



## Voice, Intention and Impact: Translating the Parkinson Voice Project's SPEAK OUT!® into Clinical Training

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Florida Atlantic University's Communication Disorders Clinic (CDC) continues to advance its mission of integrating research and clinical practice through a variety of initiatives, including the SPEAK OUT!® program. Developed by the Parkinson Voice Project, this evidence-based speech therapy program is designed to help individuals with Parkinson's disease improve vocal loudness and communication clarity through the use of intentional speech, a technique grounded in motor learning and neuroplasticity.

The SPEAK OUT!® program provides a unique opportunity for students to enhance their learning, while also expanding access to specialized therapy services in the community. By embedding research-informed practices into its curriculum, the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders prepares students for impactful careers in healthcare and communication sciences.



This past year, a collaborative research study, "Student Outcome Measures Pre/Post SPEAK OUT!® Therapy Training" was presented at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Convention. Led by Kelly Steele, M.S., CCC-SLP, Clinical Director of the CDC and Senior Instructor, Connie Porcaro, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, Department Head of Communication Sciences and Disorders and Professor, Valdosta State University, and Thomas Gollery, Ph.D., Professor of Education, Southeastern University, the study evaluated the effectiveness of online SPEAK OUT!® training for graduate student clinicians. First-year students enrolled in a motor speech disorders course and completed a 20-item multiple-choice assessment before and after participating in a 10½-hour online training module.

The team's findings revealed a significant increase in students' understanding of the SPEAK OUT!® methodology, demonstrating the value of structured online training in preparing future clinicians to deliver high-quality, evidence-based care. This critical application of translational research supports Florida Atlantic's commitment to academic excellence and innovation in clinical education.



Florida Atlantic's CDC is a vital training and service hub within the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. Located within the College of Education on the Boca Raton campus, the clinic provides comprehensive speech, language, and hearing services to individuals across the lifespan, including Florida Atlantic's community and the broader South Florida region. Staffed by graduate student clinicians under the supervision of licensed and certified speech-language pathologists, the clinic emphasizes evidence-based practice, client-centered care, and hands-on clinical education. Through academic instruction, clinical training, and community outreach, the clinic plays a central role in advancing the university's mission as an R1 research-intensive institution, committed to improving lives through education and service.

