Supplementary Material: RM ANOVA Results

PRCS: The PRC's scores as the repeated variable (time: before and after the intervention) and the group type (VRE and CG) as the grouping factor. The group x time interaction effect was not significant, $F(1,36) = 2.82$, $p = .10$, $\eta 2 = .07$. No main effects were obtained for the time variable (pre-post), $F(1,36) = 1.38$, $p = .25$, $\eta 2 = .03$. Also, pairwise comparisons show no statistically significant main effect of group, $F(1,36) = .55$, $p > .05$, $\eta 2 = .01$.

SUDs: The group x time interaction was significant, $F(1,37) = 97.00$, $p = .001$, $\eta 2 = .72$. Pairwise comparisons showed statistically significant differences in the anxiety levels between VRE and CG groups post- intervention, $p = .001$. The VRE group revealed lower levels of anxiety post-intervention compared to the CG (VRE: M=32.00; CG: M=66.05). Anxiety levels did not differ across the two groups pre-intervention. The main effect of group was significant, $F(1,37) = 13,16$, $p = .001$, $\eta 2 = .26$ with the VRE group scoring lower anxiety levels compared the CG. Also, a main effect of time was obtained, $F(1,37) = 75,91$, $p = .001$, $\eta 2 = .67$. Anxiety levels were found to be significantly lower in the post-intervention compared to pre-intervention.

Heart Rate: Significant interaction effect between group x time, $F(2,70) = 3.18$, $p<.05$, $\eta 2 = .08$. Pairwise comparisons showed that HR levels were lower post- intervention between the VRE and the CG (VRE: M=83.950; CG: M=88.176), $p>.001$. However, HR levels were not found to differ significantly across the two groups during baseline and pre-intervention . Significant main effect of time was obtained , $F(2, 70) = 55.17$, $p < .001$, $\eta 2 = .61$, showing that HR levels were found to be significantly higher in the pre-speech task compared to baseline ($p = .001$), somewhat higher between post-speech

task compared to baseline (p = .08), and lower between post-speech task compared to pre-speech task (p <.001).

RMSSD : No significant interaction effect (group x time) was obtained, F (2,74) = 2.14, p=.77, η2 = .006. The main effect of time was significant, F (2,74) = 4.63, p <.05, η2 = .11, indicating that the RMSSD levels (index of vagal tone) were significantly different (p=.002) between pre and post task (pre: M= 29.20; post: M=34.53).