

The Accent Coach Claudette Roche Discusses the Benefits of a Virtual Audience for Public Speakers

A new trend allows people to practice their public speaking skills with a virtual audience.

VERO BEACH, FL, UNITED STATES, April 17, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A new trend allows people to practice their public speaking skills with a virtual audience. The idea behind this phenomenon is to help people become more relaxed and comfortable talking in front of others. It can also help the public speaker learn good habits which will help them in real-life situations. The [Accent Coach](#) Claudette Roche, a [business speech coach](#), is excited about this new technology.

Cicero is the name of the program, and it is being developed by a team from USC and funded by the National Science Foundation. The project includes multiple avatars which have been programmed to respond with about 1,000 different reactions. Their responses depend on the facial expressions and body language of the speaker as well as their tone and volume of speaking voice. If the speaker is interesting, the avatars will respond with positive reactions. If they are boring, they will become disinterested. Though the product is not ready for commercial use as of yet, the team sees several ways it could be utilized in the future. They believe it could be useful to help socially awkward people learn how to read social cues or to enhance training in the workforce. One use in which Claudette Roche is interested is the way it could help people learn how to speak in front of others and overcome their fears. By paying attention to reactions, a person could correct their behaviors as they speak.

"It teaches them to notice the audience in a non-threatening way," Roche says of the program. "They would watch the avatars to see if they were enjoying the speech or if they were bored." A person could make adjustments to their speech and watch for a change in the responses. "Immediate feedback is good," Roche says. "It could even be used as a tool for [speech coaches](#) to give homework to clients so they can measure their improvement." According to Roche, she sees coaches using it to gauge how much the client is learning as they incorporate the information they are given.

"Practice makes perfect," says Roche, "And this program would allow them to practice whenever it's convenient." While Roche admits not everyone becomes comfortable or enjoys speaking in public, they can improve their skills which will help them build confidence and do a better job when public speaking is required.

Roche advocates for the use of technology to help people develop their skills for speaking in front of



Claudette Roche is a dialect coach who teaches accent reduction. She teaches foreign and American accents to actors and business persons/executives. In 2010 she was named as one of The Top 5 Voice Coaches by Hollywood Weekly Magazine.

an audience. There are numerous online programs that help people learn to enunciate and build other skills. However, she stresses the importance of working with real people as part of the process. Even with the benefits that modern technology provides, reactions and information provided by speech coaches and other real people still provide the best opportunities for public speakers to become successful in front of their audiences. Nevertheless, she is excited to see programs like Cicero being developed as useful tools to help speakers reach their goals.

Claudette Roche
The Accent Coach
818-434-7761
email us here

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