 287) = 4.80, p = .03, \eta^2 = .02$ . The significance of these two dependent variables will be further shown in the qualified higher order interaction.

*Power of Speech Style by Job Type by Participant Type by Gender of Interviewee*

The four-way interaction between power of speech style by job type by participant type by gender of interviewee was the highest order interaction conducted for

the purpose of this study. For this interaction, significant effects were found for four dependent variables. The first dependent variable that was found significant in the four-way interaction was control-of-self  $F(10, 287) = 7.72, p = .006, \eta^2 = .03$ . The first follow-up test indicated that the undergraduate participants rated the male interviewee interviewing for the English teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.03$ ) significantly greater for control-of-self than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.01$ ),  $t(42) = -4.44, p = .0001$ . Similarly, the professional participants also rated the male interviewee interviewing for the English teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.67$ ) significantly greater for control-of-self than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.91$ )  $t(38) = -17.04, p = .0001$ .

Further follow-up tests indicated that the undergraduate evaluators also rated the male interviewee interviewing for the science teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.73$ ) significantly greater for control-of-self than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.50$ )  $t(40) = -3.88, p = .0001$ . The same findings were also found for the dependent variable control-of-self when the professional participants evaluated male interviewees applying for a science teaching position utilizing a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.77$ ) and a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.90$ ),  $t(42) = -12.90, p = .0001$ .

Similar results were found within the follow-up tests for the dependent variable control-of-self for the four-way interaction concerning the female interviewee interviewing for an English teaching position. The first follow-up test for this interaction revealed that the undergraduate students rated the female interviewee interviewing for an

English teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.67$ ) significantly greater for control-over-self than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.88$ )  $t(45) = -7.25, p = .0001$ . Likewise, the professional participants rated the female interviewee displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.93$ ) while interviewing for an English teaching position significantly higher than the a comparable interviewee displaying powerless speech style ( $M = 3.46$ )  $t(40) = -7.91, p = .0001$ .

The follow-up tests for the four-way interaction for the dependent variable control-of-self indicated that the undergraduate participants also rated the female science position interviewees displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.67$ ) significantly higher than a female science interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.39$ )  $t(37) = -4.47, p = .0001$ . Similarly, for the dependent variable control-of-self, the professional participants also rated the female science position interviewee displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.57$ ) as significantly higher than the female science position interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 4.23$ )  $t(40) = -12.25, p = .0001$ . The means are reported in Table 13.

Follow-up tests indicated that the undergraduate participants rated the male interviewee interviewing for the English teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.26$ ) significantly more agreeable than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.79$ )  $t(42) = -2.59, p = .013$ . Likewise, the professional participants also rated the male interviewee interviewing for the English teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.42$ ) more agreeable than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.00$ )  $t(40) = -2.93, p = .006$ .

Further follow-up tests indicated that for the dependent variable agreeableness, the undergraduate participants did not differ significantly in their evaluations of the male interviewee interviewing for the science teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.97$ ) or the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.32$ )  $t(39) = -1.75, p = .08$ . On the contrary, the professional participants rated the male interviewee interviewing for the science teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.45$ ) significantly more agreeable than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.81$ ),  $t(42) = -2.10, p = .042$ .

Table 13

*Means for Power of Speech Style by Job Type by Participant Type by Gender of Interviewee for the Control-of-self Dependent Variable*

		<u>Speech Style</u>	
Male Interviewee		Powerful	Powerless
English Position	Undergraduates	$M = 2.03^a$	$M = 3.01^b$
	Professionals	$M = 1.67^a$	$M = 3.91^b$
Science Position	Undergraduates	$M = 1.73^a$	$M = 2.50^b$
	Professionals	$M = 1.77^a$	$M = 3.90^b$
		<u>Speech Style</u>	
Female Interviewee		Powerful	Powerless
English Position	Undergraduates	$M = 1.67^a$	$M = 2.88^b$
	Professionals	$M = 1.93^a$	$M = 3.46^b$
Science Position	Undergraduates	$M = 1.67^a$	$M = 2.39^b$
	Professionals	$M = 1.57^a$	$M = 4.23^b$

Note: Means with common superscripts within a row do not differ significantly,  $p < .05$ . The lower the score, the higher the evaluation of control-of-self.



For the dependent variable agreeableness within the four-way interaction concerning the female interviewee interviewing for an English teaching position, similar results were found. The first follow-up test for this interaction revealed that the undergraduate students rated the female interviewee interviewing for an English teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.66$ ) significantly more agreeable than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.83$ ),  $t(45) = -5.09$ ,  $p = .0001$ . Likewise, the professional participants rated the female interviewee displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.15$ ) while interviewing for an English teaching position significantly more agreeable than the a comparable interviewee displaying powerless speech style ( $M = 2.61$ ),  $t(40) = -2.43$ ,  $p = .02$ .

The follow-up tests for the four-way interaction for the dependent variable agreeableness indicated that the undergraduate participants did not rate the female science position interviewees displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.03$ ) significantly different than a female science interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.08$ )  $t(40) = -.26$ ,  $p = .796$ . However, for the dependent variable agreeableness, the professional participants rated the female science position interviewee displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.14$ ) as significantly higher than the female science position interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.80$ )  $t(40) = -3.80$ ,  $p = .0001$ . The means are reported in Table 14.

The third dependent variable that was found significant within the four-way interaction power of speech style by job type by participant type by gender of interviewee was overall impression  $F(10, 287) = 7.21$ ,  $p = .008$ ,  $\eta^2 = .02$ . The first follow-up test indicated that the undergraduate participants rated the male interviewee interviewing for

the English teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.07$ ) significantly greater on overall impression than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.85$ )  $t(44) = -3.29, p = .002$ . Similarly, the professional participants also rated the male interviewee interviewing for the English teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.87$ ) greater on overall impression than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.18$ )  $t(40) = -9.29, p = .0001$ .

Table 14

*Means for Power of Speech Style by Job Type by Participant Type by Gender of Interviewee for the Agreeableness Dependent Variable*

		<u>Speech Style</u>	
Male Interviewee			
		Powerful	Powerless
English Position			
	Undergraduates	$M = 2.26^a$	$M = 2.79^b$
	Professionals	$M = 2.42^a$	$M = 3.00^b$
Science Position			
	Undergraduates	$M = 1.97^a$	$M = 2.32^a$
	Professionals	$M = 2.45^a$	$M = 2.81^b$
		<u>Speech Style</u>	
Female Interviewee			
		Powerful	Powerless
English Position			
	Undergraduates	$M = 1.66^a$	$M = 2.83^b$
	Professionals	$M = 2.15^a$	$M = 2.61^b$
Science Position			
	Undergraduates	$M = 2.03^a$	$M = 2.08^a$
	Professionals	$M = 2.14^a$	$M = 2.80^b$

Note: Means with common superscripts within a row do not differ significantly,  $p < .05$ . The lower the score, the higher the evaluation of agreeableness .

Additional follow-up tests indicated that the undergraduate evaluators also rated the male interviewee interviewing for the science teaching position displaying a powerful

speech style ( $M = 1.76$ ) significantly greater on overall impression than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.60$ )  $t(39) = -4.91, p = .0001$ .

Similar results were also found for overall impression when the professional participants evaluated male interviewees applying for a science teaching position utilizing a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.01$ ) and a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.94$ )  $t(42) = -7.92, p = .0001$ .

The follow-up tests for the dependent variable agreeableness within the four-way interaction concerning the female interviewee interviewing for an English teaching position yielded similar results. First, the follow-up test for the interaction revealed that the undergraduate students rated the female interviewee interviewing for an English teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.67$ ) significantly higher on overall impression than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.57$ ),  $t(45) = -4.45, p = .0001$ . In the same way, the professional participants rated the female interviewee displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.74$ ) while interviewing for an English teaching position significantly higher on overall impression than the comparable interviewee displaying powerless speech style ( $M = 2.72$ ),  $t(40) = -6.79, p = .0001$ .

The final follow-up tests for the four-way interaction for overall impression indicated that the undergraduate participants also rated the female science position interviewees displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.68$ ) significantly higher than a female science interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.00$ ),  $t(40) = -2.17, p = .036$ . Likewise, for overall impression, the professional participants also rated the female science position interviewee displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.79$ )

significantly higher than the female science position interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.02$ ),  $t(40) = -8.17$ ,  $p = .0001$ . The means are reported in Table 15.

The final dependent variable that was significant within the four-way interaction power of speech style by job type by participant type by gender of interviewee was employability  $F(10, 287) = 3.73$ ,  $p = .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .01$ . Follow-up tests indicated that the undergraduate participants rated the male interviewee interviewing for the English teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.60$ ) significantly more employable than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.68$ ),  $t(45) = -3.85$ ,  $p = .0001$ . Additionally, the professional participants also rated the male interviewee interviewing for the English teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.22$ ) significantly more employable than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.60$ ),  $t(40) = -7.11$ ,  $p = .0001$ .

Additional follow-up tests indicated that the undergraduate evaluators also rated the male interviewee interviewing for the science teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.22$ ) significantly more employable than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.09$ )  $t(40) = -3.98$ ,  $p = .0001$ . Similar findings were found for the dependent variable employability when the professional participants evaluated male interviewees applying for a science teaching position utilizing a powerful speech style ( $M = 2.39$ ) and a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.54$ ),  $t(42) = -5.99$ ,  $p = .0001$ .

In the same way, results were found within the follow-up tests for the dependent variable employability for the four-way interaction concerning the female interviewee interviewing for an English teaching position. The first follow-up test for the interaction revealed that the undergraduate participants rated the female interviewee interviewing for

an English teaching position displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.80$ ) significantly more employable than the comparable interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.16$ ),  $t(45) = -6.26$ ,  $p = .0001$ . Likewise, the professional participants rated the female interviewee displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.96$ ) while interviewing for an English teaching position more employable than a comparable interviewee displaying powerless speech style ( $M = 3.12$ ),  $t(40) = -7.91$ ,  $p = .0001$ .

Table 15

*Means for Power of Speech Style by Job Type by Participant Type by Gender of Interviewee for the Overall Impression Dependent Variable*

		<u>Speech Style</u>	
Male Interviewee			
		Powerful	Powerless
English Position			
	Undergraduates	$M = 2.07^a$	$M = 2.85^b$
	Professionals	$M = 1.87^a$	$M = 3.18^b$
Science Position			
	Undergraduates	$M = 1.76^a$	$M = 2.60^b$
	Professionals	$M = 2.01^a$	$M = 2.94^b$
		<u>Speech Style</u>	
Female Interviewee			
		Powerful	Powerless
English Position			
	Undergraduates	$M = 1.67^a$	$M = 2.57^b$
	Professionals	$M = 1.74^a$	$M = 2.72^b$
Science Position			
	Undergraduates	$M = 1.68^a$	$M = 2.00^b$
	Professionals	$M = 1.79^a$	$M = 3.02^b$

Note: Means with common superscripts within a row do not differ significantly,  $p < .05$ . The lower the score, the higher the evaluation of overall impression.

Follow-up tests for the four-way interaction for the dependent variable employability indicated that the undergraduate participants also rated the female science

position interviewees displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.91$ ) more employable than a female science interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 2.54$ ),  $t(40) = -2.84$ ,  $p = .007$ . Similarly, for the dependent variable employability, the professional participants also rated the female science position interviewee displaying a powerful speech style ( $M = 1.91$ ) higher than the female science position interviewee displaying a powerless speech style ( $M = 3.45$ )  $t(40) = -9.53$ ,  $p = .0001$ . The means are reported in Table 16.

Table 16

*Means for Power of Speech Style by Job Type by Participant Type by Gender of Interviewee for the Employability Dependent Variable*

		<u>Speech Style</u>	
Male Interviewee			
		Powerful	Powerless
English Position			
	Undergraduates	$M = 2.60^a$	$M = 3.68^b$
	Professionals	$M = 2.22^a$	$M = 3.60^b$
Science Position			
	Undergraduates	$M = 2.22^a$	$M = 3.09^b$
	Professionals	$M = 2.39^a$	$M = 3.54^b$
		<u>Speech Style</u>	
Female Interviewee			
		Powerful	Powerless
English Position			
	Undergraduates	$M = 1.80^a$	$M = 3.16^b$
	Professionals	$M = 1.96^a$	$M = 3.12^b$
Science Position			
	Undergraduates	$M = 1.91^a$	$M = 2.54^b$
	Professionals	$M = 1.91^a$	$M = 3.45^b$

Note: Means with common superscripts within a row do not differ significantly,  $p < .05$ . The lower the score, the higher the evaluation of employability.

## CHAPTER IV – DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Paul Watzlawick is famous for the phrase, “One cannot not communicate,” and is often attributed to nonverbal behaviors. This phrase has been debated by communication scholars and lay people alike. However, how one speaks says a great deal about oneself, and often perceptions and beliefs concerning a communicator are attributed based simply on how a person speaks during a given interaction. This dissertation investigated the effects a speech style has on people’s perceptions and attributions during the telephone interview process interaction. Following the previous research, it was hypothesized that interviewees using a powerful speech style would be evaluated significantly more hireable than interviewees using a powerless speech style. Additionally, this dissertation replicated Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) by comparing the evaluations of undergraduate and professional evaluators. The idea of gender-stereotyped jobs presented by Juodvarkis et al. (2003) was also examined in hopes that the relationship between speech styles and employment expectations could be further clarified. Finally, as an extension of previous research, it was hypothesized that interviewees exhibiting a perceived similar speech style to that of the participants would be more positively evaluated.

This chapter discusses the results of this study and the perceived effects of powerful/powerless speech styles on telephone employment interview outcomes. Specifically, this chapter is divided into the following sections: (1) hypotheses, (2) theoretical implications, (3) implications for employment interview research, (4) limitations, (5) conclusions, and (6) directions for future research. In the second section, implications of these results for powerful/powerless speech styles theory are discussed.

The third section discusses additional suggestions for employment interviewing (following that of Parton et al., 2002). The final section of this chapter will discuss limitations, conclusions, and future research.

## Hypotheses

### *Power of Speech Style*

The first hypothesis predicted that an interviewee displaying a powerful speech style would be rated more favorable on dynamism, social attractiveness, superiority, control-over-self, control over others and employability more often than interviewees using a powerless speech style. This hypothesis was a replication of the previous literature. The results of this study supported this hypothesis. Within the independent variable power, main effects were found for dynamism, social attractiveness, control-over-self, and employability. Additionally, the main effects for social attractiveness, control-over-self, and employability were qualified by higher order interactions. Therefore, the dependent variable dynamism was the only significant main effect not qualified by higher order interactions for the independent variable power. These findings indicated that a person displaying a powerful speech style would be considered more dynamic than someone displaying a powerless speech style.

While the use of a powerful speech style results in a greater likelihood of perceived dynamism, social attraction, control-over-self, and employability, the current study suggests that this is due to perceived greater control-of-self. Although, Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) did not find any support for these control dimensions in the attributions of powerful/powerless speech styles, previous research suggested that powerful speech style effects could be explained in terms of control (Hosman, 1989;



Hosman & Siltanen, 1994; 2006). These attributions of control-over-self and control-over-others were found to be associated with various components of speech styles. However, it was suggested by Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) that the reason that control attributions were not supported in their research was because of the mixed participant group (both undergraduate and professional participants). The current study, however, did yield support for the control-of-self dimension. The power of speech style main effect found a significant main effect for control-of-self, thus suggesting that interviewees utilizing a powerful speech style would be considered to have a higher degree of control-of-self.

Though this study found support for the constructs of control and power, it should not be assumed that these constructs define an interviewee's certainty. Hosman and Siltanen (1994, 2006) stated that a powerful speech style may only be indicative of power, certainty, or confidence when compared to a powerless speech style. Secondly, research has shown that certainty and control may be understood as two different constructs (Hosman & Siltanen, 1994; 2006). Therefore, explanations of control-over-self and control-over-others may fall under the broader constructs of confidence or certainty. A powerful speech style may not always indicate confidence or certainty. Therefore, this misperception of speakers due to power of speech styles may give advantage to a speaker that appears to be certain, but not actually have specific levels of control.

Even nearly 30 year later, Erickson et al.'s (1978) position that a powerless speech style could be considered too costly for the listeners is still an important concern for researchers. It is important to address because for many, powerless speech style may

be too difficult to listen to, resulting in confusion for the listeners and thus requiring a greater effort on the part of speakers to convey accurate meaning.

### *Participant Type*

Results support hypothesis two, which predicted that professional participants would evaluate interviewees significantly different from undergraduate participants. Specifically, main effects were found for the dependent variables education, social attractiveness, control-of-self, compliance, dynamism, similarity, agreeableness, overall impression, and employability. The results revealed a significant difference in undergraduates' and professionals' evaluations of the speech styles. Overall, undergraduate participants gave more favorable evaluations of both speech styles and distinguished less between the two, while professionals evaluated the powerful speech style as significantly more favorable than the powerless speech style. These findings were consistent with Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) research that found that undergraduates rated interviewees significantly more favorable than did professionals.

On the dimensions of education, social attractiveness, dynamism, similarity, agreeableness, overall impression, and employability, undergraduates rated interviewees significantly more favorably than the professional participants. This outcome could be explained through the research of Smith et al. (1998) that showed that perceived speaker expertise interacted with the speech style component to effect impression formation. Therefore, undergraduate participants could have a more favorable impression of interviewee education, social attractiveness, dynamism, similarity, agreeableness, and employability due to perceived expertise.

Interestingly, one area in which these findings did not hold true was the compliance component. Undergraduates rated interviewees applying for a science position less favorably than professional participants. Additionally, undergraduates rated the powerful speech style less favorable in compliance than the powerless speech style, suggesting that there was preference for the interviewee with a powerless speech style instead of the interviewee with a powerful style. These results could be due to the fact that compliance did not load with any other factors in the factor analysis.

On the component of dynamism, significance was found for job type by participant type. Specifically, it was found that undergraduates rated the interviewees more favorable than the professionals. The undergraduates rated the science interviewees most favorably of the two job types. Follow-up tests for job type by participant type did not differ significantly on their ratings of English interviewees, but did differ for science interviewees.

For the component agreeableness, the three-way interaction of speech style by job type by participant type revealed that undergraduates rated the interviewees more favorable than the professionals. Specifically, the results indicated that undergraduates rated the English interviewees more favorable than the science interviewees when using the powerful speech style, but less favorable than the science interviewees when using the powerless speech style. This could be due in part to a violation of expectancy in that English teachers should speak in a more proper manner than science teachers. Also, it was found that when the English interviewee was female, the undergraduates made a greater distinction between the powerful and the powerless speech styles. The same distinction was not made for the female science interviewees by the undergraduate

participants. Therefore, it is suggested that undergraduate respondents hold particular expectations about the speech styles held by women in stereotyped positions and about what is considered acceptable.

Professionals also rated female interviewees more favorably when displaying a powerful speech style; however, they rated female science interviewees most harshly when displaying a powerless style. Likewise, male English interviewees were rated less favorably on agreeableness for both speech styles and by both participant types than their female counterparts. Though, professional participants rated the interviewees lower on agreeableness than undergraduate participants, the two participant groups rated male interviewees similarly with less distinction between powerful and powerless speech styles.

The “overall impression” of the participants further supported hypothesis two. The professional participants rated the interviewees significantly lower than the undergraduate participants. The undergraduate participants also rated both job types more favorably than the professional participants. The four-way interaction power of speech style by job type by participant type by gender of interviewee revealed that professionals rated powerless interviewees less favorably than powerful interviewees. Undergraduate participants did not make as great of a distinction between the two different styles. Again, the lack of distinction is consistent with the findings of Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) and Barr and Hitt (1986), suggesting that undergraduate participants were not as attuned to the differences of the speech styles due to their untrained ear. On the other hand, professional participants are trained to listen for key information and delivery in interviews.

### *Matching Speech Styles*

Hypothesis three predicted that interviewees exhibiting a matching speech style to the gender-stereotyped job position would be evaluated significantly higher than interviewees using a speech style incongruous with the gender-stereotyped job position. Limited support was found for this hypothesis. On the factor of agreeableness, it was found that both undergraduates and professionals rated female English interviewees using a powerful style as more favorable than female English interviewees displaying a powerless style. However, for science interviewees, the powerful style was not rated as favorably as for the female English interviewees. Interestingly, the professionals rated the powerless female science interviewee lower than the powerless female English interviewee. Conversely, results indicated that on the factor of agreeableness, the professionals rated powerless male English interviewees lower than powerless male science interviewees. The undergraduates rated the powerful male English interviewee higher than the powerless male English interviewee, but these evaluations were substantially lower than the overall ratings given to the female English interviewee.

On “overall impression,” undergraduates rated both job positions as more favorable than the professional respondents; however, the four-way interaction of speech style by job type by gender by participant type had specific differences within the interaction. Specifically, undergraduates rated female English interviewees higher than male English interviewees. The same held true for the professionals. However, the professional participants rated the female science interviewee lower than the female English interviewee. The greatest rating difference could be seen between the ratings of the powerful female science interviewee and the powerless female science interviewee.

For male interviewees, the findings were similar. Undergraduates rated the male English interviewee lower than the male science interviewee. Professionals rated the powerless male English interviewee more harshly than the powerless male science interviewee. The significance of this four-way interaction speech style by job type by gender by participant type broadens the original research of Juodvalkis et al. (2003). In their study, no significance was found for a three-way interaction among job type, power of speech style, and gender. The researchers did not attempt a four-way interaction.

The final factor concerning matching speech styles is employability. Minimal significance was found for the four-way interaction speech style by job type by gender by participant type. However, the findings of this interaction are of interest. On the factor of employability, undergraduates rated the powerful interviewees significantly higher than the powerless interviewees. Additionally, it should be noted that the professionals consistently rated powerless female science interviewees more harshly than powerless female English interviewees, and powerless male science interviewees were rated higher than male English interviewees. These findings suggest that a gender-stereotype might be present in the impression formation and the attribution of employment, but like Juodvalkis et al. (2003) suggested, further research is still necessary to explore this issue fully.

### *Similarity*

The final hypothesis was an extension of the research of Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002). It predicted that interviewees exhibiting a perceived similar speech style to that of the participants would be evaluated significantly higher than an interviewee displaying a speech style incongruous with that of the participants. Support was found

for this hypothesis within the two-way interaction job type by participant type and speech style by gender. It was also found that the powerful speech style was rated higher on similarity than the powerless speech style.

Results revealed that undergraduate participants rated English interviewees significantly different from professional participants on similarity, but the same did not hold true for science interviewees. No significant difference was found between the participant types for science interviewees. It was further revealed that both female and male interviewees were rated significantly higher when displaying a powerful speech style than when employing a powerless speech style. However, the female interviewees were rated more favorably overall than the male interviewees. These findings are supportive of the previous research of Hosman (1989).

Additionally, previous research had suggested that employability of interviewees was based on perceived similarity between the evaluator and the interviewee. Gallois et al. (1992) found significance for similarity across all speech styles. This study also found significance for speech style on similarity and also job type by participant type. Considering the findings of this study on employability, the results were similar to those found for similarity between the speech styles. Undergraduate and professional respondents rated the powerful female interviewees more favorable than the powerless male interviewees; but both female and male powerful interviewees were rated higher than the interviewees displaying a powerless speech style. This could have been because the participants perceived the interviewees as too similar to their selves, thereby making the interviewee appear more employable. Therefore, the claim that perceived similarity

between the evaluator and the participants should be considered a component of the overall evaluation of employability.

In summary, support was found for hypotheses one and two. Limited support was found for hypotheses three and four.

### Theoretical Implications

The results of this dissertation have implications for four speech communication theories: (1) powerful and powerless speech, (2) attribution theory, (3) uncertainty reduction theory, and (4) expectancy theory.

#### *Powerful and Powerless Speech*

Lakoff's (1973, 1975) seminal research asserted that "women's language" perpetuated unequal treatment and resulted in their being perceived by society as powerless. Erickson et al. (1978) challenged Lakoff's assertions and found that it was societal status rather than gender that created differences in language displays. Later research of powerless language conceptualized it as speech containing hedges, hesitations, tag questions, deictic phrases, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, and overly polite forms (Erickson et al., 1978; Bradac & Mulac, 1984a). However, the past 30 years of research has not found a definitive theoretical explanation of speech style effects (Gibbons et al., 1991; Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Siltanen, 1994, 2006).

The question of control and certainty still exists. The study by Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) did not find support for control, but this study found support for the control explanation. Three possible explanations for this support are the participants used, context used, and components used. First, this study replicated the Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) study by using both student and professional respondents. The



results of this study indicated that professionals evaluated the speech styles significantly differently than did the undergraduate students. However, overall, significant difference was found for control within speech style by job type by participant type. Secondly, this study used a more common context for examining speech style effects. When Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) originally performed their study, the context of screening interviews was primarily underused; however, with the onset of technology and the falling economy, the utilization of telephone screening interviews has increased. Jensen (2006) writes that “Without [telephone interviews], companies would overburden themselves interviewing candidates face to face who could have been disqualified much earlier on” (p. 1). Therefore, the utilization of digitally recorded interviews to study telephone screening interviews was more accepted within the study parameters. Thirdly, the components used could have led to the current findings. This study utilized a within-subjects dimension with individual components of the speech styles. This was similar to the previous research of Hosman and Siltanen (1994, 2006) and Hosman (1989). Though the context of telephone screening interviews worked in this study, further research might investigate the individual components of the speech styles in various contexts using only professional participants.

This leads to another implication. As Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) suggested, future research should use professional participants rather than undergraduate participants. This study supported the findings of Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) that found professionals significantly differentiated between the speech styles on evaluations of employability, whereas undergraduates did not.

Finally, in an attempt to address the issue of too many diverse measurement scales used to examine the speech style effects, this study used scales that were previously found reliable (Hosman & Siltanen, 1994; Zahn & Hopper, 1985; Hopper & Williams, 1973; Wheelless, 1974; Bradac et al., 1977). Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) developed scales to measure the dimension of employability, and these scales were again utilized for this study. These scales again were found to be highly reliable. Since the results of the factor analysis did not find all the same dimensions the items were intended to measure, and as previous research had found them to measure, future research on the speech style effects is still needed to produce more consistent measurement scales.

#### *Attribution Theory*

Kelley (1973) stated that people attempt to assign meaning to other people's behavior and thus try to establish explanations for their behavior. Additionally, Kelley (1973) believed that people assign attributions even if the attributions are inaccurate. An understanding of accuracy through speech and telephone screening interviewing is important so that interviewers can not only hire the best person for the job, but additionally so that they can understand their preconceived attributions based on an interviewee's speech. This study found that a powerful speech style produces attributions of employability, control, and an overall positive impression. Therefore, as suggested by earlier research, if the interviewee wanted to form a positive impression regarding control and employability, then he or she should display a powerful speech style.

It is important to point out the lack of interaction effects for speech style and gender with regards to interviewee gender. Similarity was the only factor to result in significance for speech style by gender. The findings of this study and earlier ones

suggest that gender is not the only attributing factor to situational variables and that additional factors such as speech style should be considered. Unfortunately, the research still cannot address the specific reason as to the significance of speech style, but studies have shown that it is of great significance in specific settings (Bradac & Mulac, 1984a; Wright & Hosman, 1983, Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Siltanen, 1994, Hosman & Siltanen, 2006). One explanation, which was suggested by Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002), may be that participants placed themselves in the interviewee's position and thus rated the interviewee as they wished others would rate themselves.

Furthermore, contrary to Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002), it was found that both professionals and undergraduates evaluated the female interviewee in the powerful speech style condition as significantly more employable than the male interviewee in the powerful speech style condition. However, similarly to Parton (1996) and Parton et al., (2002) the professionals evaluated both males and females in the powerless speech style condition significantly less employable than the undergraduates.

#### *Uncertainty Reduction Theory*

Berger and Calabrese (1975) stated that when people communicate, they will act to reduce the uncertainty about the other person, seeking ways to predict their behavior. This is particularly true in contexts in which the two parties do not know each other, such as an employment interview. This uncertainty can be about what each party is thinking, but more importantly how they might behave once they obtain the position.

Interviewees using a powerful speech style were perceived to be more similar by the participants than interviewees using a powerless speech style. This finding supports the previous suggestions of Juodvalkis et al. (2003) when they stated that it could be

beneficial to a job applicant to employ a communication style matching his or her gender to that of the position for which they are applying. This would further mean that if interviewers prefer the powerful speech style, then interviewees should try to speak in a more powerful style because this study found that powerful speech styles were considered more employable than powerless speech styles.

This theoretical implication can also be considered for the factors of control and compliance. Unlike previous research, the current study did yield support for the control-of-self dimension. The power of speech style main effect found a significant main effect for control-of-self, thus suggesting that interviewees utilizing a powerful speech style would be considered to have a higher degree of control-of-self. Likewise, this study found that interviewees speaking in a powerful speech style were rated higher on compliance. This would lend itself to the idea that if an interviewee is perceived as having control and being compliant, then they will behave in a controlled and compliant manner once they obtain the position. Through previous research, these two dimensions appear to be very highly regarded in formal settings, including courtroom and job interview settings. Thus, this study shows that interviewees should take power of speech style into account when presenting themselves within formal settings if they desire to be perceived as in control or willing to comply.

### *Expectancy Theory*

Burgoon (1994) found that people evaluate other people's communication competence through preconceived norms for communication and the violation of these norms. The violation of the norms affects the communication outcome either positively or negatively. Burgoon concluded that "verbal cues are more important for factual,

abstract, and persuasive communication, whereas nonverbal cues are more important for relational, attributional, affective, and attitudinal message” (pp. 235-236). For example, the norm within employment interviewing is that an interviewee is to communicate in such a way that a positive impression is enhanced. Interviewees using a powerful speech style were perceived as significantly more employable and competent than interviewees using a powerless speech style because they matched the evaluator’s expectations.

Expectancy theory may explain why female science interviewees using a powerless speech style were perceived as significantly less employable than when they used a powerful speech style. The same held true for male interviewees applying for an English position. The research of Juodvalkis et al. (2003) supported the notion that many job positions still carry gender-stereotyped expectations. This study’s results suggest that some gender stereotypes might still exist, especially within educational job positions. However, this study was not prepared to fully test these ideas.

Also, this study dealt with the expectations of the position titles. English interviewees were rated significantly lower when displaying a powerless style of speech than a powerful style of speech. Females using a powerful style of speech were rated even higher on employability than males. This is contrary to the previous findings of Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) that suggested that females speaking in a powerless speech were rated significantly more favorable than females displaying a powerful speaking style. This extension of the previous research should be noted and further examined. At what point in society did the shift occur? When did women speaking in a powerless style become less acceptable and in what contexts do positive

evaluation of the powerless style still exist? And even more importantly, at what point in the future might the expectation shift back to its previous findings?

Furthermore, like that of Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002), this study found that undergraduates rated interviewees significantly more favorable overall than professional participants. This holds a great importance in the area of expectancy because the results indicated that undergraduate students have lower expectations of an interviewee than the professional participants, thus suggesting that at some point within a professional lifetime, individuals will shift their expectations as to how an applicant should present himself or herself either in person or via a telephone.

#### Implications for Employment Research

This study revealed some additional implications for employment interview research. First, researchers should work to design studies that do not rely solely on undergraduate participants. The findings of this study and the two studies it was developed from (Parton, 1996; Parton et al., 2002; Juodvalkis et al., 2003) suggest that undergraduate participants should be eliminated completely from employment interview research. Significant findings have shown that undergraduates and professionals evaluate the interviewees differently on several factors. This further provides evidence that the use of undergraduate subjects for the study of speech style and employment interviewing many not result in an accurate understanding. Therefore, in order to gain a real understanding of how speech styles are perceived in employment interview research, professionals should be the source for participants. As discussed by Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002), time, expense, and willingness of participants again were three major problems faced in this study. However, with the development of better online

technologies, it is the hope of the researcher that more creative and accurate ways of gaining such willingness to participate with less of an expense will be on the horizon.

An additional point of interest is that the professionals appeared to take the research seriously. Several gave the interaction their full attention and wanted to discuss the research once the collection was finished. Many of the professionals even had ideas as to how to expand the current study or areas within speech style they would like to see addressed for their future benefit. The undergraduates on the other hand were not as intrigued by the study and many times did not appear to take the interaction as seriously. Several even commented upon completion that they “did not see why they were made to listen to the same interview twice,” thus indicating that they did not recognize a difference in speech styles.

Interviewees should attempt to understand how the gender stereotypes and style of speech affects impression formation. Additionally, interviewees should understand that gender and the job type affects evaluations of employability and overall impression. This study found that powerless female interviewing for a science position were rated significantly lower than powerless women interviewing for an English position and vice versa for males. Therefore, it is suggested that stereotyped expectations still exist concerning teaching positions within educational institutions. In order to negate these findings, interviewing bodies (individuals or boards) should implement not only a structured interview, but also insure that there is equal representation of all genders. By having a formal structure and equal representation, interviewers will be more likely to rule out gender and speech biases or at the very least even out the differences within their judgment rulings.

Additionally, it should also be noted that this study found that both professionals and undergraduates evaluated the female interviewee in the powerful speech style condition as significantly more employable than the male interviewee in the powerful speech style condition, and this was contrary to the earlier findings of Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002). These findings suggest that further research into the area of gender effects is warranted because this study was limited to the inferences that could be made as to the reasoning for such an outcome.

### Limitations

Four limitations restrict the generalizability of this study, which are (1) the measurement scales, (2) audiotaped interview, (3) vocal quality, and (4) participant type. First, the measurement scales may have limited the results. As pointed out by Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002), all the scales except one had positive adjectives representing each of the dimensions placed on the left, and the negative adjective except one representing each of the dimensions were placed on the right, thus allowing participants to fall into a pattern while responding to the study variables.

Second, participants were instructed to listen to an interview and did not see the interviewees. While this was done in order to replicate a telephone-screening interview and the earlier research (Parton, 1996; Parton et al., 2002; Juodvalkis et al., 2003), some participants could have found it difficult to just listen without actually seeing the interview taking place. Many participants (both undergraduate and professional) suggested that future studies should include at least a photograph of the applicant. The reasoning was because they felt that with the advent of online means, it was fairly easy to find what an applicant might look like prior to the telephone interview.



Third, the use of professional voices for the interviewer and the interviewees may have limited the results. It could have been perceived because these were recordings that the voices were the exception to the general population's vocal quality. However, since this had been a concern in Parton (1996), steps were taken to create good vocal quality without making the actors sound too staged. These voices were used to control for confounding variables in order to accurately examine the effects of powerful and powerless speech styles while at the same time sounding as real as possible.

The final limitation with this study could be through the use of the professional participants. Many of the participants (a little more than half) from this study were recruited at various universities. Originally, it was the thought by the researcher that these educators might be more sympathetic to the interviewees because they are in contact with undergraduate students daily. However, this concern was unfounded in personal observation and statistical results. Additionally, the researcher was able to gain professional participation from the areas of banking, medical institutions, public relations organizations, religious entities, and area businesses. Therefore, any idiosyncrasies of a particular type of group to the condition heard (i.e. English professor listening to an English interviewee) may have affected their evaluations.

### Conclusions

The results of this study on the investigation of the powerful and powerless speech style effect on telephone employment interview outcomes were consistent with the previous research of Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002). Generally, a powerless speech style resulted in negative attributions of employability and overall impression. Again, the utilization of hedges and hesitations were considered to be powerless. This

study also found that powerful speech style results in higher evaluations of control, but not social attractiveness (Bradac et al., 1981; Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Siltanen, 1994, 2006; Parton et al., 2002; Ruva & Bryant, 2004). In the context of a telephone employment interview, gender did not play a significant role on many of the dimensions. However, gender was found to interact with speech style effects of attributions of similarity, and gender was also involved in several multiple interaction outcomes such as control-of-self, overall impression, agreeableness, and marginally in employability. However, it should be noted that these findings are consistent with past research that found gender did not have a clear connection with speech style (Bradac & Mulac, 1984a, 1984b; Hosman, 1989; Hosman & Wright, 1987; Mulac & Bradac, 1995).

Additionally, Erickson et al. (1978) and Wright and Hosman (1983) found some interaction between gender and speech styles, but the connection is not fully understood at this time. Mulac & Bradac (1995) stated that the relationship between the concepts of gender, language, and power is more complex than can be understood. Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) helped to clarify this relationship in that they found situations where speech style may override gender when evaluations are made, and there may be situations where gender may override speech style when evaluations are being made. By approaching the research from the standpoint of gender-stereotyped job positions as suggested by Juodvalkis et al. (2003), the results of this study support the Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) findings and attempt to clarify the connection between gender stereotypes and employment interviews.

Since this research failed to explain the relationship between gender and speech styles, the question still remains – Is it important to understand and study this

relationship? The answer is “yes”. Ehninger (1968) pointed out that since Aristotle’s time, the role of ethos has been shown to be important in the act of persuasion. Within the telephone interview context, an interviewee must persuade the interviewer that he or she is the most credible person for the job without relying on nonverbal cues to help. However, for many, the use of a powerful speech style results in the attributions of high credibility, and that is an inaccurate perception. Several dimensions were at work throughout the study. This study found that the use of a powerful speech style was rated as having more control-of-self, being more compliant, and scoring higher on overall impression. Contrary to Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002), it was found that both professionals and undergraduates evaluated the female interviewee in the powerful speech style condition as significantly more employable than the male interviewee in the powerful speech style condition. Additionally, there was an interaction effect on speech style with gender for similarity. Therefore, it is important to conduct further research in order to understand the complex relationship between gender and speech style effects.

#### Direction for Future Research

Several directions for future research are suggested by this study. First, future research could examine the stereotyped job positions, especially within the educational setting such as that of Bugental and Lewis (1999), but also within such settings as government, military, and aviation. This study was limited by what conclusions could be drawn, and, therefore, the conclusions are referred to as suggestions. Juodvalkis et al. (2003) postulated that they had found evidence to show that stereotyped jobs exist; however, their study was limited by the utilization of only undergraduate participants. Do stereotypes within society still exist?

Building off the idea of participants, research in employment interviews could begin to shift toward using only professional participants to examine the speech style effects. Though it would increase the complexity of this study, further research could then provide the participant with the interviewee's paper credentials and determine if the nonverbal messages made a difference. Within the idea of broadening the understanding of telephone-screening interview outcomes, the idea of vocal quality and dialects in various geographical areas need to be addressed. For example, will a female with a Southern dialect in combination with a powerful speech style interviewing for a male dominated job in the Midwest yield positive attributions of employability? Would the findings on similarity affect the outcome of the attributions?

Additionally, research could further examine other individual components of speech style in a less formal environment. Parton (1996) and Parton et al. (2002) pointed out the findings of their study were consistent with the previous findings in the legal context, but what about outside of a formal context or in a varied formal context? What about in informal conversations? What about within military or aviation settings? What about within medical settings that are both formal and informal, such as doctor and patient interactions or hospice worker and family interactions? Results of such research may or may not support Johnson and Vinson's (1987) speculation that females using powerful speech may not find it as helpful in an informal setting, or the findings of Carli (1990) that found that women could be more persuasive with men when they displayed powerless speech and that the converse was true when women attempted to persuade women. Or in the case of this study in which it was found that females displaying a powerful speech style was in some contexts considered more positively than even males

displaying a powerful style. Therefore, further research such as that of Bugental & Lewis (1999) concerning the paradoxical misuse of power may shed light on other situations. However, it should be noted that Ruva and Bryant's (2004) research opened the way for such research situations to be considered depending on the age of the speaker, which resulted in an additional variable for researchers to consider. Therefore, the study of gender, speech styles, and informal settings need to be addressed.

Finally, the relationship between gender and speech style is still not fully understood, and the relationship between gender, language, and speech style still cannot be defined. Moreover, with the expansion of gender expectations within society, gender is in continual flux. The study of these variables should continue because a greater understanding of the possible interaction effects is necessary for practical application. Although physical gender cannot be easily manipulated, a person may strategically use an altered speech style to form a desired impression for a specific outcome. It is for this reason that research in the area of speech style, gender-stereotyped job positions, and matching styles is important. An example for future research could be that of issues concerning aeronautical response and directives being received from ground crew during emergency situations. Does a female voice affect response time due to perceived issues of control and competence?

If a person understands how his/her gender interacts with a particular speech style and how that speech style interacts with particular job positions, then he or she can manipulate variables to create a desired impression and increase the overall impression and employability. This could result in a more positive outcome for the speaker, but should someone always alter his style of speech? By understanding the role of gender

and speech styles in the formation of the gender stereotypes, education and training modules could be developed to address the current perception of particular jobs and roles. This training could assist individuals in communicating via a powerful speech style, which is a more positively perceived style within telephone employment interviews, but also help to further understand at which times the shift in power of speech style such be employed, such as times of consultation, expressions of empathy, and the like. Therefore, this could be especially helpful for those entering the workforce for the first time or those returning to the workforce following an extended absence.

## APPENDIX A – IRB Approval Letters



**The University of  
Southern Mississippi**

*Vice President for Research  
and Economic Development*

118 College Drive #5116  
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001  
Tel: 601.266.5116  
Fax: 601.266.5755  
[www.usm.edu](http://www.usm.edu)

TO: Heather McFarland  
307 CR 2322  
Clarksville, AR 72830

FROM: Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.  
HSPRC Chair

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 26111401  
PROJECT TITLE: Effects of Job Stereotype, Applicant Gender, and Powerful  
and Powerless Speech Styles on Telephone Interview Outcomes

Enclosed is The University of Southern Mississippi Human Subjects Protection  
Review Committee Notice of Committee Action taken on the above referenced  
project proposal. If I can be of further assistance, contact me at (601) 266-4279,  
FAX at (601) 266-4275, or you can e-mail me at [Lawrence.Hosman@usm.edu](mailto:Lawrence.Hosman@usm.edu).  
Good luck with your research.

Date: Thu, 15 Feb 2007 13:45:32 -0600  
From: "Eldon Clary" <eclary@atu.edu> **Block Address**  
Subject: **Human subjects**  
To: hmcfarland@atu.edu  
Cc: dvocate@atu.edu

 Reply |  Reply All |  Forward |  Print |  Delete

-->

Heather McFarland

Your proposal entitled "Effects of job stereotype, applicant gender, and powerful and powerless speech styles on telephone interview outcomes" has been approved by expedited review by the Human Subjects Committee.

Eldon Clary

Chair

 Reply |  Reply All |  Forward |  Print |  Delete

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<http://onetech.atu.edu/cp/email/message?msgId=88cc5a9eb7a22d6a27ba1100387f6659-3....> 2/23/2007



## APPENDIX B – Oral Presentation

### ORAL PRESENTATION

1. **Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to study the impressions of undergraduate and professional participants in an interview setting.

2. **Description of Study:** The study consists of undergraduate and professional participants listening to two 3.5 minute digitally recorded employment interviews. Following each interview, the participant will have approximately 6 minutes to respond to a questionnaire concerning employment. The completion of the questionnaire should take approximately 20 minutes. The complete Study will consist of at least 320 participants.

3. **Benefits:** People participating in the experiment will become sensitized to the important issues of this study. The study will contribute to a more comprehensive and advanced understanding of speech styles and telephone interview outcomes. This relationship has important pragmatic implications for successful job interviewing.

4. **Risks:** Risk to participants is minimal and there are no realistic physical or psychological threats to participants. Information collected from the interviews and the questionnaires is relatively typical including demographics and employment experience data. No identifying information will be solicited from participants. Participants have the right to voluntarily remove themselves from the study at anytime by not submitting the questionnaire. All information from the questionnaires will be kept confidential.

5. **Confidentiality:** No identifying information will be solicited from participants. Participants have the right to voluntarily remove themselves from the study at anytime by not submitting the questionnaire. All information from the questionnaires will be kept confidential.

6. **Alternative Procedures:** Participants have the right to voluntarily remove themselves from the study at anytime by not submitting the questionnaire.

7. **Subject's Assurance:** (this may be used verbatim or paraphrased)

This project has been reviewed by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board at 601-266-6820. Participation in this project is completely voluntary, and subjects may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits. Any questions about the research should be directed to Heather Palmer McFarland at 601-466-4106 or Dr. Susan Siltanen at 601-266-4369.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Giving Oral Presentation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX C Sample Letter Requesting Permission



Arkansas  
Tech  
University

Department of Speech, Theatre and Journalism  
Russellville, Arkansas 72801-2222

Tel: (501) 964-0890  
Fax: (501) 964-0504

Dr. Daniel Taddie  
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty  
University of the Ozarks  
105 Mabee Administration Building  
Clarksville, AR 72830

Dr. Taddie:

Good Afternoon!

I am writing today to ask for help with some data collection for my dissertation. I am currently an adjunct instructor at Ozarks and am in the process of finishing my dissertation. The subject is on speech styles in telephone interviews. I have already collected the student data and am currently working on collecting data from professionals.

I would like to ask permission to survey you and any of your staff that might deal with interviewing (does interviewing, has been interviewed for a position, etc.). The survey process is simple. You would listen to two 3 minute interviews and then evaluate each on some simple scales. Following your evaluation, you would recommend one of the interviewees for the position.

If you would be willing to help, I would be happy to set up an appointment in which to come by your office and do the surveys. Any help that you could give me would be wonderful. Thank you in advanced for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather Palmer McFarland".

Heather Palmer McFarland

*\*\*\*This study has been approved by both the Human Subjects Committee at Arkansas Tech University and the Institutional Review Board at the University of Southern Mississippi.\*\*\**

## APPENDIX D Permission to Use Copyrighted Materials

Date: Mon, 05 Feb 2007 12:20:21 +0000  
From: "Whittaker, Michelle" <Michelle.Whittaker@tandf.co.uk> **Block Address**  
Subject: **RE: FW: Questions regarding permission**  
To: "Heather McFarland" <hmcfarland@atu.edu>

 Reply  Reply All  Forward  Print  Delete

Our Ref: MW/RCMM/N600/N601/N602

Dear Ms Palmer McFarland

Thank you for your correspondence requesting permission to reproduce the following material from our Journal in your thesis.

Semantic Scales from the following three articles:

'Speech Characteristics and employability' by Hopper R & Williams R  
Speech Monographs (now Communication Monographs) Vol.40 pp.296-302  
(1973)

'The effects of attitude, credibility and homophily on selective exposure to information by Wheelless L R  
Speech Monographs (now Communication Monographs) Vol.41 pp.329-338 (1974)

'Diversity and density: Lexically determined evaluative and informational consequences of linguistic complexity by Bradac J Desmond R & Murdock J  
Communication Monographs Vol.44 (1977) pp.272-283

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Yours sincerely

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Tel: 0207 017 7413  
[michelle.whittaker@informa.com](mailto:michelle.whittaker@informa.com)

-----Original Message-----

From: Heather McFarland [<mailto:hmcfarland@atu.edu>]  
Sent: 02 February 2007 17:59  
To: Whittaker, Michelle  
Subject: Re: FW: Questions regarding permission

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