

# Communicating Psychological Science: Fan Favorite Carmen Callizo-Romero on Presenting a Thesis in Just 3 Minutes

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Carmen Callizo-Romero is a PhD student researching the experimental psychology of time and its variations across culture and religion at the University of Granada. During the 2022 APS Annual Convention, she was named the Fan Favorite in the APSSC Pitch Perfect Thesis Competition, where competitors have just 3 minutes to present their thesis or dissertation and demonstrate its significance to a non-scientific audience.

Learn more about Pitch Perfect, including opportunities to audition for the competition at the [2023 APS Annual Convention](#).



Carmen Callizo-Romero

My thesis topic is on how people of different cultures and religions think psychologically about time, specifically about the asymmetry with which they perceive and represent the past versus the future. I chose this topic because I am passionate about human temporal conceptualization. In addition, this research project allowed me (together with my supervisor, Dr. Julio Santiago) to combine the areas in which I have been trained: psychology, philosophy, and religious and cultural studies.

As my thesis is about temporal thought, it seemed like a good idea to try to capture the audience's attention by starting my speech by looking at the clock: I wanted to make the point that even if 3 minutes are objectively the same elsewhere, subjectively they can be many things. In that case, just 3 minutes allowed me to tell a story about a journey that my 5-year thesis entails!

## Getting help from others

I wanted to tell my thesis in an informative way that would be understood even by people who are not

familiar with research in psychology. In particular, I thought of my older brother and my teenage sisters. If they could understand my talk, and hopefully even enjoy it, that would be a good sign. So I presented it to them first and modified it based on what they told me they thought was most difficult to understand. Thus, this would be my advice: If you want to present your thesis in a concise and engaging way, try to tell it first to your relatives.

Relatedly, Carlos Centeno and Susana Escudero, the journalists in charge of disseminating the findings made by researchers at the University of Granada, guided me on how to give a speech that non-academics could understand and that would also catch their attention. I am very grateful for their help.

## **Learning to discuss the research**

When I decided to apply for the Pitch Perfect Competition, I was spending the academic year doing a research stay at the University of California, Santa Barbara. While there, I met people in social situations (i.e., not in my academic context) who asked me about my thesis, but it was very difficult for me to talk about what I was doing, and even more so in English (I am used to talking colloquially about my thesis in Spanish). Fortunately, preparing my Pitch Perfect presentation helped me a lot to talk about my research in a more natural and understandable way for everyone.

The most difficult challenge was to transmit the work of several years of research into just three minutes. If I could give one piece of advice to future contestants, it would be to not try to introduce too much information. The second most essential and important piece of advice is to try to do it in a way that sticks in the listener's mind. If they want to know more details, they can always ask you later. Furthermore, that later discussion will probably allow an enriching exchange of ideas!

**Related content:** [Pitch Perfect: Exploring Black Women's Emotional Coping Strategies](#)

## **Benefits of competing**

Now, 6 months after competing in Pitch Perfect, I have finally finished writing my thesis and am preparing my presentation. I feel much more confident about this after having participated in the Pitch Perfect Thesis Competition, which made me feel capable of communicating the content of my thesis in front of an audience and also enjoy doing it.

I also found many other benefits in participating. For example, I met a couple of researchers who saw my Pitch Perfect presentation and asked me about my dissertation. In this way, I have also been able to learn about their research, and we have even talked about possible future collaborations!

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## **Advice for future competitors (and PhD candidates!)**

The first thing I would say to anyone considering participating is to go for it! It is a very good

experience for the reasons I mentioned and many more. And I would cheer them on! I would also tell them to try to enjoy every step of the way and to always remember the main purpose by which they started their PhD, (e.g., what does it bring to them as individuals or what does it bring to society?). I believe that keeping this in mind is essential to enjoy this stage of their research.

## [See all Communicating Psychological Science columns](#)

### **Next steps**

I would love to continue my research in a postdoctoral stage in the field of psychology that deals with philosophy and cultural and religious studies. I will search until I find a project that fascinates me in these fields and to which I will dedicate all my work during the next few years.

Some other pending activities that excite me but are not directly related to academy relate to hobbies, experiences, and trips I had postponed for “when the thesis is finished.” I hope to live them soon. I will use these experiences to connect with myself and also to approach the next academic stage with all my energies!

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### **References for the two published papers related to Carmen’s thesis:**

Callizo-Romero, C., Tutnjević, S., Pandza, M., Ouellet, M., Kranjec, A., Ilić, S., Gu, Y., Göksun, T., Chahboun, S., Casasanto, D., & Santiago, J. (2020). Temporal focus and time spatialization across cultures. *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review*, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13423-020-01760-5>

Callizo-Romero, C., Tutnjević, S., Pandza, M., Ouellet, M., Kranjec, A., Ilić, S., Gu, Y., Göksun, T., Chahboun, S., Casasanto, D., & Santiago, J. (2022). Does time extend asymmetrically into the past and the future? A multitask crosscultural study. *Language and Cognition*, 14(2), 275–302. <https://doi.org/10.1017/langcog.2022.5>