Association for Business Communication

Proceedings of the 85th Annual International Conference

October 27-31, 2020 – Virtual

ABC

Strengthening B-comm in an era where perception is reality

Proceedings Editorial Review Board

Leigh Ann Whittle, Editor

Preface

Although the theme of the 2020 ABC Annual International Conference was selected well before the world was subjected to an unprecedented global pandemic, the notion of strengthening business communication proved relevant to the circumstances.

Instead of meeting in San Diego as we hoped, we convened in an online virtual setting. Transitioning a conference from a physical to virtual setting was no small undertaking, yet it enabled those unable to travel to California to experience the conference, the camaraderie, and the scholarship characteristic of our past conferences. When physical distancing kept us apart, we sought new ways to strengthen business communication.

The conference proceedings experienced its own set of changes. Previously, presenters were asked to submit a full paper to supplement their conference presentations. Limited response to the call for proceedings made it difficult to fully showcase our presenters' scholarship and practice. After the 2019 annual conference, it was decided that the proceedings would consist of presenters' proposal submissions. The result of this decision lies in the following pages: A robust collection of scholarship and practice, a testament to the strength of business communication and those who teach, practice, and research it.

We have separated the proceedings by track and focus for your reference. I hope that you find these proceedings as inspiring and informative as I did while compiling them.

My gratitude is extended to Jim Dubinsky, Marilyn Buerkens, Dirk Remley, Jason Snyder, and each of the remarkable members of the Proceedings Editorial Review Board for their guidance, assistance, and dedication to seeing these proceedings to completion.

Leigh Ann Whittle, M.A., M.Ed.

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Emotional Co-Construction in the Workplace Discourse of First Aid Servants in Combat Environments of Communication

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Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Introduction

Dramatic dynamics of current geopolitical processes suggests that the configuration of society in the near future might depend on the communicative competence of those who act as stakeholders of vital responsibility in war environments. The communicative skills of First Aid Service servants include non-interference in the monologue of the traumatized person, linguistic support of interaction; making use of creative rather than destructive potential of displayed emotions, responding to the client's emotions verbally and non-verbally.

Literature Review

This study focuses on the workplace discourse of First Aid Servants (FAS) who operate in the military conflict zone and carry out a dialogic contact with injured combatants. The contribution discusses findings based on the research conducted in Ukraine in collaboration with clinical neurologists and military psychologists during Trauma Resolving Training (TRT).

The research investigates communication as a process of constructing and transmission of meanings with the dominant function of emotional co-construction in interaction (Barrett & Wager, 2006).

The study provides analysis of emotional interaction as a pragmatic discourse phenomenon (Schnall, 2005) with a particular focus on those discourse-related features that are relevant for constructing and maintaining interaction as part of the emotional co-construction: context of expressing emotion, communicative intention to manifest emotion, affective inferences, and choice of language devices. Theoretically, the investigation relies on Fairclough and Wodak (1997), who view interaction as the process of discourse construction.

Method

The research methods involved a survey, reports, face-to-face interviews, and testimonies. The survey covered paramedics, medevac servants and chaplains who operated directly in the military conflict zone in eastern Ukraine. They were involved in removing the wounded from the battlefield and entered into a dialogue with combatants in order to assist psychologically. In addition, the participants of the research were soldiers who received professional assistance of the services mentioned above. A total of 33 participants of the study included 24 representatives of the combat care services (Wind, ASAP, Interfaith

Battalion of Military Chaplains) and 9 combatants who were involved in the dialogue with combat care personnel in the combat zone during evacuations from the battlefield and in the distribution points on the first line.

Noteworthy is the fact that all participants voluntarily agreed to recall the first dialogue and convey/act it out during the professional training. Two representatives of the ASAP service used to be traumatized as a result of participation in a military conflict and received assistance from combat caregivers.

During the TRT, the author resorted to observation with CA techniques in the way Heritage and Clayman (2010) apply them. Regrettably, strict adherence to the requirements of pure CA was not always possible, which is viewed as the limitation of the study.

Results

The stimulus-responses and emotional effects in the professional dialogues that were observed and practiced during the training are considered by the author. Unlike language-oriented studies (Foolen, 2012), this research does not view dialogue as a traditional compositional form of structuring speech. Conceptually, it relies on Per Linell's (2006) understanding of dialogue as a speech form that shows interdependence between communication, cognition, and semiotic practices.

The author offers interpretation of the ways the FAS staff recognized the emotional condition of a combatant and constructed a reactive utterance aimed to constrain the combatant from the destructive personal effects of emotion. The communicative strategies and techniques, verbal and nonverbal repertoire employed to make effective communication decisions in a professional setting were highlighted. As a result of emotionally correct interactions, dialogue between servant and client contributed to personal stabilization, resilience, resistance, relief of combatant.

Therefore, the TRT for the combat care servants included a range of dialogic interaction and communicative practices, such as: tracking emotional reactions; helping express and manage emotions; building trust, calling forth a constructive emotional reaction; using language devices for emotional recognition, expressing intention, clarification, elaboration, shifting, correction, co-construction, etc.

Conclusion

The research findings indicate that certain emotional language devices are more important than others for maintaining dialogue. Moreover, some of them, contrary to our assumptions, have to be avoided during the first contact with the client while evacuating them from the battlefield. The important findings are the ways and opportunities to examine and classify emotional language devices and workplace communication strategies that relate to emotions and emotion clusters.

Giving insight into the workplace discourse of the FAS staff in the military conflict zones and their dialogic interaction with clients, this study contributes to minimizing the impact of traumatic experience as well as preventing victimization and PTSD of the clients.

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Teaching Responsible Leadership through Language Analysis and Digital Storytelling Podcasts

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The collapse of the economy in 2008 was blamed on the banking industry's immoral investing practices and a bureaucratic leadership that failed to consult or value the opinions of others. This led to a series of banking CEO narratives explaining the financial crisis (Liu, Cutcher, & Grant, 2017; Riaz, Buchanan, & Ruebottom, 2016; Tourish & Hargie, 2012) and a further crisis of confidence in corporate leaders (Ainsworth, 2020). As a result, "public trust in business and government hit historic lows in the years following the Great Recession" (de Bettignies, November 11, 2014, p. 1).

Thus, this failure of leadership requires a completely new era of responsible leadership centering on sustainability and global responsibility. De Bettignies (November 11, 2014, p. 2) states that the core tenets of responsible leadership consist of five dimensions: Awareness, Vision, Imagination, Responsibility and Action, and that all five need to be considered at the individual, organisational and societal levels. These dimensions reflect a conceptual shift away from the prevailing business paradigm of consumerism, economic growth and increased shareholder value, and lead to an alternative paradigm where organisations, business leaders and stakeholders can initiate, encourage, and actively implement practical applications such as reducing waste and consumerism, increasing reliance on sharing and using local economies more mindfully (Doh & Quigley, 2014).

Currently, business school curricula are failing to develop responsible leaders, as well as the critical thinking and decision-making skills required for modern management (Arum & Roksa, 2011; Steedle & Bradley, 2014). In the notes to accompany part 1 of The Stories We Live By: an online course in ecolinguistics, Stibbe writes, "Given the current trajectory of increasing inequality, over-consumption and waste, profound changes are needed to hold back or reverse the tide of ecological destruction" (2015b). To start the process of influencing and implementing these profound changes, business schools must build curricula around these principles and imperatives, thus contributing to the emergence and development of the ethical, responsible leaders the world desperately needs.

Therefore, this presentation argues for the need for students to use linguistic and discourse knowledge and analysis to question the "stories that underpin our current unsustainable civilization, exposing those stories that are clearly not working, that are leading to ecological destruction and social injustice, and finding new stories that work better in the conditions of the world that we face" (Stibbe, 2014, p. 117). To that end, I report on an undergraduate business communication assignment requiring students to examine critically the language patterns and discourse in the 2017 and 2018 CEO corporate annual report letters of an MNC operating in the Consumer Packaged Goods industry. In 2017, the CEO's social responsibility mission focused on human sustainability, environmental sustainability, and sustainability of talent. The new CEO, selected towards the end of 2018, is positioning the company to be faster,

stronger, and better and is adopting new leadership behaviours focused on driving high performance and building competitive advantage.

The two texts were chosen for the students to study because they constitute important leadership discourse affecting all stakeholders and are considered relevant either in forging and perpetuating the ecologically destructive stories we live by, or in challenging those stories and providing new stories we could live by. The "stories we live by" are structures in the minds of individuals or across the minds of multiple individuals in society that influence how we think, talk and act. Stibbe proposes eight types of stories and their linguistic manifestations: ideologies, framings, metaphors, evaluations, identities, convictions, erasure, and salience.

To explain in part social change agendas (Brueckner, Spencer, & Paull, 2018), student teams drew on ecolinguistic discourse analysis related to ideologies (Stibbe, 2015a) to analyse language to reveal underlying beliefs and values embedded in the two texts. For example, some teams analysed destructive, ambivalent and/or beneficial discourse using Stibbe's model. Students were asked to record a podcast framed as an interview with a panel of experts and to prepare a one-page document that included an introductory paragraph to their podcast and their discourse analyses with examples from the two texts. Both the podcast and document were uploaded to the LMS Discussion Board. Individually, students commented on two podcasts, which reinforced their learning.

Thus, students analysed and compared the social agenda discourse of the two letters to provide a deeper understanding of language-as-social-practice. Understanding the complexity of discourses that come together to tell a particular story (Auvinen, Aaltio, & Blomqvist, 2013) about the world or a coherent way of making sense of the world (Locke, 2004) requires careful investigation of the interplay between multiple interactional resources. These analyses enabled students to notice areas of conflicting values, purposes, and interests in business texts.

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Communication Issues in Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management, Consulting and Practice Focus

The Pitch Formula Used by Top Silicon Valley Startups

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The 2020 Annual International Conference targets communication issues in entrepreneurship and innovation management. The two greatest challenges entrepreneurs face are attracting customers and raising money. When an entrepreneur fails in either of these challenges, his or her innovation dies. Fortunately, the communication strategy to succeed in both are similar.

Through an analysis of over 1,000 startup pitches, Chris Lipp identified a robust framework that over 90% of successful entrepreneurs use to raise funding. Lipp utilized this pitch framework to help startups raise millions of dollars. This framework is recognized as best-practice for entrepreneurship fundraising and is currently taught at Stanford Graduate School of Business (GSB) and numerous Silicon Valley accelerators. When adjusted for different audience interests, the same framework can be applied to successful customer marketing.

The purpose of this workshop is to equip ABC members with the four-point pitch framework outlined in Lipp's book, The Startup Pitch: A Proven Formula to Win Funding. Through a series of real-world examples, interactive discussions, and break-out exercises, attendees will learn how the framework functions and how to craft an effective pitch. Attendees will also examine the underlying research and theory that explain why the framework persuades investors to invest in the product. By examining the in-depth logic behind each step, educators will walk away with the ability to derive answers to questions students ask that extend beyond the scope of the workshop.

Over the course of two hours, workshop attendees will move through each of the four steps of the framework. The workshop begins by focusing on investor (and customer) interests. Next, the workshop addresses how to create an effective problem and enhance the problem's persuasion. The workshop outlines how to position the product as a solution to the problem, present the unique selling proposition and demo, and identify relevant benefits. The elevator pitch is introduced as a condensed version of these first two steps, and attendees will have the opportunity to pitch themselves and their ideas. The second half of the workshop moves into investor-specific interests how to present the market and business aspects of the product. The market step covers targeting and leverage opportunities. The business step covers how to effectively describe go-to-market strategy and revenue model. Taken together, the four steps provide attendees the ability to establish a perception of value around startup innovation.

The workshop addresses conference topics including Strategy and Adaptation to the growing demands for entrepreneurship training. Many successful startups depend on high-quality MBA education. Roughly a quarter of "unicorn startups" (those that have broken $1 billion dollar valuation) have at least one MBA on the team. At Stanford GSB, one of the country's leading academic entrepreneurship institutions

where this framework is taught, almost all students enroll in at least one entrepreneurship-related course, with roughly one in six students launching a venture immediately after graduating (up from one in 10 a decade ago). To stay competitive and recruit the best students, business schools must focus on entrepreneurship best-practices. This workshop will enable faculty to add tangible value to their school's entrepreneurship training and their alumni's success.

Pitching Like a World Class South American Entrepreneur: Lessons from Start-Up Chile

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Global business has changed dramatically in recent decades. The world has become increasingly reliant on innovation for business success, and additionally, the number of nonnative English speakers has grown far past the number of native speakers. Because of this, the business communication strategies of transnational entrepreneurs from diverse language backgrounds has emerged as an important and yet understudied intersection of topics in business communication. Recognizing this gap, this project analyzes the use of business English as a lingua franca (BELF) with entrepreneurs at Start-Up Chile (SUP), a business accelerator that Forbes described as "one of the top startup accelerators in the world" that is responsible for "[transforming] entrepreneurship in its native country and throughout Latin America" (Moed, 2018). In particular, I analyze the structure and content of SUP business pitches. The purpose of this project is to illuminate the pitching strategies used by transnational entrepreneurs at one world-class accelerator, showing what makes these pitches different and effective, so that practitioners or scholars can improve their knowledge and ability with entrepreneurial pitches.

The methods for this project are qualitative. As inspired by Daly and Daly (2016), I use a language-based discourse approach to analyze each of the pitches, focusing on structural and rhetorical elements. In other words, I establish which pitch elements come in which order, and which persuasive strategies are used in each section. Every pitch receives two cycles of coding, and the coding is accomplished using the qualitative data analysis software NVivo. The pitches come from SUP's most recent cohorts of their "Seed" and "Huella" acceleration programs, and my sample consists of 11 pitches. Each company was allowed a 3-minute pitch, and the pitches were delivered at an event called Vertex Demo Day that took place on January 16, 2020 in Santiago, Chile. The purpose of the event was to showcase the businesses created by the startups and to conclude the two 6-month acceleration programs. The event was livestreamed on SUP's social media accounts; therefore, IRB approval is not required as all data are publicly available.

Initial data indicate that several unique presentation strategies are used by entrepreneurs at SUP. Overall, the pitches are highly developed and uniformly give the impression that the startup has achieved product/market fit and that investment is all that is required for their company to begin scaling even more rapidly. Some of the most prominent strategies SUP entrepreneurs use to form this impression have already been explored in entrepreneurial communication scholarship like audience appropriate levels of jargon (Clark, 2008), professionally made and image heavy slide design (Williams, Spinuzzi, & Newbold, 2020), and use of storytelling (Lurtz & Kreutzer, 2014; Martens, Jennings, & Jennings; 2007; O'Connor, 2002). Some of the strategies at SUP, however, have not been explored in scholarship. For example, each pitch presents highly polished introductions and conclusions which often

include slogans. Traction, while often an optional element of pitches, is a critical element of the SUP pitch structure and is described in terms of exponentially growing users and revenue. I argue that these characteristics, taken together, are what differentiate a good or acceptable pitch from a pitch that is likely to result in securing investments. Of course, since these pitches come from the same event, some similarities between them are because of the context of the rhetorical situation (for example, none of the pitches include an explicit ask in the structure). Even so, SUP is well known for its rigorous pitch training, and I believe that most of the patterns are attributable to the communicative preferences of SUP and the high experience level of the entrepreneurs in the sample.

This project fits the conference theme by relating to several tracks. The pitches studied are highly intercultural because SUP is unique in allowing entrepreneurs to enter their program regardless of citizenship. Though they are required to speak English, the entrepreneurs in my sample come from all over the world, bringing with them a wide variety of language backgrounds, and the judges that constitute their audience are similarly diverse. The presentation is, of course, also connected to innovation and entrepreneurship. SUP startups have a stellar record not only for startup survival at several years (54.5% average for startups across all programs and cohorts), but also for attracting large investments and scaling. Therefore, I argue that carefully analyzing and understanding these pitches can help us emulate the strategies that make these startups so successful. The findings have the potential to help both startup founders convince potential investors and customers, and business communication consultants and teachers to teach their students and clients more effectively.

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Strategic Narrative Canvas: A Template for Developing and Communicating Human-Centered Innovation

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Recent studies of creativity, innovation, and adaptability have found that a fundamental challenge for organizations is to become ambidextrous in order to both exploit existing capabilities and explore new capacities. Put more simply, organizations must be able to efficiently execute on a strategy in order to perform, while also investing in research and development to innovate. At a basic level, organizational innovation requires a process that supports choosing ideas to pursue, organizing teams to implement these ideas, and completing projects in ways that lead to progress and learning.

A less frequently recognized aspect of effective innovation is the role of abductive reasoning. Recent studies show that highly innovative organizations, teams, and individuals find ways to engage noisy information, search for alternative and intermediary models, and engage in holistic and recursive processes. A key component of abductive reasoning is that deals with developing and evaluating explanations for poorly understood aspects of a problem space. Even as creative problem-solving processes and methodologies such as design thinking and human-centered design have become commonplace in many organizations, there is a need to better adapt abductive reasoning methods for specific contexts and applications.

In order to support abductive reasoning, innovation strategy can be linked to practices of storytelling and narrative creation. We are, perhaps, already familiar with the ways that stories can support strategy through communication and dissemination. A story links a strategy to the reasons it matters in the form of concrete benefits for specific human beings: partners, clients, customers, users, consumers. However, as demonstrated in case studies of design thinking and human-centered design, stories can play an equally crucial role in discovering worthwhile problems and opportunities for innovation. Furthermore, storytelling can be crucial to the creation of the types of unanticipated connections that facilitate novel idea generation and the development of effective strategies and solutions.

Based on previous research and leadership consulting work, this presentation will introduce a "Strategic Narrative Canvas" visual chart that can be used to provide an ambidextrous approach to developing innovation strategy and communicating it through vision, values, and vital behaviors. The session will provide an overview of the research-based design and illustrate diverse applications in both business and academic contexts including leadership communication coaching, communication strategy consulting, employee training, curriculum design, and faculty development.

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Question Asking: A Critical Communication Skill

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A 2019 Gallup survey found employers value the following qualities when evaluating a candidate's readiness: critical thinking, effective communication, teamwork, and curiosity. The results of this survey should not surprise business communication faculty. Effective workplace communication is at the heart of our courses and our work often encompasses these other essential skills.

The ability to ask effective questions is an essential subskill of each of the four skills employers identify as important but an often overlooked part of business communication courses. First, asking questions is a key element to critical thinking and an effective way to build relationships with teammates. Second, curiosity is enacted through question asking. Finally, asking questions is a precursor to another important communication skill: listening.

Scholarship from the field of communication has studied question asking in a variety of contexts: doctor-patient communication (e.g., Venetis, Robinson, & Kearney, 2013), communication education (e.g., Goldman, 2019), interpersonal communication (e.g., Douglas, 1987), computer-mediated communication (e.g., Antheunis, Schouten, Valkenburg, & Peter, 2012), and journalism (e.g., Heritage & Roth, 1995).

The research most relevant to our field of business communication has been published in contexts related to employment communication (e.g., Van De Mieroop, Clifton, & Schreurs, 2019), financial communication (e.g., de Oliveira & Pereira, 2018), auditing, (e.g., Lauer & Peacock, 1990), negotiation (e.g., Miles, 2013), organizational decision making (e.g., Aritz, Walker, Cardon, & Zhang, 2017; Halvorsen 2018), and entrepreneurship (e.g., Dyer, Gregersen, & Christensen, 2008).

This session aims to accomplish two broad goals: 1. Summarize research related to question asking in professional contexts, and 2. Share a classroom activity instructors can use to help their students develop question asking skills.

Relevant Research

In a special issue of Discourse Process on the topic of questioning, the editor wrote, "Research on questioning has been fragmented both within disciplines and among disciplines" (Graesser, 1990). Almost 20 years later, in the introduction article on a special issue of Discourse Studies on the topic of questions, the authors argued, "Questioning is one of, if not the, central communicative practice of institutional encounters" (Tracy, & Robles, 2009).

Business communication courses tend to place the most emphasis on sending messages in the form of assertions and directives. Less emphasis is placed on information seeking. Questions are the primary vehicles professionals use to acquire knowledge. Questions serve other functions including expressing affiliation/disaffiliation (Steensig & Drew, 2008), communicating accountability (Heinemann, 2008), complaining (Mononi, 2008), and exercising control and power (Wang, 2006).

Questions come in many forms. Most typologies include at least three categories of questions including questions that seek verification (inviting yes/no answers), open-ended questions (i.e., wh-questions), and comparison questions (alternative).

Tracey and Robles (2009) argue that questions are distinguishable social practices embedded in institutions. For example, in the context of presentations, the institutional norms may be to wait until the end of a presentation to ask questions, while some may ask questions throughout.

Classroom Activity

A review of the question asking literature suggests questions are enacted across many professional contexts. With a growth in entrepreneurship programs on college campuses, business communication faculty are well positioned to include questioning asking activities in entrepreneurial contexts.

Since entrepreneurship is the process of creating value by bringing together a unique package of resources to exploit an opportunity, the context could be within a large organization or small startup.

The activity that will be shared in this session was created for a course titled: Communication for Entrepreneurs, but it could be used in any course where students are proposing a solution to a problem. The main tasks students complete related to this activity are listed below:

1. Identify an idea or new business venture.
2. Develop a list of assumptions about the problem and potential solution.
3. Develop an interview plan that includes a series of questions.
4. Interview people who are experiencing the problem and would benefit from the solution to test their assumptions.

This session will include a full description of the activity (and details about how it is connected to a broader assignment) and then we will practice connecting the relevant research findings to an example customer discovery interview.

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Influencer Consulting: Sharing Business Communication Knowledge Through Web and Social Community Building

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Westminster College
Recipient, 2019 Award for Excellence in Communication Consulting

This workshop is designed to help business communication experts find new and innovative ways of teaching important communication skills by becoming influencer-consultants.

The ability to communicate well has never been so complex. Professionals can't just be decent writers anymore. In a world over-saturated with information, industry experts—in order to truly engage, educate, motivate, and inspire people—must learn to also be information designers, public speakers, search engine optimization wizards, usability gurus, accessibility ninjas, and on and on.

Both business professionals and professional educators are quickly discovering that communication expertise is no longer a luxury; such communication prowess is critical to making important messages heard, recalled, and acted upon. Unfortunately, most professionals and educators were never given formal training in the nuances of rhetorical theory, information design, user experience, videography, virtual conferencing, data visualization, brand identity, or even writing. Yet, professionals are required to communicate at high levels in complex scenarios almost daily.

As an example, a state legislative auditor may have naturally, upon starting their career, expected their job description to require some business communication—such as in the writing of audit reports for legislators and other stakeholders. What they may not have expected, however, is that those stakeholders live and work in world of information overload—and those stakeholders may not be responding as well to a report or data that hasn't been designed for user experience. Auditors are suddenly faced with a dilemma: they're trained auditors, but they have to simultaneously become data visualizers, public speakers, usability experts, and information designers.

Educators often find themselves in a similar conundrum. Students, often raised in a media-rich, design-savvy world, frequently struggle to engage with and comprehend large bodies of written text, bullet-heavy slide decks, or otherwise poorly structured handouts, lectures, syllabi, or educational resources.

Many of these professionals (and professional educators)—scrambling to discover how best to design and deliver information in order to make the greatest impact—look to Google, social media, and other online avenues to discover new communication tools from experts and "influencers." They often search, in other words, for consultant advice through quick and accessible channels.

Understanding the need to communicate at more sophisticated levels, and suddenly assuming unexpected roles as information designer and communication specialist (in addition to their regular jobs), these professionals and educators frequently look to the internet for tips, tricks, and ideas on how best accomplish tasks such as:

- choosing, organizing, and designing charts and graphs in order to ethically and accurately persuade stakeholders;
- turning complex processes into simplified infographics and flow charts for general consumption and application;
- designing materials with images and icons that follow legal and ethical intellectual property guidelines;
- creating syllabi, handouts, and other educational materials that students and participants will actually read and use;
- applying principles of plain language, punctuation, rhetorical devices, and other writing tactics to clarify information and persuade audience; and/or
- presenting and pitching ideas and research through oral presentations, digital files, or printed promotional materials.

Business communication experts, researchers, and practitioners possess a unique opportunity to serve as "influencers" in such subjects. Functioning as influencer-consultants, experts can provide valuable resources to business professionals not trained in communication. In this role, they can create searchable, accessible materials that provide guidance in business communication areas as diverse as data visualization, presentation design, information architecture, image copyright laws, plagiarism, plain language, and even punctuation.

In my presentation, I describe my purpose, process, and lessons learned in developing an online communication hub and attempting to serve as a business communication influencer-consultant. Specifically, I describe my process for developing a visually rich website, TheVisualCommunicationGuy.com, and what I've learned about the opportunities, challenges, rewards, and mistakes in that process.

Established in 2013, I initially built the website as a tool to learn about content creation, observing user habits and adjusting content to fit search and engagement trends. As the site matured, however, I learned how powerful the world of internet influencers actually is, how surprisingly easy it is to rank at the top of some Google searches, and how important it is that experts are the ones landing at the top of search results.

The website now receives thousands of visitors daily and it reached over 3.5 million pageviews in 2019. Several pages on the site rank in the top three in Google for searches like "the rhetorical triangle," "advertising appeals," "document design rules," and "consumer profiles." Created primarily with the idea of building easy-to-use resources, the website includes scores of visual guides in topics such as the logical fallacies; MLA formatting; the thirteen types of plagiarism; rhetorical criticisms; plain language; and even the impeachment process. Through this website, I have sold infographic prints and digital resources to thousands of individuals and organizations around the globe and I have been given new and unexpected opportunities to share my knowledge through consulting and public speaking.

My workshop is designed to provide ideas, best practices, recommendations, and tools for those interested in becoming influencer-consultants, in particular with the aim of spreading good information, providing helpful resources, and building consulting and income-earning opportunities. Specifically, I address my process, pitfalls, and rewards, while briefly covering tips and tricks in areas such as user experience; information design; search engine optimization; social media; visual content development; and monetization of blog.

Our First or Best Communication Consulting Gigs: Yours Too

Rita R. Owens
Boston College

Karin Goettsch
Global Collaboration Insights

James Stapp
Oklahoma State University

Eric DeMar Waters
Marquette University

Most of us aspire to use our vast knowledge about business communication beyond our teaching and research. Many ABC colleagues have had consulting, training, and coaching experiences with both corporate and non-profit entities that exercise sharing that knowledge. While it can be daunting to begin a consulting practice, it's also very rewarding and can enhance our professional development. From the pre-engagement to the post-engagement phases of a project, having clear goals and deliverables supports a consultant's and a client's success. We can learn so much from others who have had consulting experiences, especially memorable ones.

The purpose of this session is to provide new consultants with a framework from which to establish themselves and seasoned consultants' additional support to boost their current projects. Using prior communication consulting, training, and coaching engagements as examples, participants will be able to learn how to jump-start their consulting practices and expand their current ones.

Panelists will share communication consulting engagement experiences that have left a mark on their consultancy practice and their clients. The panelists will include the very first or very best consulting engagement they've had.

Goals of the session include a review of:

- How to recruit clients for communication consulting engagement
- How to begin an engagement (including deliverables)
- How to organize an engagement
- How to wrap up an engagement
- What makes a great consulting engagement
- What is it like to conduct the first engagement
- What challenges and opportunities arise during engagements

- What types of communication consulting are possible
- How to create repeat business

We will frame this session as a recorded panel presentation with live Q/A. A moderator will introduce the panel and the goals for the session. Three panelists will each present their "first" or "best" communication consulting engagement for 10-12 minutes. The moderator will then ask the panelists a series of questions that reflect the goals of the session (see above). During our live, virtual session, the moderator will field questions from the audience to particular panelists. After that, the moderator will also encourage audience members to share their best or first consulting engagements. This audience involvement will undoubtedly enhance the session. The intention is to model an effective panel presentation, share relevant content, and produce a lively exchange.

Our three panelists will share details about these consulting engagements:

Eric Waters

"My best consulting gig so far occurred in the fall of 2017 as I was starting my second year as faculty at Marquette. I was asked to facilitate a day-long training as part of a new growth accelerator which was designed to assist Black-, Latinx-, woman-owned businesses grossing less than $1M annually. The director of the accelerator sought me out because he was intrigued by my communication background and thought I could add unique expertise to a curriculum that was heavily focused on business functions such as sales, marketing, and finance. We were both MBAs and shared an interest in entrepreneurship and small business development, so we became quick friends. Prior to the accelerator, he spoke to two of my classes at my request, so my participation was an in-kind return of the favor. Following my training session, several participants commented that they had never considered topics such as corporate identity, reputation, or communication strategy before and personally thanked me for my help. For me, this gig led to subsequent referrals and resulted in my formal introduction to the Milwaukee business community. Since my training session, accelerator participants have experienced 57% revenue growth."

James Stapp

"As a relative newcomer to the world of consulting (less than two years), I want to share my experience of two 'firsts.' I have the good fortune of teaching Business Communication in a business school which has a robust outreach arm, one that has not only developed relationships with corporate clients in the region for decades but has also formed a strong reputation for certificate programs available to the public. My first official on-site consulting session was a challenging experience, replete with the cliched 'tough crowd': 50 senior managers of a Fortune 500 energy company going through their third reorganization in two years! Another 'first' I will discuss will be my experience shadowing and assisting a seasoned professional in consulting, Lee Johns, in a multi-day, on-site program on business writing for an oil and gas company. I learned invaluable lessons from Lee that I hope to apply to my consulting practice, however, this experience has been tempered by the immediate roadblocks I experienced because of the onset of the pandemic. For this panel, I'll explore the feeling of "imposter syndrome" as a newcomer, leveraging my specific expertise to a wider audience, and the differences between university-supported outreach vs. "going it alone" in consulting."

Karin Goettsch

"Memorable consulting gigs can arrive with a big splash or as a gentle ripple effect. One example of the latter is my unexpected best experience resulting from a referral to lead a strategic planning session. It speaks to the power of keeping professional networks warm and sustaining authentic relationships over time, well beyond potential business leads. A long-time acquaintance has been a rich source of referrals across many industries for my now full-time consulting practice. Even during the pandemic's uncertainty, this individual has connected me to contracts for virtual facilitation, webinars, coaching, and team-building. For this panel, I'll discuss more about the challenges and surprises of stepping into the non-profit strategic planning role in an unfamiliar industry and how I leveraged my own board experience and transferable consulting competencies (such as strong facilitation and listening, learning agility, managing ambiguity, and emotional intelligence) to create a successful outcome. What I anticipated to be a one and done engagement may result in further work following some strategic communication on my part. I'll emphasize networking in early stage consulting and the importance of listening to your intuition while exploring new opportunities outside of your comfort zone."

We expect rich takeaways from the panel. The interplay among the panelists on the recording will be encouraged by the moderator, followed up during the conference virtual session with audience participation. The audience should leave the panel presentation with:

- Enough detail to begin a communication consulting practice
- Specific deliverable examples
- Advice on what to do on their first consulting gig
- Examples of what makes a successful consulting experience
- Examples of consulting opportunities in business communication
- Advice on how to secure repeat business

Diversity and Inclusion, Consulting and Practice Focus

Excuse Me, Your Ableism is Showing: Impacts of Ableism in the Workplace

Shelley Ann Hepler
University of Kansas

Chances are that most businesses have employees with a disability in their organization. In 2019, the U.S. employment-population ratio for persons with a disability was almost 20 percent.

In the United States of America, the Americans with Disabilities Act is the "most comprehensive piece of civil rights legislation that prohibits discrimination and guarantees that people with disabilities (PWD) have the same opportunities as everyone else" ("Introduction to the ADA," n.d.). The ADA defines disability as "(A) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; (B) a record of such an impairment; or (C) being regarded as having such an impairment" ("Americans with disabilities act of 1990, as amended," n.d.). When bias against individuals with disabilities is manifest, it often results in ableism, which is defined as the "overarching act of prejudice and/or discrimination against disabled people and the devaluation of disability and corresponds with able-bodied/neurotypical privilege, the set of unearned privileges held by non-disabled individuals" (Kattari et al., 2018, p. 477).

Effective business communication is critical for business members across an organization to perform their jobs and fulfill their responsibilities. Yet, many employees with disabilities experience barriers to internal workplace communication. Workplace discrimination in the form of ableism acts as a communicative barrier that may keep employees with disabilities from achieving their full potential. Despite the protections of the ADA, these employees experience work as inhospitable or incompatible.

The goal of this presentation is to bring awareness of the impacts of ableism in the workplace. There is a lack of understanding of how ableism against individuals with disabilities impacts effective workplace communication as many people are not aware of the term. These individuals are unaware that they use ableist language and adhere to ableist principles while on the job. Due a lack of exposure to people with disabilities, the amorphous definition of disability, and privacy and discrimination concerns, ableism is one of the last "isms" that is still widely socially acceptable. Ableism is defined as discrimination in favor of able-bodied people (Kattari et al., 2018). Despite regulatory monitoring of disability-related discrimination at work, workplaces remain plagued with inaccessible jobs, job descriptions, and workplaces. No one chooses to be sensory-impaired, clumsy, and restless, or different. Yet, it is a reality that outcomes of having a disability are lower average pay, reduced job security, fewer training opportunities, less involvement in decision-making, and marginalized workplace inclusion.

This presentation will identify microaggression (Sue et al., 2007) as a form of ableism (Kattari et al., 2018; Pierce et al., 1978). The discrimination or oppression of individuals with disabilities, intentional or unintentional, has no place in the workforce. Ableist microaggressions are a common means of perpetuating ableism. Able-bodied co-workers often engage in language and non-verbal communication

that results in the "othering" of colleagues with sensory, physical, mental, or self-care impairments. Ableist microaggressions directed at persons with disabilities in the workplace impact not only the individual but the health of the organization. Ableist microaggressions are a destructive form of internal business communication that affects employee and management interactions and interfere with reaching organizational goals at every layer of a business (Baldridge & Kulkarni, 2017; Keller & Galgay, 2010; McLaughlin et al., 2004; Mik-Meyer, 2016).

A goal for this presentation is to demonstrate the harm ableism causes business, both internally and externally. Workplace ableism can be stigmatizing. In most cases, employees with a disability are not seeking special treatment or sympathy. Rather, they desire to be respected for what they can do as a person and employee. Ableism disincentivizes employees with disabilities from initiating conversations with their employers and colleagues because they are afraid of sharing their ideas due to bias or stigma. It is costly for employers to have employees who cannot contribute to their full potential.

Lastly, it is the intention of the presentation to offer awareness and intention as an option to ableism for employees and managers who hire and work with individuals with disabilities.

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Diversity and Inclusion, Teaching Focus

Enhancing the Environment: Teaching Female Undergraduates in the Business Classroom

Shelly Scott-Harmon
Indiana University

Serving as a female faculty member in a predominantly male business school, I have been mansplained to by students less than half my age. They may do it once, but they do not do it twice. As a mother to two teenage boys, I witness daily how communication habits form and are reinforced in our environments. My children and my students are coming of age in the era of participation trophies and the idea that everyone is special. Many of my students appear to be acting out the belief that they are somehow more special, or their brand is more unique, than others. It is therefore no surprise that this can manifest itself in acts of sexism not recognized as such by those perpetuating it and even by those experiencing it.

As faculty at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business in Bloomington, I share stories of diverse student teams struggling to make space for women's ideas and individual females demonstrating a lack of confidence that permeates everything they do. This presentation analyzes my own observations of female student achievement and confidence in light of national trends among women in business education environments.

Last fall, when a fellow faculty member's social media posts were exposed to show sexism, Kelley undergraduate women united to protest by selling "Female Genius" sweatshirts, raising money for a local organization, Girls Inc. The goal was to sell 50; they sold 3400, raising over $14,000. While spurred by an unfortunate incident, the action taken was inspirational and demonstrative of what motivated female undergraduates can do. Remarkably, they did this as a distinct minority in the business school.

Females made up only 36% of the class of 2019 at Kelley in Bloomington. Competing business schools reflect higher numbers of female undergraduates. At the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, the class of 2023 is composed of 43% women, and at The Mcintire School of Commerce at University of Virginia, 43% of third and fourth year students are female. While the reason for such disparity is not this presentation's focus, it is indicative that there is work to be done at Kelley to welcome women, retain them, and send them forth competent and confident. Here I consider how the minority status that female students expect and accept at the Kelley School of Business has transformed perception into reality. Told they are viewed as a minority in the business school, so many female students find it challenging to communicate with confidence. Many are searching for ways to make their voices heard in an environment where they are outnumbered. Those social media posts made Kelley women feel directly attacked and belittled because of their sex. When faced with a clear and present sense of danger, the women responded. They found a way to make their voices heard. How can we ensure that this continues?

I teach a 100-level course required for all students majoring in Business. In the last few years, I have observed an increase in females populating my course and, while there may be strength in numbers, I have not observed a rise in confidence levels. When I first taught Business Presentations, a course designed for students to hone their public speaking skills through individual and group speeches, I had a section with only four women in it. In assigning teams, I knew diversity was valued so I split them up – a rookie mistake. One female student withdrew from the course and another barely survived the team presentations, even with heavy intervention from me. Just last year I had to intervene with group work again. This time, three women came to me to complain about the sexist treatment they felt they were getting from one of the three men on their team, due to the way he communicated with them that differed from how he spoke to the male teammates. My conversations with those team members highlighted the vastly different perspectives the men and women had about their roles and the best ways to contribute. And just last semester, I was approached by a dozen male students and only one female student to submit recommendations for the Business Honors Program. I announced this phenomenon to my classes. Afterward, I ended up recommending six females and nine males, but it made me wonder why I needed to plant the seed in the first place.

A perception shared by too many is that business communication curriculum should follow a "one size fits all" model. When there is only one size, it is clear the majority gets the best fit. If diversity, equity, and inclusion are truly priorities, we must incorporate the gender differences acknowledged in studies of business communications into our teaching methods and content. Only then will our female students grow their confidence (and perhaps our male students will recognize mansplaining). While acknowledging gender differences in the business world, we are not necessarily providing all students with adequate preparation to succeed even though that is the perception. In this case, the perception has not become the reality.

Diversity and Inclusion, Teaching Focus

Fostering Inclusive Documentation Practices by Teaching Disability Studies in Technical and Professional Communication: A Case Study

Kristin Bennett
Arizona State University

PRESENTATION THEME: As a field, technical and professional communication (TPC) frequently forgets the body, particularly the disabled body (Melonçon, 2013b). However, technical and professional communicators (TPCers) are uniquely positioned for negotiating the needs of diverse users through their rhetorical considerations for audience and context. TPCers are engaged in "an ongoing process of articulation constituted in (and constituting) the relations of meaning and power operating in the entire context within which messages move" (Slack et al., 2003). Such articulations frequently marginalize those with disabilities by "legitimating and subjugating knowledge, examining and controlling workplace practices, forming subjectivities, and marking bodies as normal or deviant" (Palmeri, 2006). In articulating disability, TPCers generally align with medical notions of disability as individual deficit that must be overcome or erased (Kafer, 2013). When disability is considered by TPC, it is frequently positioned as a problem to be resolved through accommodations that assimilate individuals into environments not constructed with them in mind. However, DS posits that disability is in fact relational; rather than reflecting "personal defect or lack in need of medical or therapeutic intervention," disability arises through "environmental and technological barriers" that may limit "access to goods, services, interfaces, and information" (Melonçon, 2013a).

Through their documentation practices, TPCers directly impact rhetorical understandings of disability. It is important that TPCers recognize and resist normalizing tendencies which may disregard and disempower particular bodyminds. Recognizing that this begins at the level of the classroom, I encourage TPC instructors to incorporate disability studies (DS) in their own courses to help students think critically about the way normative TPC documentation practices and genres may disenfranchise disabled individuals by failing to consider them at the forefront of construction.

Purpose

Building on disability studies (DS) and TPC scholarship, the purpose of this presentation is to provide TPC instructors with theoretical and practical insight for promoting more inclusive TPC practices that consider disabled individuals by integrating DS into TPC courses.

Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

1. Provide a reflection on my own experience of incorporating DS into a professional writing course

2. Offer insight into the theoretical DS framework guiding my own inclusion of DS into my professional writing course
3. Model ways instructors might utilize case studies and student feedback to examine their course documents, content, student work, and pedagogical practices through my own experience of doing so, and
4. Provide concrete suggestions for how TPC instructors might effectively apply DS to TPC course content and documentation practices to model more inclusive TPC strategies for students.

Methodology/Methods

In examining the impact of integrating DS into TPC curriculum, I was guided by the questions: 1) How do TPC genres in the professional writing classroom consider disability in the language they use? 2) How might the incorporation of DS into a TPC course impact students' understandings of normative TPC documentation practices?

This presentation uses case studies to examine the impact of incorporating DS into a professional writing course. Case studies focus on individual representatives of a larger group; they are studied in a "natural context, bounded by space and time" and they involve a "more thorough examination of the given phenomenon" through diverse sources of information and are thus "richly descriptive" (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). My teaching case focuses on my fall 2019 professional writing course. It consists of data collected from four students' report assignments, proposal assignments, two project reflections, final reflections, and 30-40-minute, semi-structured interviews conducted after the completion of the class. I likewise examine the documents guiding the course, including assignment descriptions and the course syllabus. I used Johnny Saldaña's (2016) concept coding to identify themes across the data by examining "smaller, observable actions" (p. 119) to make broader, thematic conclusions.

Outcomes and Takeaways

While many themes emerged in my case study analysis, this presentation will examine two specifically:

1. Students' continued reliance on ablest frames in spite of insights regarding the relational nature of disability
2. Students' use of DS for critiquing and reconsidering TPC genres

Based on the insights yielded through these student case studies, I then provide TPC instructors with concrete recommendations for ways to effectively integrate DS into TPC courses to promote students' critical engagement and generative knowledge building in relation to normative TPC documentation practices.

By attending this presentation, individuals will acquire

- A theoretical framework outlining the pedagogical relevance of DS to TPC instruction
- A model for considering disability by engaging in ongoing (re)design TPC courses using case study methods, student feedback, and concept coding
- Practical recommendations for incorporating DS into TPC courses to foster students' critical engagement with normative TPC documentation practices.

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Diversity and Inclusion, Teaching Focus

How Do You Teach Diversity and Inclusion? I-II

Jacquelyn Lowman
University of Maine at Presque Isle

Yingqin Liu
Cameron University
Using Narratives to Engage Students in Sharing Personal Testimonies on "Cultural Shocks" and Learned Lessons

Laila Montaser
Menoufia University
"Stem cell and Nanotechnology Literacy" for Post Graduate Students of Clinical Pathology

Evelyn Plummer
Seton Hall University
Nonverbal Markers: Diverse Ways We Use to Signal Inclusion

Drew Marsherall; Young Sun Lee
University of Rochester
What's in a Name?

Laura Lambdin
University of South Carolina
Fun D & I Conversation Starters: Disney Princess Game and Traditional Greetings Game

Tara Moore
Elizabethtown College
Publishing the Poetry of Children from a Special Needs Classroom

Junhua Wang
University of Minnesota
Masks, Cultural Differences, Racism, and Discrimination During the
COVID-19 Outbreak

Ruby K. Nancy
University of Minnesota Duluth
Upgrading Presentation Materials

Kimberley Williams
University of Alabama
"Whom to Add to the Group": Discussing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

Geert Jacobs
Ghent University
Diversity and Reputation: How Student Research Projects Can Help
Create Awareness

Rebecca Dawn Heino
Columbia University
Using Bafa Bafa to Teach Cultural Diversity

David Healey
Purdue University Global
Using the Modern Elder Approach to Create Generational Synergy in the
Online Classroom

Fadia Nordtveit
Smith College
What Is Your Superpower?

Zsuzsanna Palmer
Grand Valley State University
Creating University Recruiting Brochures for International Audiences

Sheila B. Lalwani
Bentley University
Considering Diversity, Poverty and Ethics in the Union Carbonide Disaster: A Case for Young Business Leaders

Sushil Oswal
University of Washington
Teaching Accessibility for Disabled Users through COVID-19 E-government Documents

Larissa Ramos
University of Miami
Developing a Global Mindset with Google's Tour Creator and 360 Virtual Reality Tours

Courtney Hawk
University of South Florida / Hawk L&D Innovations
Finding Common Ground Through Rhetorical Impact

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Workplace Diversity Awareness Statement

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Learning from YouTube Videos and Online Comments about Neurodiversity

If you ask people to define "diversity," you will get as many different definitions as you have people. Some think of such traditional hierarchical categories as color, gender, and class. Others factor in such additional aspects as age, religion, creed, socioeconomic status, geographical location, disability. But these are just some of the more salient characteristics. People combine them in unique ways, pulling in additional factors.

Diversity can be magical, exposing us to ideas and perspectives of which we would otherwise never be aware. It can make any group or enterprise better and stronger.

But it can also be divisive if one particular brand of diversity takes precedence over others—and over prior hegemonies, if we proceed blindly, without careful deliberation and questioning.

In our rush to be diverse, to welcome groups and individuals long marginalized, we cannot afford to marginalize, in turn, groups who once held power. We still need contributions from white males, for example, and from those who are financially, environmentally, and socially secure. In our rush to level the playing field, we need to be mindful and not tilt it another way. In a truly integrated global society, no one is expendable.

One of our challenges, then, is to interweave the disparate strands of diversity into a cohesive, well synthesized whole, inextricably intertwined, stronger than the sum of its parts.

In short, we need an encompassing form of diversity—we need inclusion. This is the philosophy and application in which every voice matters, can be distinct and sing solo, is prized for the richness it offers. But beyond that—and without losing the wonders of the individual—all are blended into a chorus more powerful than any mere collection of individuals.

This is one of our challenges as business communication teachers and practitioners. How do we teach and enact this? How can we best prepare ourselves and our students for the complexities of this new reality?

The proposed teaching roundtable will be a forum in which panelists—and audience--will share best practices. The idea is for panelists to share a favorite assignment in a lightning round in which each will have three to five minutes to present (depending on number of participants). The idea is to pull from ABC membership (and prospective members), not just members of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. We want people to start thinking about diversity and inclusion in their teaching, research, and daily lives. We want them to consider all the things that they currently do and all the opportunities that they have to do more. Our emphasis is on teaching and application in a very broad sense. We would love to draw practitioners as well as academics. We hope to recruit panelists/participants in any practical way. We view the session as a good way for people to try out a new topic that they can turn into something more substantial. They then can fine tune based on feedback. Being part of this panel can be an easy step to presenting at ABC. This can also be a powerful demonstration that diversity and inclusion are not values that we as an organization relegate to pure research and merely annual discussion. Ideas can emerge from this roundtable that will strengthen us as an organization.

This roundtable was very well received when it debuted at the Seattle Conference in 2015. Since then, there has been interest in our making this an annual session. We brought it back for Albuquerque. Now it is an expected and accepted part of our annual ABC conference. We had such an overwhelming response for the Dublin conference that we needed two sessions. Each session had about 15 participants, which made for great, diverse, stimulating sessions. From Miami on, we have had three. This year, again, we are aiming for three.

Diversity and Inclusion, Teaching Focus

Overcoming Rhetorics of Deficiency: The Legacy of Watermelon Postcards

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Why do watermelons matter to workplace communication? This paper discusses the postcard craze of the early 1900s that disparaged Black Americans' love of watermelons and that still has a debilitating effect today. The watermelon stereotypes became rhetorics of deficiency that even hinder interactions at work. Session attendees are asked to examine deficiency rhetorics in the workplace and the biases that feed them.

Extended Abstract

According to WorldAtlas.com, watermelon is the third most popular fruit in the world after the tomato and banana (Mala, 2020). It is known for its superior hydrating, muscle soothing capabilities; for lowering blood pressure; and for its ability to reduce sun damage to the skin (Kadey, 2015). Ancient Egyptians prized watermelons and packed them in the Pharaohs' tombs for the afterlife (Mala, 2020).

Watermelon is also the most popular summer fruit in America, but not only for its nourishing, ninety-percent water content. New York Times food critic, Peter Wells, personifies watermelons as "social by nature, built for crowds, [and] happiest surrounded by humans." (Wells, 2018).

So, what's not to like about this sweet, wholesome fruit? Ask historian Cynthia Greenlee, who felt she was "not as free as I thought," when she consciously chose strawberry over watermelon while having lunch with white co-workers (Greenlee, 2019). Or the cafeteria staff at New York University who were fired after serving "watermelon-flavored water" and other foods associated with African Americans to celebrate Black history month (Singal, 2019). Or ask author Jacqueline Woodson who eloquently described the "pain of the watermelon joke," which recounted an awkward exchange with a friend who was presenting her a trophy at a National Book Awards ceremony (Woodson, 2014). Following such stories, I unearthed a troubled association between watermelons and Black Americans that has lasted from the days of slavery to today. A story that is sourly ironic.

The watermelon originated in Africa, traveled on slave ships to plantation gardens in the Americas, and later became a source of livelihood for former slaves in the southern United States. By the late 1860s, the watermelon appeared as a source of pride and humor in magazine and newspaper drawings and columns. It was a reliable prop for photographers and painters seeking to depict post-War Black culture and appeared in vaudeville acts across the country. But the most lingering use of watermelon images may have come from the popularity of postcards at the beginning of the 1900s.

Through postcards, people shared fantastic images to support a collection craze that last over a decade. Photographs and paintings were colorized and embellished and made into postcards by printers in the UK,

Germany, and the US. Cameras became more specialized and accessible to average people for the first time, and postal agencies across Europe and North America enacted policies that allowed the use of personal images and handwritten notes on the postcard. Many enthusiasts shared the most vulgar images and offensive messages about Blacks on postcards. Although the postcard craze ended by the First World War, the damage had been done. Blacks began to distance themselves from watermelons in public. The narrative reflected the shift toward a rhetoric of deficiency—from watermelons being a beloved fruit to watermelons becoming a loathsome image to be associated with.

A rhetoric of deficiency describes discourse or messages that deliberately cast the features or actions of a person, object, event, or situation mainly in a negative light, despite their inherent worth or previous associations. Deficiency rhetorics succeed when an audience is willing to view the subject negatively due to implicit biases against the subject, exigences of the situation, and perceived credibility and appeal of the rhetor. The message may be depicted in writing, speech, visually, or in physical performance.

Deficiency rhetorics often arise when there is a shift in social, political, or economic conditions. Before the postcard craze, Blacks had gained more autonomy and accessed educational, political, and economic opportunities just a few years slavery ended during the period of Reconstruction. Educators such as Booker T. Washington (1896) and W.B. DuBois (1898) asserted the capacity and capability of Blacks to help rebuild the South if given the support. But such ambitions were thwarted by strict enforcement of segregation laws, physical assault on Blacks, destruction on their property, and other activities at the turn of the twentieth century.

In today's classrooms and workplaces, Blacks, women, ethnic and religious groups, persons with disabilities, LGBT persons, immigrants, military veterans, and even student athletes still face deficiency rhetorics. It is also worth noting that deficiency rhetorics may exist within groups, often towards members who, for example, display characteristics or behaviors deemed antithetical to the ethos of the group (Workman, 2020). Reversing deficiency rhetorics takes deliberate work, especially when messages are baked into the culture and when the origin of the messages are not fully understood or known.

As instructors, trainers, and consultants who value diversity and inclusion, we should make the effort to locate and reverse deficiency rhetorics in our workplaces. We should note what we do and say that may seem mundane and commonplace, but that may have deep, negative effects on others. At a time of increasing soul-searching and action towards improving social and organizational inclusion and equity, we should find ways to change rhetorics of deficiency that prevent others from having positive workplace and classroom experiences.

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Diversity and Inclusion, Teaching Focus

Presentation Rubric Design and Ableism: Towards a More Inclusive Rubric

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Theme

Teaching presentation best practices in professional schools require rubrics that reflect real world expectations for the discipline. Those best practices, however, may not be able to be met by individuals with visible and/or invisible disabilities. As both professional schools and the corporate world move towards inclusivity, we must consider how to revise our presentation evaluation metrics to be less ableist and more inclusive.

Purpose/Goals

In this presentation, I examine examples of presentation rubrics in business schools in the United States and discuss how they do/do not present as ableist for individuals with visible and/or invisible disabilities.

My goals for the presentation are to provide some insight and ideas based on my research on accessibility best practices as to how we might look to revise our presentation rubrics and expectations to be more inclusive of people with disabilities.

Methodology

I am in the process of collecting business school presentation rubrics and examining them in terms of how they evaluate students. In particular, I am looking for examples that offer ideas for best practices for more inclusive rubrics as well as examples of rubrics that could be seen as ableist.

Working with my own university's Accessibility Resources Services, I am going to develop language for revising my own presentation rubric for my classes next fall. I plan to share these findings in my presentation.

Takeaways

Ableism, as defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary*, is "discrimination in favor of able-bodied people; prejudice against or disregard of the needs of disabled people."

In the case of presentation rubrics that evaluate presentation best practices including eye contact, volume, hand gestures, verbal clutter, and posture, it is easy to spot how these expectations are ableist.

At a recent panel on Disability Pedagogy at MLA, speakers offered ideas on how we might make our teaching practices more inclusive, with suggestions including offering students the chance to "opt-out" of presentations in favor of an alternate assignment. These offerings were met with very positive feedback.

As teachers in professional schools, however, we face a challenge: we must prepare our students to face a world that, without a doubt, is ableist. One can't simply "opt-out" of certain expectations at work. And until the world changes to be more inclusive, we need to prepare our students as best as we can for the world that they will face upon graduation.

Thus, the topic of how to revise our own presentation rubrics to not be ableist, while, at the same time, preparing our students for a multitude of workplace environs and expectations, presents a unique challenge for business communication teachers.

This presentation is the beginning of what I see as an ongoing project/conversation about inclusion and accessibility in both business schools and the professional world. I don't propose to have all the answers; what I have are ideas to contribute in hopes of moving our conversation further down the line of accessibility and inclusion.

Notes

Language from our PhD program:

"Students with disabilities needing accommodations should contact the University's Accessibility Resources and Service Office. See the ARS Website for contact information: https://ars.unc.edu or email ars@unc.edu."

Teaching Diversity and Inclusion Online: Strategies for Success

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Organizations increasingly recognize the value of being inclusive, diverse, and equitable; however, organizational leaders are often inadequately prepared to create the inclusive impacts they desire. Business schools - and business communication instructors - should (and do) respond to this knowledge gap by offering courses on related topics. Such courses often ask students to share their own identities, learn about common institutional challenges to inclusion, and engage with one another about difficult topics.

Courses on diversity and inclusion are often taught where participants can be physically present with one another to encourage vulnerability and trust among students and the instructor. Given both our immediate context - COVID-19 - and the broader academic adoption of online degree programs, professors can no longer assume such classrooms will be the norm (or even available).

In this session, we will share strategies for creating and leading effective diversity and inclusion courses within virtual settings. Attendees of this session can expect to leave with tools for taking advantage of online settings and techniques for encouraging students' engagement with challenging topics. We will share our own experiences, interview three former students, and demonstrate tools for collaborative learning. A strong virtual diversity and inclusion course involves effective, complementary asynchronous and synchronous materials, so our session will cover both types of content.

Asynchronous content - which students must prepare outside of live class time - should set the foundation for course concepts and encourage individual reflection. For example, we have found that the online setting allows instructors to create high quality video interviews that can be frequently reused as asynchronous material.

We will also describe and recommend high impact synchronous activities for use during class sessions. Through a discussion of advocacy vs. allyship vs. inclusion, we will demonstrate the creative use of online whiteboards for conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion. Other synchronous suggestions include setting course agreements, having students lead discussion, and forming assignment-related breakout groups.

These strategies are drawn from our professional experiences and from teaching related courses in UNC Kenan-Flagler's online MBA program. Students in our courses tend to be working adults who live all over the world and have family responsibilities. While professional students' needs are not identical to those of the average undergraduate, we are confident that the lessons we have learned while teaching this course will benefit instructors with students from a variety of backgrounds.

Teaching diversity and inclusion-related topics online can be daunting, but the virtual setting offers unique opportunities. We encourage business communication instructors to create and teach such courses in order to create the inclusion-fluent leaders that organizations so desperately need.

Diversity and Inclusion, Teaching Focus

Underserved Populations: Meeting the Needs of Veteran Students

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> *"Perception is reality, but it may not be actuality, and you have got to be able to keep the difference between that." –Bill Cowher*

This paper focuses on providing business communication faculty with information on the underserved veteran student population by describing the needs and providing ideas for facilitating those needs in their business communication classrooms.

Student veterans, an underserved population, present challenges for business communication classrooms that require adjustments in which business communication faculty become aware of the unique challenges this community faces. What a business communication professor may perceive about a student veteran may not be the actuality of the veteran's classroom experience.

Understanding the specific needs of veteran students requires business communication faculty to sensitize themselves to the mentality of the students as well as the special needs this population brings to the business communication classroom. Focusing on the needs of veteran students within the classroom and understanding ways to deal with these issues that include their maturity, status as non-traditional students, transitioning from military to student life, and the intrusion of posttraumatic stress disorder allows business communication professors to meet the needs of this underserved population.

Maturity: Students who are returning to the university after time spent in the military have matured through their experiences in ways that traditional students have not. The twenty-year-old traditional student has spent three years partying and studying while the twenty-five-year-old military member has spent seven years attending boot camp, acclimating to a new culture, traveling the world, working a full-time job, and meeting expectations of senior people. Veterans understand why they are in school and what they want to gain from their education. This leads to a seriousness and intensity about their studies, but also an impatience with "busy work." Many veterans have worked in a professional writing environment that is similar to the business communication curriculum. Veterans expect to be treated with respect for their experiences and world knowledge. Often, as faculty, we overlook this expectation, but addressing it with students can lead to a higher level of success for that student (Falkey, 2016; Vachi & Berger, 2014).

Non-traditional learners: As non-traditional students, veterans' needs differ from those of the traditional college student. In some cases, the veterans struggle with basic skills needed for college, but they also can struggle with the English language. Many young people join the military from other countries, and their preparation for college is not optimal (Falkey, 2016). Recognizing this international experience can optimize the business communication class as traditional students learn to broaden their perspectives through the experiences of veterans.

Transitions: Transitioning from a military environment to a civilian environment is difficult for almost all veterans. The transition from a military environment to a college environment is especially difficult for veterans who have matured far beyond a typical student environment. Veterans report feelings of being outsiders in classes and on campuses which can lead to them dropping out of the university. Business communication faculty can facilitate this transition for veterans by intervening in the veterans' lives so that they can locate environments where they belong and can form community (Berger, 2014). This facilitation can be met by communicating with the veteran to understand their specific needs.

PTSD: Trauma based injuries present some of the greatest obstacles to veterans who are students in the business communication classes. The conference theme of "perception is reality" cannot be applied to veterans who struggle with the challenges of posttraumatic stress disorder. The actuality of their experience can be far different than what is happening in the classroom. The following situation illustrates this concept:

> Perception: With the PowerPoint lecture complete, the business communication professor moves on to the writing assignment which requires a team meeting to produce a document. The professor hesitates with assigning the veteran to a team because that veteran is always angry and argumentative when he isn't daydreaming.

> Actuality: The picture in the PowerPoint just set off a flashback for the veteran who is once again in the heat in Iraq, not focused on the classroom at all. His "daydreaming" is, in actuality, a flashback which then controls his responses. The intensity necessary to stay alive in the war zone (now a habit) is perceived as high levels of anger by his classmates and professor. Frustrated, he remains quiet while the team discussion focuses on last night's drinking and partying. He wonders why he is in college at all.

Developing an understanding of how trauma affects student veterans' abilities to pay attention, complete assignments, and participate in discussions in business communication classrooms is a necessity for professors. Expression of ideas and class debates can also be challenging to the veteran since their "normal" level of involvement is highly intense. Veterans' intensity which kept them alive in the combat zone appears as intense anger to non-veterans. Understanding the triggers for PTSD and veteran responses can assist business communication faculty in off-setting the traumatic reactions that veterans may possess which will lead to more successful classroom outcomes (Langston & Langston, 2016).

Struggling with age and experience differences, veterans can find a business communication class that focuses on teamwork and writing to be challenging. Business communication professors can ease the way for this underserved community with understanding of their challenges.

Veterans are taking classes in undergraduate and graduate programs in unprecedented numbers. Understanding the military community requires an openness to their experiences and an understanding of trauma-based injuries. Business communication faculty can better meet the needs of this underserved population by working to understand their challenges and to communicate to these students that they are welcome in the classroom environment.

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An Investigation into How Communication with One's Colleagues, Organization, and Romantic Partners Impacts the Experience of Retirement

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Theme

A recent prediction by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicates that the U.S. Labor Force will total approximately 164 million people in 2024. About 41 million of those workers—or a quarter of the labor force—are older workers, or those who are ages 55 or older (Toossi & Torpey, 2017). Many of these older workers are a part of the baby boom generation and will be in their 60s to 70s by 2024. In just a few years, baby boomers will be planning their organizational exits and retiring en masse. The labor force will experience a massive change, but also important for consideration is the major life transition these retirees will undergo.

How do workers experience retirement? Research in the distant past found that most people view retirement favorably and eventually adapt in positive ways (Fletcher & Hansson, 1991; Riley & Foner, 1968). Atchley (1974) noted that retirement had been touted in the 1960s as a "reward for a lifetime of work" (p. 97). However, another body of research sheds light on nuanced experiences and outlooks on retirement. Bradford (1979) highlighted negative emotional reactions toward retirement, including "the frustrations of a meaningless existence, separation from previous activities and companionship, lowered motivation, feelings of uselessness, and loneliness" (p. 429). Clearly, retirement is not considered a reward by all.

While there is a growing body of literature on retirement planning from a financial perspective, social sciences studies are far less common. While sound fiscal preparation for this life change is important, the organizational, social, and relational implications of retirement warrant attention as well. The few empirical, communication-centered studies on retirement demonstrate the importance of a social and message-based understanding of retirement, and of viewing retirement as a process, not a singular event (Quinn, 2001). Why are more empirical, communication-centric studies of retirement needed? As noted in a social constructivist study on retirement:

Retirement is a social construct that is learned throughout a person's working life.

Communication is an essential part of this learning… Very little of the retirement literature focuses on how retiring individuals understand this life process (Smith & Dougherty, 2012, p. 454).

Workers describe retirement in a multitude of ways. Phillips and Bach (1995) explored the metaphors recently-retired and not-yet-retired workers use to describe retirement. They found that transition

metaphors, freedom metaphors, and emotion metaphors (ranging from very positive to very negative) were the most common descriptors of retirement. While some said retirement was like "a flower reblossoming" (p. 10), others said it left them "being very uncertain" and "empty" (p. 13). Similarly, Fletcher and Hansson (1991) note that individual reactions span a spectrum from "intensely negative and fearful to highly positive" (p. 76). Regardless of the valence of emotion toward the process, it stands to reason that retirement impacts workers to their core, and on more than just a financial level.

Purpose, Goals

The purpose of this project is threefold in its attempt to explore retirees' social components of retirement anxiety (Fletcher & Hansson, 1991) as related to: (a) one's organizational identification, or feelings of oneness with or belongingness to their organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989); (b) one's role identification, or the extent to which one defines themself in terms of their role identity (Ashforth, 2001); and (c) one's satisfaction with their long-term romantic partner.

Methodology

Full-time workers who are within a year of retirement or have retired within the past year are eligible to participate in this study. Participants must also currently be in a long-term (e.g., five years or longer), romantic relationship.

Retirement anxiety is the "generalized feeling of apprehension or worry regarding the uncertain, unpredictable, and potentially disruptive consequences of impending retirement" (Fletcher & Hansson, 1991, p. 77). This study will focus on the social components of retirement anxiety, rather than including financial concerns, concerns of aging generally, and so on. Employing a quantitative methodology, the Social Components of Retirement Anxiety Scale (SCARS) will be used to measure four factors: (a) social integration and identity; (b) social adjustment/hardiness; (c) anticipated social exclusion; and (d) lost friendships. Evident in the social components of retirement anxiety scale is the role of one's relationships on one's view toward retirement.

Until retirement, full-time working adults spend most of their waking hours in their organizations and with their coworkers. It stands to reason that workplace relationships (broadly defined as our relationship to the organization as well as our relationships within the organization) impact workers' experience of retirement greatly. To measure workers' relationship to their workplace and work, participants will complete a six-item organizational identification questionnaire (Mael & Ashforth, 1992) twice, once keeping in mind their organization and once keeping in mind their role or career.

Adults' remaining waking hours are often spent in the company of a significant other. It stands to reason that workers' interpersonal, romantic relationships also impact the experience of retirement. The Interpersonal Solidarity Scale (ISS; Wheeless, 1976) will be used to measure relationship strength with participants' significant others. Participants will also complete the ISS while thinking of their coworkers to measure the strength of those relationships as well.

Takeaways

Retirement is touted as one of the most distinct forms of organizational exit in that "it signifies an individual's formal, publicly-declared, 'final' disengagement from work-related organizational relationships" (Avery & Jablin, 1988, p. 68). Like any process, retirement can be experienced smoothly or

turbulently. How workers talk about retirement with coworkers and significant others could shape their anxiety toward this major life milestone. Given its individual impact along with the societal impacts of an upcoming organizational exit of some 40 million workers, it is critical that we gain greater understanding of how the negative impacts of retirement can be mitigated.

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Moving Forward: Applying the Triadic Professional Approach to Promoting Business and Professional Communication in a Post-COVID-19 Landscape

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Background/Theme

Business and professional communication teachers and scholars have long struggled to find a consistent basis for professional identity within institutions. In our presentation at last year's ABC conference, we introduced a concept called the "triadic approach" to professionalization in business and professional communication, offering a way to recontextualize business and professional communication scholarship, teaching, and service in ways that offer flexibility in different academic contexts while consistently allowing for recognition of tangible contributions in a unique and evolving field/discipline (Rosselot-Merritt & Bloch, 2019).

In addition to business and professional communication's unique disciplinary challenges, even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, higher education in general was facing many challenges, such as increased competition for a declining traditional college-age population, mounting student loan debt, decreased state funding, and increased questioning of the cost-benefits of higher education (Mintz, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic has accentuated these challenges (Chronicle staff, 2020). For example, during the spring of 2020, most higher education institutions were forced to abruptly convert all or nearly all of their operations to remote/online delivery. As a result, many institutions experienced large budget shortfalls on top of already decreasing state funding (for public institutions) and are expecting enrollment declines, hiring freezes, furloughs, and other cost-cutting measures, resulting in even more uncertainties (Gardner, 2020), leaving non-tenure-track, untenured, and part-time instructors feeling most vulnerable, in addition to those who are or will soon be in the market for academic jobs (Zahneis, 2020).

In future terms, we argue that the triadic approach to professionalization can be used as a tool for aligning formal expectations of business and professional communication scholarship and teaching with the realities of what business and professional communication scholars and teachers are doing often "invisibly" --yet in ways that significantly benefit their institutions, departments, and communities. The triadic approach can be used to demonstrate that the work of business and professional communication scholars and teachers offers excellent potential for adaptation in times of economic and resource compression, such as the projected post-COVID-19 environment.

The triadic approach consists of three parts:

1. Reflection-in-action, based on Schon's (1987) concept of applying tacit knowledge in various situations;
2. Critical reflection, based on Fook's (2011) process of negotiating meaning and articulating value systems;
3. Scholarship of application, from Boyer's (1990) arguments for a broader definition of scholarship that extends beyond the traditional scholarly research paper and encompasses the value of non-academic application.

We offered this approach as a way of "position[ing] ourselves in [diverse institutional and departmental] settings, construct[ing] a clear notion of our work for transdisciplinary stakeholders, and inculcat[ing] early career scholars with the critical capacity to do the same as they define their scholarly paths and move into permanent academic roles" (Rosselot-Merritt & Bloch, 2019) with additional implications for career development and promotion, reappointment, and tenure assessments.

Purpose

The purpose of this presentation will be to explain the post-COVID-19 landscape and its effects on the environment for business and professional communication teachers and scholars, as well as to offer ways of applying the triadic approach to business and professional communication in the context of that environment. With broad impacts on higher education, the post COVID-19 landscape will present unique opportunities to leverage business and professional communication's inherent transdisciplinarity (Bernstein, 2015; Rosselot-Merritt & Bloch, 2017) in engaging academic, industry, and community stakeholders as part of a larger process of addressing workplace needs for students, thinking through and rethinking pedagogies, connecting universities with the communities of which they are a part, and considering the future of higher education. In this presentation, we will overview adapting the triadic approach to studying the environment for business and professional communication faculty within institutions. Then, using the triadic approach, we will connect those effects specifically to business and professional communication in a post COVID-19 social and academic environment, offering ideas for application based on an empirical analysis of relevant texts and artifacts.

Methodology

The methodology will involve multiple parts:

1. Summarize literature on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on higher education, broadly speaking, and suggest particular implications for business and professional communication as an academic discipline.
2. Analyze job ads for academic positions in business and professional communication and build on the results of our analysis from last year's presentation.
3. Analyze promotion and tenure requirements for at least five institutions using the triadic approach to professionalization.

Goals/Takeaways/Outcomes

a. We will offer recommendations on how business and professional communication faculty can navigate the post-COVID19 environment within their institutions.

b. We will give suggestions for those business and professional communication faculty navigating the post-COVID-19 environment in the job market.

c. We will help attendees reflect on how they can help to both adapt to and instigate change within their institutions in the "new normal" post-COVID-19 higher education environment.

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Outside the Business College: Non-tenure Track, Tenure Track, and Adjunct Issues in Business Communication

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In 2017 the Association for Business Communication's (ABC) CCCC Subcommittee for the Marketing & Membership Committee was tasked to create a Special Interest Group (SIG) to create conversations between members of the two organizations, help expand the working knowledge of business and professional writing's place within the English department and Writing Studies and encourage membership in ABC for current instructors who may be unfamiliar with the organization. Members of the subcommittee (Kathryn Rentz, William Christopher Brown, Crystal Shelnutt, Kathy Wills, and Geoffrey Clegg) successfully crafted a proposal, later accepted for the 2019 CCCC conference, creating the new Workplace Writing SIG.

The focus of this presentation is to report back on the events of our engagement with CCCC's members who attended, discuss the types of engagement we received from attendees on a variety of topics, and discuss future ways of further engaging writing scholars. What we've discovered from this meeting is how fractured and distanced many new members felt in their department. Attendees often voiced their displeasure that they were under the strain of two different worlds (business and English), the pressures from the different ideologies representative in each major field, and the challenges of having to work within accreditation standards (AACSB) that conflict with each other.

The topic eliciting the most interest concerned the place of business communicators within the university. Many of the SIG attendees felt out of place as their primary area of teaching was spent teaching students from their respective business colleges and less interaction with their own backgrounds within English Studies. We neither fit into the space of writing studies, which tends to privilege first-year and technical writing, nor into the world of business. Our liminal presence often complicates our role and authority within the curriculums of business students because, those confined to a Humanities department, often are seen as providing a service rather than posing an integral part of the business college's mission.

A secondary concern of the attendees comes from the ideological bent of writing studies itself and the questions such epistemologies bring to our classroom. Initiatives such as Students Rights to Their Own Language (SRTOL) often finds itself at odds with the very nature of business communication, especially when questions of language use, authenticity, and professionalism are brought up. The place of SRTOL within business communication itself has rarely been discussed openly in both organizations and deserves more understanding. Similar questions were raised about the CCCC's move towards antiracist pedagogy within grading, specifically calls for not taking off for spelling or grammatical issues within a document.

This proposed talk will bring forth the questions of this SIG meeting into the world of ABC by directly addressing our need for identity. Who do we serve? Are we writing teachers first or are we sublimated to the needs of business? Can we unify the principles and ideologies of the CCCCs and ABC? How can our SIG's direction continue to bring new questions to members of both organizations and increase interest in business communication?

Search Committee, Interrupted: The COVID-19 Pandemic's Impact and Influence on the Faculty Recruitment Process

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Hiring high-quality faculty is essential to building and sustaining strong business communication programs, which prepare graduates to meet employers' desire for professionals with relevant communication skills (Clokie & Fourie, 2016). As part of this hiring process, the on-campus visit helps search committees determine a candidate's fit for a faculty opening. During this visit, a candidate's teaching demonstration, in particular, configures strongly in a search committee's appraisal of a candidate's fit. Search committee members gain not only a more forceful sense of a candidate's classroom praxis (e.g., facilitation strategies, instructional design skills), but also a finer appreciation of a candidate's professional presence (e.g., interpersonal engagement).

However, what happens when a carefully planned search is suddenly disrupted—in mid-search—by an external crisis such as COVID-19? The pandemic unfolded in the middle of the co-presenters' search for two full-time faculty hires, challenging the traditional search committee process. This was an especially high-impact search since these hires would replace most of the business communication faculty at the co-presenters' home institution. In this presentation, the co-presenters will share how their expectations as search committee members evolved with respect to candidates' teaching demonstrations during "virtual campus visits."

Specifically, the co-presenters will identify several ways that the virtual teaching demonstrations challenged them to appraise candidates in ways that were not anticipated when the search initiated (i.e., pre-COVID-19). First, interpersonal connections were disrupted through digital platforms, as verbal and non-verbal cues typically conveyed in face-to-face classroom facilitation were repressed in virtual conferencing spaces (e.g., Zoom), thereby limiting search committee members' perceptions of a candidate's professional presence. Hence, search committee members were challenged to fully assess candidates' promise as learning facilitators in traditional face-to-face classrooms. Second, candidates who mediated digital platforms more fluidly—a competency not actively solicited in the faculty position posting—made stronger impressions during the virtual teaching demonstrations. For example, candidates who could share slide decks virtually and skillfully shrink live feeds to redirect audiences' eyes in their teaching demonstrations made more positive impressions. In turn, search committee members were challenged to consider the extent to which unconscious bias—in this case, a more favorable impression of technological "know-how," which was not explicitly described in the faculty job description—impacted their assessment of candidates.

Moreover, there were two competing narratives influencing messaging at the co-presenters' home institution during the peak of the epidemic, dovetailing into the search committee process: (a) either scale down your expectations and be sensitive to current conditions linked to COVID-19, or (b) "stay the course" to help students and colleagues retain a sense of normalcy during this time of uncertainty. Our search committee struck a balance between these two narratives: staying attentive to our candidates' virtual needs and perceived related limitations, but also maintaining our standards for teaching excellence in spite of these virtual considerations. In striking this balance, we discovered that our mental models—those preconceived ideas we had that underpinned our decision-making process (Bonchek, 2016)—shifted during this job search, for we attended to some candidate competencies in ways that we had not anticipated before the pandemic. For example, as we considered that future faculty would be required to transition between face-to-face and online instruction frequently in the post-COVID-19 era, we found ourselves paying closer attention to candidates' instructional design strengths, as captured in visual and narrative techniques that transformed slide decks into compelling "stories" with strong, "stand-alone" value (especially ideal for online learning). By extension, we also assessed candidates favorably who designed their respective slide decks explicitly for virtual contexts, such that supratextual features (Kostelnick & Roberts, 2010) helped guide search committee members more easily through the "story" or narrative of the candidate's given topic in the teaching demonstration.

This unique search committee experience offers several implications for future search committees in a post-COVID-19 era. We expect that digital platforms will not simply disappear when we transition back to face-to-face classrooms and institutions, but rather continue to flourish. Thus, candidates in job searches should consider what multimodal elements of their messaging are being enhanced or restrained in virtual teaching demonstrations. Also, as we anticipate virtual teaching demonstrations becoming more commonplace in future faculty searches, job candidates should consider how they demonstrate their capacity to engage learners in virtual spaces.

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Employment Issues in Business Communication, Teaching Focus

Twenty-First Century Workplace Attire: Formal or Casual?

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The purpose of this study is to learn through interviewing business professionals the appropriate dress most twenty-first century entrepreneurs and businesspeople prefer that their employees wear in the work environment. The question is this: Do most of these professionals prefer formal or casual dress for their employees in 2020?

Methodology

The method used to obtain information for this research presentation is through interviews with professionals in the areas of business, medicine, insurance, and finance. The interviews will be conducted in person and/or by Zoom during the summer and fall of 2020. The method used to interview individuals depends on the continuing situation with COVID-19 and its restrictions.

Interview Questions will include the following:

- How long have you been an entrepreneur or worked for this company?
- What was the established dress code when you began working in your own office or for this company? If changes have been made, what positive or negative impact have they made on the company?
- What type of dress code does your company have at present?
- Does your company have a dress code for the virtual environment (online meetings or presentations with clients, customers, colleagues, managers, and so on)? Or does your company dress code extend to the virtual environment as well?
- Is this code activated or is it still basically the employee's decision?
- Does your company have any repercussions in place if the employee does not adhere to the dress code? If so, are you at liberty to share some of that information with me?
- What suggestions do you have for millennials entering the workforce regarding dressing for success?

Literature Review

The Statistic Brain Research Institute has stated that 40 percent of young adults ranging in age from 18 to 25 in the United States have at least one tattoo. Since the millennial generation has begun to enter the workforce, approximately half of these young people are showcasing "tats." Hopefully, employers will not turn too many future employees away because of their choice in body art (The New Standard, 2017). Since the body art age has somewhat settled down, we now must turn our attention to gauging how business professionals and entrepreneurs value workplace attire.

According to Clemente (2017) the life and impending death of business casual demonstrates broader shifts beyond clothing in American culture and business. Life is less formal, the thought of going to the office has primarily changed, and most American businesses are currently more results-oriented than process-oriented. The way business casual fashion began and dwindled demonstrates that cultural change results from a tangle of seemingly disparate and ever-evolving sources: knowledge, consumerism, employment, characteristics, and demographics.

What type of dress did we typically have before business casual? Basically, most professionals wore suits. During the 20th century, the norm was conventional collars, overcoats, and more wearing of hats. Americans dressed up for work, and they also dressed up for restaurants, for travel, and for the theater.

During the early years, 1950 until about the1980s, companies demanded and retained a strict and formal dress code that continued into the 1990s. In the early 2000s, women were also taught, as a rule of thumb, that if you wore a particular outfit to a nightclub, it was inappropriate for your work environment (Clemente, 2017).

Yet, more research by Peltz (2017) indicates that outfits worn today in the office are much more casual than they were a few years ago. The researcher also discussed the findings of a survey released by OfficeTeam, an arm of the office-staffing firm Robert Half International, Inc., which revealed that dressing up for work continues to go out of style. At least half of the senior managers interviewed in the survey said that their employees wore less formal clothing than they did five years ago, and 47 percent indicated that their employees dressed somewhat too casually. The research also revealed that 32 percent of managers thought that their workers showed too much skin (Pelz, 2017).

Christina DesMarais (2017) states that Goldman Sachs, the fifth largest U.S. bank, has unbuttoned its dress code to help attract and retain tech talent. According to a memo from Sachs, employees in its technology division now may dress down and exercise their own judgment in determining when to adapt to business attire. Goldman's relaxed dress code is one of the first changes to be made by the bank's chief information officer, Elisha Wiesel. Wiesel describes himself as a socially awkward young man who was most interested in programming computer games. Perhaps, therefore, his casual approach to dressing in a business setting has become a reality in 2020.

Additionally, JPMorgan Chase is also permitting its employees to relax somewhat. According to Michael J. de la Merced (2017), Chase told its 237,420 workers that it was making business casual its everyday code per an internal memorandum reviewed by DealBook. This move makes JP Morgan the latest company to acquiesce to the more casual nature of today's workplace. Furthermore, General Electric and IBM have moved away from their traditional uniforms of white shirts and dark ties. This change is also a nod to the informal style of the tech industry, which has been successful in recruiting workers who might have once preferred more traditional careers.

According to Michael Studenka, a partner specializing in employment law at Newmeyer & Dillion's office in Newport Beach, California, "Clothing styles and trends show more skin and stick to the body more. This often causes conflict with policy."

Lastly, dress codes and habits vary greatly based on an industry's position within a company hierarchy and its geographic region. However, the office environment is especially ripe for confusion and even conflict, given the numerous attire options and the ever-changing work culture. Offices are becoming increasingly casual, as comfort-loving millennials take over the workplace and the Silicon Valley ethos

exemplified by Facebook founder and chairman Mark Zuckerberg's tee shirt-and-hoodie style spreads into other business environments. Not surprisingly, according to a survey administered by OfficeTeam, which specializes in placing temporary office and administrative staff, a majority (56%) of individuals prefer a relaxed dress code.

Data Analysis

The data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Findings and Results

As this study is ongoing, the findings and results are not yet available to share. However, by the time of the ABC Convention, the interviews will have concluded; and the findings/results will be available for dissemination at the session. The findings and results of this study will reflect the responses of the businesspeople to the interview questions.

Conclusions and Recommendations

With each successive generation, workplace dress codes seem to shift. The conclusions and recommendations in this study should provide takeaways for attendees to share with students in their courses regarding appropriate professional and casual attire selections for the work environment based on the results of the interviews with business professionals.

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Sir Antony Jay on Business Communication: Oral Presentations

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Theme

This presentation concerns instruction in oral presentations. It describes relevant works by Antony Jay (who, along with John Cleese) founded and nurtured a London-based, video training-film company, Video Arts. It identifies distinctive (and potentially useful) concepts from Jay's work. And it includes clips from a Jay film, "Making Your Case" (Jay & Robinson, 1982) which is still available in some university libraries and can still be useful in the business communication classroom.

Purpose

At the 2017 meeting of the Association, the authors argued that business communication academics—and particularly American business communication academics—have overlooked the contributions of Sir Antony Jay to the field of business communication. This presentation extends and elaborates part of that claim, focusing on Jay's efforts concerning oral presentations and exploring Jay's work in both written and video media.

The purpose of this presentation is to help in giving Jay's work the attention it deserves and, thereby, to provide ABC members with potentially useful ideas and materials for teaching the oral presentation.

Goals

The goals of the presentation include: (a) educating ABC members about the contributions of Antony Jay to the field of business communication through his entrepreneurial success as the moving force behind the creation of Video Arts and his personal efforts as writer and film maker; (b) delineating some of Jay's specific ideas and approaches for preparing students to make oral presentations; and (c) suggesting the possibility of using Jay's films in the business communication classroom (and providing information about some potential films).

Methods

The research methods used in this study are traditional historical/critical methods—identifying, summarizing, and evaluating written and visual works of Antony Jay.

Making Your Case (Jay & Robinson, 1982)—which situates a young female protagonist ("Alice") in a strange but hauntingly familiar encounter with a "Red Queen"—will be analyzed both as a film and as a business communication teaching tool.

The presentation will include oral descriptions of both methods and outcomes and will include film clips from "Making Your Case."

Outcome

In the U.K., Jay's book *Effective Presentation* (1971a) went through multiple editions and remained in print for several decades. The book offered prophetic attention to the importance of teams in oral business presentations, provides an innovative (non-Aristotelian) perspective on audience analysis, and emphasizes the power of visual aids including, potentially, film.

Jay's film Making Your Case is an excellent illustration of the power of film. It also provides the viewer with an intriguing mixture—a non-traditional presentation (the student as Alice in Wonderland; instructors as Mad Hatters and March Hares) of straightforwardly traditional principles (organize your thoughts, illustrate them clearly). Furthermore, the film provides us with the purest available example of how Jay understood the complementary roles of written and visual instructional media. Many of the early Video Arts training films reflected contributions from both Jay and one of the other co-founders, John Cleese. And, while "Making Your Case" was directed by another one of the co-founders (Robinson), it appears to be a precise embodiment of the theoretical notions that Jay had been articulating for more than a decade.

Walmart's Identity: A Corpus-Based Cognitive Analysis of Discursive Strategies in CEO Discourse

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Identity is the part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership (Tajfel, 1981, p. 255). With the discursive turn of the study of identity, recent scholarship has emphasized that identity is a process embedded in social practices within which discourse practices have a central role (De Fina et al., 2006). Corporate identity, a firm's strategically planned presentation of itself with a certain purpose (Alessandri, 2001), derives from business philosophy, corporate strategy, and corporate culture (Gray & Balmer, 1998) and serves to create corporate image and reputation and contributes to the judgement from the society and the acknowledgement of employees through corporate communication, which can further influence the ability of this corporation (Bloch, 2014). One of the main communication methods for a company is the release of the annual report, in which the CEO letter is usually written each year as a personal letter by the CEO of a company to rhetorically project a positive corporate identity so as to establish favorable relationship with current and prospective shareholders. By far, a few studies on discursive construction of corporate identities by letters to shareholders have made some synchronic comparative research between different genres, like annual reports and corporate social responsibility reports (Fuoli, 2018), and different countries, like Chinese corporation and American corporation (Wu & Zhang, 2019), while the diachronic investigation of corporate identity construction remains the gap.

Therefore, the 59-year-old Walmart, an American multinational retail corporation, which operates a chain of hypermarkets, discount department stores, and grocery stores, was selected as the study object of this study. In 1962, Sam Walton founded Walmart in Bentonville, Arkansas where its headquarter stands. Then Walmart went into public in 1972, and has successively welcomed 5 CEOs, Sam M. Walton from 1972 to 1987, David D. Glass from 1988 to 2000, Lee Scott from 2001 to 2008, Michael T. Duke from 2009 to 2013, and Doug McMillon from 2014 till now. Nowadays, Walmart possesses 11,277 stores and clubs in 27 countries and is the frequenter of the Top 3 in Fortune global 500. And the 5 CEOs have played the crucial role for accompanying Walmart through all thorns and roses in different periods.

From the perspective of stakeholder relationship management, this study presents a corpus-based cognitive analysis of discursive strategies in Walmart's CEO letters (from 1972 to 2019), aiming to investigate what, how and why these corporate identities have been constructed by the five CEOs through times. To be specific, the discursive strategies analyzed in this study are the five strategies of discourse-historical approach (DHA) (Reisigl & Wodak, 2014), namely nomination strategy, predication strategy, argumentation strategy, perspectivization strategy, and intensification and mitigation strategy.

What's more, the corpus tools applied in this study are Wmatrix4 and Wordsmith6. After the diachronic analysis, the results show that Walmart has experienced distinct identities during the 5 CEOs tenures when discursive strategies were used differently to portray Walmart respectively as a confident and practical market builder, an aggressive global market explorer, an acknowledged market leader, an obliged social responsibility taker, and now an ambitious but anxious leader. In addition, the 5 CEOs attached greater importance to different stakeholders with different discursive strategies and finally constructed these different corporate identities in different periods. These identities can be interpreted as strategic presentations of the 5 CEOs to meet changing situations and expectations internally and externally. This study can shed new light on the impression management strategies used by companies for their corporate identity construction in public discourse. And it can provide both linguists and business communication scholars with a descriptive basis for critically assessing letters to shareholders.

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Examining How Categorized Feedback Impacts and Improves Student Writing

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Written communication remains at the heart of our discipline. Recent scholarship has identified one specific area, the ability to write business correspondence, as an important and specific "closing the gap" area where scholars can continue to lend value (e.g., Coffelt, Grauman, & Smith, 2019). With this insight in mind, in this session, the researchers will share the results of a new assessment strategy that they have developed to help students improve their writing in quantifiable ways using categorized feedback.

The researchers' novel assessment strategy has grown out of two insights related to formative feedback that, the researchers argue, is more actionable and, thus, more effective for students than traditional approaches to formative feedback. This feedback strategy can inform the pedagogical approach to business communication writing curriculum. The first insight is based on message organization. Because business communication instructors teach message organization strategies and expect students to organize their business messages, the researchers argue that feedback should model this important rhetorical best practice. As such, business communication instructors should apply organizational strategies to their own formative feedback where and when possible. The second insight is based on how people in general process and remember information. Research has shown that people process and remember information more accurately when that information is packaged into categories (e.g., Miller, 1958; Portrat, Alessandro, Thierry, & Benoit, 2016). To capitalize on this insight as it relates to feedback on student writing, the researchers argue that communication instructors should group feedback into related rhetorical categories so that students are better prepared to process, remember, and act on that feedback.

In an initial demonstration project, the authors devised a study that involved 177 undergraduate students enrolled in nine sections of a core undergraduate business communication course. In that project, the researchers randomly assigned students to receive either categorized or uncategorized feedback, which students were able to 'study' for one minute. The researchers then asked students to recall what writing challenge they would need to work on for ensuing writing assignments and were given three options: punctuation, style, or organization.

Analysis of the data shows that students who received the categorized feedback were more likely to recognize and remember that comments related to the 'style' category appeared most frequently and, thus, represented the biggest opportunity for improving writing on ensuing writing assignments than those students who simply received uncategorized feedback (Schultz & Meredith, 2018).

While the results of this initial demonstration project were encouraging, the researchers wanted to determine whether student writing – not simply recall – actually improved in significant ways as a result

of receiving categorized feedback. To that end, the researchers devised a follow-up study in which they divided nine sections of a core business communication course from a single professor into three groups involving 156 undergraduate students. Group one (n=51 participating students) received traditional, inline feedback that received no categorized feedback. Group two (n=53 participating students) received an initial writing assignment that received categorized feedback. Group 3 (n=52 students) had three writing assignments, each of which received categorized feedback. The results quantify and then compare the feedback that the three groups received across eight writing categories (i.e., style & tone, punctuation, mechanics, grammar, sentences, paragraphs, organization & content, and design, format, & visuals) as well as 27 subcategories for style & tone. The researchers then compared the quantified results of the feedback in each of the three sections to the final course grades that students earned. By correlating feedback in each of the three groups to final grades, the researchers showed a positive correlation between categorized feedback and improved student writing.

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A Public Speaking Renaissance at University of California, Santa Barbara: How Innovative Presentation Training Led the Way

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An innovative new course, Writing for Public Speaking, debuted for the Writing Program at UC Santa Barbara in the spring of 2012. This professionally oriented class focused mostly on the written aspects of presentations—content and language, structure and flow, slide design—rather than on delivery style. Initial student response was so strong that the program soon began adding additional sections and instructors, all of whom shared similar presentation principles suggested by respected authors/trainers such as Nancy Duarte (Resonate, 2010), Garr Reynolds (Presentation Zen, 2011), and Jean-luc Doumont (Trees, Maps, and Theorems, 2009).

Beginning that spring, the campus experienced a Public Speaking Renaissance. Course-based influence has extended to three other courses in three departments; to numerous workshops for undergraduates, graduates, staff, and faculty spanning diverse disciplines; and to annual campus competitions for undergraduates and graduates, attracting audiences of more than 1,000 people yearly while offering up to $15,000 in awards and a chance to present in the UC systemwide finals at LinkedIn each spring. As we reflect back eight years later, we better understand how the unique combination of innovative course curriculum, presentation principles, and teaching methods has contributed to this successful spread of public speaking across our campus.

This panel presentation will examine the core factors that three instructors of this course have identified as central to this Renaissance during the past eight years. Balancing explanation and multimedia examples, the panel presenters will share their key lessons learned so that anyone who might be considering similar efforts elsewhere could apply these insights. To that end, a handout and online resource site will also be available to all participants. Overall, the panel will target key factors in three primary presentation planning areas: script writing, slide design, and extra-impact options.

Script Writing

In 2001, we watched in agony as groups presented their business plans. We (including the class) suffered as each presenter shared endless Excel spreadsheets and data. Watching the presenters read bulleted text, trying to understand data-filled slides and "noise," we thought, "There's got to be a better way."

At the time, we thought, "You can't blame them." They're just doing what they've seen their teachers do. We devised a simple idea to transform the presentations: ask groups to share with us the "story" of their business plan. Ten weeks ago, they had proposed a business idea; they then adapted it to the competition, shaped it for consumer need, and investigated profitability. A story would require them to

explain the obstacles they experienced, the problems they solved, and the creativity they wielded. As simple as that.

The results were dramatic. Students went from needing notecards and bulleted slides to employing simple visuals and a conversational speaking style. We then developed this method of storytelling to fit the needs of UCSB students. As presentations became more central to classes—and ultimately the basis of whole courses—we incorporated the ideas of innovative storytellers. UCSB was at the forefront of embracing storytelling, which now connects the classes and workshops we offer.

This section of our panel presentation will describe how we incorporated storytelling into our classes in order to transform the scripts for speakers and audiences alike.

Slide Design

Recalling the slow, excruciating "death by PowerPoint" we experienced in those early days, we realize that everyone's slides stunk: lectures, talks, trainings, committee meetings. Our debut course demanded adaptation in slide design so that we could catch up with communication trends for greater student preparedness. We leapt at the chance to dig into these current best practices. We jettisoned slides fully loaded with bullets and bloated animation builds of ancient clip art. We ditched department names in slide headers and banished templates ripe with canned graphics like a fungus obscuring any focus. We stressed that slide visuals were the transmission of a speaker's purpose/message using symbols and imagery that didn't compete with words, making the speaker the focus, not the slide. This new strategy that puts purpose first to improve effectiveness and overcome "noise" or "overcommunication" worked wonders for every person employing it.

Our quiet revolution spread, changing other classes with oral presentations. Then science programs requested workshops on how to cut through chart junk to humanize their data. Our under/graduate research colloquium added workshops that included creating the critical three-slide deck. Faculty now seek out training for themselves and their TAs. Even student groups solicit our workshops for their membership meetings.

This section will share design, image, and text principles that ensure the speaker is the star and the slides are just great sets, ultimately achieving the noise-free focus on message, rather than gimmicks, which was a hallmark of this Renaissance.

Extra-Impact Options

Comfortable with our planned use of storytelling to strengthen a script, and with our focus on noise-free slides that support rather than lead, we sought something more for our course debut: options for students to add extra impact to their presentations. We wanted to make these presentations engaging in ways that would transfer well beyond academia—and encourage a buzz among students. This excitement would make presentation days special, even fun, while also helping to spread word of the course.

Our search for related communication trends led us to some interesting ways to make ideas more memorable and presentations more impactful overall. One particularly helpful resource, Made to Stick (Heath, 2008), addresses six characteristics of memorable ideas: simple, unexpected, concrete, credible, emotional, and story-based. Additional resources by Duarte, Reynolds, Doumont, and others reinforce

these same characteristics in unique ways, some of which led to innovative instructional methods for the new course.

This section will examine four extra-impact options, in particular, that worked well initially and then later as course influence spread: keeping time limits tight, starting and ending strong, adding passion, and offering something the audience will never forget. We believe that these options, combined with our innovative teaching of script writing and slide design, have played a crucial role in the Public Speaking Renaissance at UC Santa Barbara and may help others elsewhere seeking a Renaissance of their own.

Adapting the Business Communication Core Course: Keeping Up with Trends Without Overstuffing the Curriculum

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University of Iowa

Ryan Sheets
University of Arkansas

Overview

The current directors of the business communication programs at The University of Arkansas and The University of Iowa will explore tensions inherent in trying to design a course that encompasses as many communication modalities as possible and share what they have learned while working to incorporate communication trends in the standard business communication course curriculum.

Theme

Adapting to communication trends and preparing students to meet the multiple expectations of the workplace put pressure on what might be the single "soft skills" course in the undergraduate business curriculum. Can one course contain everything? And if your dean's answer is an enthusiastic "Yes!" how do you make that happen in a pedagogically meaningful way that does not exploit your instructional staff? Exploring strategies for how to add communication competencies without subtracting from skill development in other key communication areas-- all while also keeping the course "teachable" -- requires careful adjudication of likely conflicting assumptions from multiple course stakeholders.

Purpose

The purpose of this session is three-fold: (1) to demonstrate that one communication course cannot cover all communication trends and competencies; (2) to share lessons learned when one course director nevertheless attempted to design just such a course; (3) to assess how scaffolding of multiple communication skill competencies within a single assignment functions tactically in meeting an ever-expanding list of communication learning objectives.

Goals

In sharing their respective experiences designing an all-inclusive business communication course, the presenters hope to prompt discussion of what it means if you, or your dean, actually embraces that latter part of this year's ABC conference theme: ". . . in an era where perception is reality." If the perception is that a single business communication course can function as a one-stop-shop for workplace preparation, how do you make that a reality in your course? Can you make that a reality? For

those tasked with designing such a course, the presenters will provide specific assignment-design parameters for how to incorporate multiple communication learning objectives without overwhelming students or instructors.

Methodology

Research into including more communication learning objectives to the required core business communication class started in spring 2018 at The University of Iowa Tippie College of Business as competency in visual communication was added to the college's strategic plan. Given additional semester hours were not an option, the following process questions became part of the curriculum re-design to reflect the expanded strategic scope for communication skill development:

- How will students be expected to communicate their solutions to their problem-solving and what curricula will best prepare them?
- How does one balance focusing on communication deliverables with the charge to also include interpersonal communication, team building, and diversity/inclusion, including universal design?
- How does one recruit, hire, and train contingent faculty to teach data visualization and visual design?
- How can a communication curriculum prepare students for workplace communication expectations without overwhelming them in the classroom?

Curriculum redesign at The University of Iowa Tippie College of Business commenced in 2018 with the revised curriculum ready for Fall 2018. Throughout the 2018-19 academic year, advisory boards reviewed the curriculum and offered additional communication objectives to consider. Data collected in Spring 2019 found 24% of students put off taking the required business communication class until their final semester because of perceived workload concerns. Students taking the class in their sophomore year were most likely to report being overwhelmed; while seniors or juniors who had just finished an internship were most likely to report appreciating the workplace communication preparation. University of Arkansas Walton School of Business reports similar data, although from a smaller sample size.

With the creation at Tippie of full-time Instructional Track faculty (ITF) lines for teaching the business communication core course, Fall 2019 saw the first data come in on the experience of teaching four sections of the course at one time. Compared with the experience of contingent faculty teaching one or two sections, full-time ITF reported more job dissatisfaction, particularly with the grading workload. That experience has led to a recognition that data relating experience of overload considerations should include both faculty and students and that scalability is also a significant factor in determining curriculum components.

Continuously collecting both student and instructor experience data allowed us to test whether one efficiently designed course can cover all communication learning objectives. Spring 2020 saw the initial redesign of a scaled-back curriculum, with scaling-back accentuated by the pandemic move to emergency remote instruction. Data collection and analysis will continue throughout the 2020-21 academic year. This research question regarding the scope of the business communication curriculum assumes even more relevance as colleges and universities consider curriculum redesign to accommodate the exigencies of curriculum delivery and communication skill mastery during pandemic education settings.

Outcome/Takeaways

We have identified the following as key design and implementation considerations for a business communication curriculum featuring an expanded scope of learning objectives:

- Determine one or two primary goals for writing, speaking, and visual competencies and then reinforce that goal throughout multiple assignments during the semester (e.g., Students will write effective claim statements as their positioning statements and put those statements in the first-sentence position of all paragraphs/sections).
- Engage in continuous data collection across multiple measures and among multiple stakeholders in the course: e.g., taking the pulse of students AND both contingent and instructional track faculty in the course in quick surveys four times/semester.
- Use the opportunity as leverage to achieve other strategic goals: e.g., maintaining current class size but moving other curriculum elements (e.g., ethics) to other departments, or accepting expanded scope considerations but using comparative faculty grading load data to argue for smaller class sizes and/or grading support.
- We learned exposing students to multiple communication trends and channels does not guarantee skill development nor successful learning outcomes absent sufficient classroom instruction and engagement, including skill reinforcement from one assignment to the next. We further learned that scaffolding communication skills within a multi-part capstone project can reinforce student skill acquisition especially if the curriculum reinforces one or two primary goals for writing, speaking, and visual competencies that students can keep track of throughout the semester.

Anxiety-to-Excitement Reappraisal Strategies and High Valence Music: Antidotes for Presentation Anxiety

Heidi Schultz
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Helping students overcome presentation anxiety and helping students cultivate presentation confidence are core objectives in many business communication courses. To that end, the researcher proposes to share the results of an initial research project that examined whether high-valence (positive) background music from a Spotify-curated playlist that was played during select times in a core MBA-level presentation skills course enhanced anxiety-to-excitement reappraisal strategies as a way to mitigate presentation anxiety better than anxiety-to-excitement reappraisal strategies alone.

In other contexts, music has improved anxiety. In medicine, for example, preterm neonates who were exposed to music during stressful medical procedures experienced a "decrease in heart rate, improvement in oxygen saturation, and reduction in the perception of pain" twice as fast as those preterm neonates who were not exposed to music (Rossi, 2018). In retail, music with specific characteristics has been shown to "enhance customer's time spent in-store and/or the sales volumes" (Michel, 2017). And in exercise science, researchers discovered that "[p]articipants exercised longer and recovered faster in high tempo music conditions" (Maddigan, 2019).

While music has had positive effects in these contexts, the researcher wanted to know if music could have similar positive effects on students' anxiety when having to deliver presentations as part of a core business communication course. Indeed, many students suffer from presentation anxiety, and as researchers have pointed out, anxiety "is often associated with adverse effects on the performance of cognitive tasks" (Eysenck, 2007) because it impacts working memory and reasoning. Moreover, experiencing anxiety before or during a presentation can drain working memory and thus undercut the effectiveness of presenting.

As a way to mitigate anxiety in high stakes situations, researchers have studied the effects of various emotional coping strategies. These strategies include down-regulating anxiety to a state of calmness, immobilizing anxiety by disengaging emotionally from the anxiety-inducing situation, and reframing anxiety as excitement (Brooks, 2014; Shiota & Levensen, 2012). But because anxiety and excitement are arousal congruent – that is, people experience these emotions similarly – people who reappraise anxiety as excitement with self-statements such as "I am excited," perform better on anxiety-inducing tasks (Brooks, 2014).

To supplement anxiety-to-excitement reappraisal strategies in two sections of a core presentations course, the researcher played positive music in one section to learn whether this addition could mitigate anxiety even more.

Students in both sections were asked on the first day of class to rank their level of anxiety on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being "not at all anxious" and 10 being "extremely anxious." After that initial ranking, both course sections were introduced to the physiology of anxiety along with psychological and physical anxiety-mitigating strategies. As part of this instruction, students learned about anxiety-to-excitement reappraisal. And to reinforce the anxiety-to-excitement concept, students were reminded to apply the reappraisal strategy by saying, "I am excited" in unison and aloud at the start of any class session that required an individual presentation for a grade.

Again, students in one course section were subjected to high valence music at the start and end of each session as well as during class workshops as a way to supplement anxiety reappraisal strategies.

On the last day of the course, students were again asked to rank their level of anxiety on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being "not at all anxious" and 10 being "extremely anxious," and both sections were then debriefed on the additional music element of the research.

Based on statistical analysis of the data, the researcher determined 1) that anxiety-to-excitement reappraisal strategies resulted in statistically significant improvement in self-reported confidence in both sections of the course and 2) that the addition of high valence music had no effect on confidence. To understand this finding, in consultation with Dr. Christopher Wiesen at the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the researcher concluded that moving students from anxiety to confidence through reappraisal strategies as much as the results in this study shows had its limits. That is, the researcher was able to improve students' self-reported anxiety levels significantly – but only so far.

Estimate (Std Err)	DF	t Value	Pr > |t|		
Time 0 Section 003	Mean	5.43	(0.56)		
Time 1 Section 003	Mean	4.53	(0.56)		
Time 0 Section 004	Mean	5.68	(0.49)		
Time 1 Section 004	Mean	4.68	(0.49)		
Time 0	Mean	5.56	(0.37)		
Time 1	Mean	4.61	(0.37)		
Time 1 vs. Time 0	-0.95 (0.35)	32	-2.71	0.0107	
Section 003	Mean	4.98	(0.49)		
Section 004	Mean	5.18	(0.43)		
Section 004 vs. Section 003	0.20 (0.65)	32	0.31	0.7610	
Test of No Section by Time Effect	0.05 (0.35)	32	0.14	0.8874	

Because the anxiety-to-excitement reappraisal resulted in statistically significant results related to confidence, the researcher plans to follow-up this study with one in which one group of students get no intervention, one group of students get anxiety-to-excitement intervention, and one group of students get high valence music alone.

In the meantime, instructors who teach presentation skills as part of a business communication course can rely on anxiety-to-excitement reappraisal strategies as a reliable approach to help students become more confident presenters.

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Application of Problem Based Learning (PBL) in Hands-on Business Communication

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Active learning (Bonwell & Eison, 1991) is an array of "Instructional activities involving students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing". Those authors go on:

> […] approaches that promote active learning focus more on developing students' skills than on transmitting information and require that students do something—read, discuss, write—that requires higher-order thinking. They also tend to place some emphasis on students' explorations of their own attitudes and values.

But how new is Active Learning? Is that set of techniques something that never existed before? If you take a historical look, we might consider Socrates as a pioneer. Most people know about the Socratic method: asking continual questions until a contradiction is exposed, thus proving imperfection on some initial assumption. Experience shows that the Socratic Method, though not so easy to assimilate, is a good tool to engage a sizeable group in a discussion through the use of probing questions to get at the heart of the subject and to develop critical thinking skills.

But there have always been other thinkers who wrote about education by making the students act and think. Let us take, for example, Rousseau who, in the 18th century, wrote that education must happen in a natural way, allowing for everything that promotes growth coming from the student and not inculcated. William James, in the late 19th century, used pragmatism which, in plain words, is to concentrate in what is useful ("belief in action"). He wrote "There is but one cause of human failure. And that is man's lack of faith in his true Self," showing that one of the tasks of the teacher is to promote student self-confidence. John Dewey, in the early 20th century, did nor view people as passive observers of the environment but, instead, active participants.

Apart from philosophers, there have always been the successful teachers, who did make their students think for themselves and perform deeds with enthusiasm. Everybody reminds popular teachers, well-liked by the students and successful in making them learn. Their classes are fun, what raises student interest and joy of learning. One can resource to rhetoric to explain such success. Aristotle, more than twenty-four hundred years ago, conceptualized the so-called rhetorical proofs, represented by three Greek words: logos, pathos, and ethos. Explaining all-too-briefly: logos is knowledge, reasoning, capacity of logical understanding — it is contained in texts, explanations, whatever is taught; pathos is desire, emotion, the passional side, the pleasure involved in learning; ethos is the image, the character of the orator. In this case, the orator is the teacher, who shows and causes empathy. Not by coincidence, the word empathy is derived from the Greek pathos.

In the mid-eighties a few professors in the US and Europe (Eric Mazur, Charles Bonwell, James Elson, Carl Weiman) developed a wrap-up of theories and reports of successful practice and the result has been the set of active learning methodologies: problem-based learning, project-based learning, team-based learning, and others.

Today, the typical student profile is quite different from the profile a couple of decades ago. Today, information that comes from both hand-held and tabletop devices is virtually limitless. As a result, the students of today often show difficulty to focus, need for instant gratification and, most importantly, reluctance in taking the teacher's word as the absolute truth. Making a long story short, features that were some kind of gift of a few charismatic professors became more of a necessity. And active learning techniques are here to help.

Now comes a real-life example: a case of teaching Business Communication skills to technology majors in a Community College. During six semesters, PBL was applied to classes (one per semester) with students originated from schools where traditional teaching was practiced, with the teacher as sole provider of knowledge. The research question is: does anything change by applying PBL and, if so, what exactly? The data came from qualitative analysis of those technology students' attitudes towards the discipline of Business Communication before, during and after the semester the students went through the classic steps of PBL. The results were in general incredibly positive. Going back to rhetoric, students were motivated to learn what was necessary (logos) and have shown genuine joy in developing the project (pathos). Now the ethos of the teacher was no longer the one of that powerful holder of all knowledge, but the ethos of a facilitator, a well-qualified helping hand.

Business Communication is a particularly important discipline for technology majors, who do not always acknowledge such importance. The teacher of Business Communication is responsible for instructing those students on many aspects of how a business works. They will need that knowledge if they work for a corporation or if they have their own business.

In PBL, the educator is not a mere transmitter of content; he is more like a mediator, who encourages students to discover, interpret and learn and provides guidance as needed. The instructor is also a manager, who develops all the planning and makes sure it is adhered to. Problem solving is a powerful motivator for the students to adopt an active role in the teaching-learning process — they take important steps to become better problem solvers.

The problem that had to be solved by groups of five students each was to create fictitious companies. They needed to develop advertising and publicity pieces to present, at the end of the semester, to a specialized board. The groups were jointly responsible for creating a special event for the presentation night. The work should be developed along four lines.

The first line dealt with the creation of a fictitious yet plausible business, with corporate name, product or service performed, number of employees, monthly and annual revenue, vision, mission, and values. This line also includes definition of a visual identity, like colors, fonts, and company logo.

The second line consisted of creating certain business communication tools: business cards, leaflet, folder, two issues of a house organ, two issues of a newsletter, one press release, the company website, and design material for Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook, with special attention to the production of texts based on journalistic language. They also had to develop advertising pieces such as billboards, jingles, posters, advertising texts for radio and TV, posters. The students developed an understanding of

the techniques used in writing informative items, based on logos and pathos-oriented advertising pieces.

The third line implied in the definition of a social action to be applied to a real institution, as a way to foster company image. The groups needed to find an institution to put the defined action into practice. The groups, always under the supervision of the teacher, should select the institution and the type of action to be applied. The actions were directed to the homeless, the poor, needy children, and the elderly.

The fourth and in some respects final line is the seminar. At the event, which is a task to be performed by all groups, students create a seminar for the presentation of all the fictitious companies. Each group shows the development of the house organ, the newsletter, the social action, documented with photos and videos, all material shown using the visual identity.

The work is developed throughout the semester, with precise interventions from the teacher, with: 1) theoretical and conceptual information on Business Communication, which include internal and external communication, communication barriers, typologies, tools, crisis communication and 2) practices, monitoring the creation of the company at all stages.

The results have been surprising. Students who, at the beginning of the semester, thought of business communication in a diffuse way, come to understand the importance of communication skills and the need for a well-designed communication plan. It is interesting to note that the social action takes students to another level of social responsibility and many demonstrate a desire to continue with the actions initiated, even after the end of the course.

The same exercise done, in past semesters, without the use of active learning had different outcomes: students arguing with the instructor and among themselves, people feeling lost, trying to change themes in the middle of the project and less-than-good results.

Caught Off Guard by COVID-19 in Your On-Campus Classes? Colleagues are Here to Help!

James G. Ward
Fort Hays State University

The presenter recently participated in a series of virtual regional ABC meetings which focused on the problems faced by instructors with little-to-no online teaching experience. We discussed questions such as:

- How do you motivate students in online team projects?
- What are your favorite online collaborative approaches?
- How do you get students to virtually work together?

The origin of this poster was the presenter's participation in the ABC chapter's meetings and discussions.

The conversations of this chapter meeting were all in the context of sharing experiences and ideas to help others grow and develop in our profession, a goal of this international virtual conference in October. Thus, the proposed audience for this poster and conversations are instructors who perceive themselves as requiring assistance in their movement from an on-campus experience to an online teaching/learning experience. The poster's theme is a discussion of examples of student work, utilizing Action Learning, for those in the Covid-19 age of transition from on-campus to online teaching.

The Problem

As of July 2020, the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic is not slowing down. The virus is rapidly spreading due to societal failure to wear masks and to socially distance. The fact that ABC, as well as many other professional organizations, migrated to virtual events indicates the belief the crisis may not soon be over. The accepted fact is that university students will not wear masks or social distance when off campus, thus creating conditions for another closure of campuses and, therefore, universities may well continue with the status quo.

As Covid-19 spread and was eventually declared a global pandemic, universities worldwide pivoted from on-campus learning to 100% online learning seemingly overnight. On one end of the spectrum, instructors were very prepared and continued to engage learners. On the other end of the spectrum, instructors were caught off guard for numerous reasons, including non-familiarity with the virtual learning/instructional environment.

How do we, as colleagues, prepare others with less, or no previous online experience, to successfully jump into the fray? This poster provides some answers to this pressing societal professional question. Experienced online instructors may also find this poster and discussion helpful.

Possible solutions to the question "How do we, as colleagues, prepare others with less, or no previous online experience, to successfully jump into the fray?"

All successful learners (on or off campus) require collaborate/action-based activities. This approach:

- Helps to maintain student concentration and deepens learning towards higher-level skills such as critical thinking and the application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of course objectives and themes, the higher-level skills of Bloom's taxonomy.
- Assists in engaging students who might otherwise struggle.
  All instructors have witnessed students struggle when working alone and how working with others can positively impact student attitudes and skill development.
- Is more durable as students are cognitively engaged.
- Leads to idea sharing, another mode that promotes learning leading to improved flexibility, engagement, productive meetings, and innovation. These skills are required both in the classroom and in the workplace.

The following are examples of student-generated work that will stimulate idea sharing and engagement in the session.

- Presentations to other students through PowerPoint and Video
- Mind mapping Activities
- Creation of concept maps
- Replying to opened-ended questions that encourage a variety of answers
- Team activities
- Student use of Linoit, VoiceThread, and Yellowdig (web-based tools) will also be displayed for discussion.

Participants in this poster session will thus walk away with activities that they can immediately apply to their online courses.

Center in a Crisis: Challenges Created by COVID-19

Ryan Sheets
University of Arkansas

Matthew Gilchrist
Lehigh University

Beth Kozbial Ernst
Western Michigan University

Brian S. Hentz
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Carl Follmer; Pamela Bourjaily
University of Iowa

Katie Gerst
Temple University

Overview

Over the past two years, the Business Communication Centers (BCC) Special Interest Group (SIG) has organized panels on starting and then expanding the scope of business communication centers. This year's pandemic, however, created a new challenge: delimiting the operations of centers while still finding ways to support students, to address other campus and community stakeholders' needs, and to pursue strategic, long-term plans for center expansion. How did these centers retain authority as the business communication hubs for their campus and community without being able to meet individual students in person or hold workshops or traditional classroom sessions? While no one university or center can provide a definitive model for others to adopt, presenters' approaches to unique challenges offer models of the kinds of creative adaptation and resilience that define the ethos of writing and communication centers. Panelists will discuss what they learned in the process of responding to the pandemic and will reflect on how those responses shaped both temporary and lasting changes to daily operations and strategic endeavors.

Purpose

This session will consider the ways and extent to which a generation-shaping event affects business communication instruction and support on campus. The panelists will discuss, in keeping with the conference's theme, the relationship between student perception and center/university reality and vice versa. Likewise, panelists will discuss how they addressed the campus and community perception that the "university is closed" as instruction and services moved online. By providing pragmatic guidance for leading centers through this difficult time, this session will address the learning curve during a pandemic and steps they took to flatten that particular curve. Panelists will also discuss how their departments and centers' recruiting efforts have been compromised and how they addressed the short- and long-term effects of said compromises. Participants will provide insight on how they pivoted quickly and with very little or no formal warning of a shift to online-only operations. As these are ongoing developments (i.e., all of our respective centers and departments have shifted to online-only operations), we cannot provide current insight to lessons learned from the shift, but we expect to be able to do so by this autumn. Panelists will nonetheless offer strategies and insights on how they remained focused on their respective institutional missions, despite the perception that doing so would be difficult, if not impossible, during the pandemic. Our hope is that these insights and strategies will help others create more robust disaster response plans for future disruptive events.

Goals

The panelists seek to create a robust, incisive dialogue around the topic of maintaining operations during a pandemic or other long-term disruptive event. The presentation will result in a resource describing useful practices regarding online tutoring, online center operations, online workshops and resources, and social media usage to mitigate the loss of face-to-face interactions and instruction.

Over the past two years' presentations, we learned that many attendees were interested in how to start and sustain a center; this year's presentation continues that discussion but does so in light of the current pandemic. This proposal thus responds to the audience's desire for a continued discussion of that topic.

Methodology

While very little research on business communication centers exists, several studies exist regarding university-wide communication centers and a comprehensive body of scholarship exists in the related field of writing center theory and pedagogy. A survey of studies into writing and communication centers' responses to exigencies will frame our understanding of our own emerging responses to COVID 19 in business communication centers (McKinney, 2005; Denton, 2017; Griffon, et al., 2006; Kinkead, et al., 2002; Simpson, et al., 2006; Grimm, 2008, Sharon, et al., 1998; Harris, 2000). Additionally, we will measure our experiences against several studies regarding students' willingness to pivot to online education during a pandemic's first wave and other disaster settings (Van, et al., 2010); likewise, we will also measure our general perceptions of student anxiety against prior studies of pandemics (Fox, 2004; Wong, Gau, Tam, 2010). We will also examine several historical analyses of universities' responses to prior pandemics (Jordan, 1930; Tomes, 2010) to reduce caseloads alongside our respective universities' responses.

This panel presentation will inform future practice by providing the groundwork for documentation and online resources that will aid center directors' responses to future disasters that disrupt campus routines. These resources will be housed on the Business Communication Centers SIG page.

Takeaways

Participants will learn how to navigate a pandemic or other disaster scenario with respect to business communication center operations. Additionally, participants will have a better understanding of the challenges certain academic and administrative units face during these types of crises. Participants will also gain a deeper appreciation for the many nimble, flexible strategies that colleagues adopted on such short notice, all of which guaranteed that - despite the circumstances - not only did our students develop confidence and efficacy as business communicators, but our center expansion plans also continued on course.

Collaborating with a Community Partner - Quality is No Accident!

Ann Marie Alexander
Grand Rapids Community College

Theme

This session focuses on collaboration and effective communication, both between college faculty and administrators, and between those faculty and administrators and a community partner, a large regional retailer. This collaboration has resulted in the implementation of a credit-bearing certificate offered to the retailer's staff on a cohort basis, with each cohort completing the 25-credit certificate in four to five semesters of accelerated coursework, while working full-time. Ongoing flexibility and adaptation have characterized this project from the beginning, and the program has continued to evolve during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Purpose

This poster session will describe the design and implementation of a cohort-based academic certificate program developed by a community college in collaboration with a large regional retailer. The retailer has a long history of valuing employee learning and development, providing in-house training as well as partially funding college courses for both full- and part-time employees. The retailer also frequently promotes employees from within the company, based on skills, knowledge, and performance. The development of the content was strategic; it needed to meet the retailer's skill and knowledge requirements for its staff, as well as the requirements of its trade association. In addition, the certificate was designed to encourage employees to continue their education, as certificate program courses aligned with existing associate degree and pre-transfer requirements. Finally, the program needed to be scheduled and delivered to meet the needs of the retailer's operation and staff. The first cohort began with intensive accelerated face-to-face courses, followed by accelerated online courses. With the advent of the pandemic, additional use of technology, changed assessments, and flexible deadlines were implemented to meet the needs of essential employees working all three shifts. By the time of this poster session, a second cohort will have begun, with academic and retail partners building on lessons learned during the first cohort.

Goals

This project has included both process and outcome goals, with both quantitative and qualitative measures. Process goals include employee enrollment, participation, and perceived satisfaction with the certificate program. Outcome goals, in most cases, are more long-term, in terms of course completion, certificate completion, skills/knowledge transfer on the job, completion of further post-secondary degrees, and promotion at work. Many of these measures are not yet available, but the poster will provide partial data for Cohorts 1 and 2.

Participant goals for this poster session include the following:

- Identify ways to maximize internal communication within a college or university to enhance external partnerships.
- Identify benefits and challenges of developing academic programs with community business partners.
- Identify potential pitfalls of working with community business partners, and ways to prevent or mitigate those pitfalls.

Methodology

Methodology is partially addressed in the goals section. The project is a longitudinal case study examining the effects of the certificate program on employee knowledge, skills, and job performance. It could also be described as action research, as curriculum and instruction are applied to the work setting, leading to professional development. At this point in the project, data are mainly descriptive.

Methods to be used in this poster session include dialogue and discussion. In addition to the poster, a short video of program developers and participants is also planned.

Outcomes/Takeaways

Participants in this session will discuss topics as addressed in the goals section. They will also have the opportunity to work with a handout (to be provided in paper and electronic form) to assess and plan for similar collaborative academic projects with community business partners.

Cross-Discipline Experiential Learning Approach to Teaching Business Communications Within a Live Client Scenario

Liane Czirjak; Sarah Mellen; Lori LaDuke
Suffolk University

Theme

Co-curricular experiential learning approach provides more thoughtful and relevant connections between core business course content and professional work standards.

Purpose

Many higher education disciplines are siloed and unable to maximize students' learning from one discipline to the other. This session will explain the rationale, design, and outcomes of how Suffolk University's Sawyer Business School's Business Communications curriculum has been successfully coordinated as an integrated experiential learning approach with the efforts of the foundational Marketing Research curriculum.

It is no secret that students are not always enthusiastic about learning business communications/business writing from theoretical frameworks. They relish the opportunity to dive into real life scenarios, but often the true connection to the professional world is out of reach. Also, with the high investment cost of a college education and a competitive job market, universities are tasked with providing curriculum that teaches real world skills and provides opportunities to work with corporate executives. Therefore, this innovative approach to teaching business writing that leverages experiential learning with a cross disciplined curriculum offers students valuable learning that is in fact a new type of on-the-job real work experience.

Experiential learning is "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 38). "Experiential learning theory stresses on the role of experience in constructing knowledge" (Kolb, & Kolb, 2005a, p. 2). "Knowledge can be constructed through assimilating lessons and feelings stem from experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41).

The Sawyer Business School has offered this curriculum in a traditional classroom setting every semester since September of 2017. The approach was quickly adapted to a hybrid as well as fully online format in late Spring and Summer 2020. Clients have included Sonos, Autism Research Institute, Mass General Hospital, Pandora, and EveryBody Fights. Over 20+ faculty have collaborated to support more than 2,000 students with this project approach.

The presenters are the business writing team who initially designed and have continued to manage, teach, and evolve the ongoing business writing program at Suffolk University.

Goals

The session provides an overview of how to launch and manage a deep experiential learning experience for business students using an immersive real audience centric focus to the business writing curriculum.

Will provide educators with details about how to incorporate a real time client into the traditional learning outcomes for a business communications course; how to ally two independent courses (Business Writing and Marketing/Marketing Research) into shared learning outcomes and syllabi; understand the unique direction and components of student assignments; understand the value of this approach for students and the business client – as well as the instructors – by reviewing course expectations vis-à-vis end of term student and client feedback.

Methodology

The session will begin with an overview of the experiential learning curriculum as it applies to the two partnered courses, Business Writing and Marketing Research. We will demonstrate how the two previously autonomous foundational courses have now been synchronized in several areas/with several shared assignments to best leverage facets of experiential learning.

Details will be offered on overall client project timing, uniquely created assignments, and the general management of the interface between individual and team assignments throughout a regular semester. Note: the teaching format works for both face-to-face and online teaching scenarios (full summer term of this linked curriculum was successfully piloted Summer 2020).

Feedback from students, clients, and instructors from other disciplines will also be shared.

Anticipating participant questions, challenges (both resolved as well as ongoing) with this unique partnered strategy for a business communications course will also be discussed.

Outcomes

Participants will gain an understanding of why it is beneficial to develop a partnered experiential learning course and may be encouraged to develop new learning opportunities at their own institutions. Participants will gain insight into how to manage this cross disciplined approach and will also have a portfolio of writing projects that have been specifically designed for this co-curricular approach.

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Innovative Instructional Methods, Teaching Focus

Earn Accreditation in SOCIAL STYLE® to Expand Students' Communication Skills: Writing, Presenting, Engaging, and Leading

Judy Tisdale
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

David C. Collins
TRACOM Group

Daisy L. Lovelace
Duke University

Jana M. Seijts
Western University

Here's your chance to become accredited in the SOCIAL STYLE® model, a communication skills program used by companies in over 100 countries around the world. This model is unique in comparison to other profiles typically taught in business communication courses because it focuses exclusively on observable communication patterns—not on personality traits or types. By achieving accreditation, you can integrate this communication profile into your undergraduate, graduate, or executive education courses to support student communication skills development in terms of writing, presenting, engaging, and leading.

You can leverage the SOCIAL STYLE® model to teach students or executives how to analyze an audience more efficiently and effectively in order to craft more outcomes-oriented written messages or presentations. Students also can draw on SOCIAL STYLE® to be nimbler in interviews, as well as think more strategically about how to lead sideways. Additionally, the model will help students and executives demonstrate confident versatility in today's multi-cultural, multi-national business environment.

In this experiential workshop, we'll provide ABC attendees with a deep dive into SOCIAL STYLE®, a deceptively simple, yet well-researched, communication style profile that gives students the abilities to:

- Heighten their emotional intelligence, and
- Become more agile and effective in influencing and communicating with others

Workshop participants will work through their own self-perception profile and actively engage in an in-depth learning experience about SOCIAL STYLE® content and how to leverage it when teaching in any

program. As well, participants will receive assignment samples, a book, a certificate of accreditation at the end of the workshop, and access to online resources from TRACOM, Inc.

Each of our presenters brings a different perspective on SOCIAL STYLE® in the business communication classroom, ensuring the session provides maximum value for ABC attendees:

- David Collins, President and CEO of the TRACOM® Group, will take participants through real-time accreditation in the SOCIAL STYLE Model®.
- Dr. Daisy Lovelace, Associate Professor of Management, at the McIntire School of Commerce (University of Virginia), will share experiences teaching SOCIAL STYLE® to UVA undergraduates, as well as to law school students at Duke University.
- Professor Jana Seijts, Lecturer in Management Communication at the Ivey Business School (Western University, Canada), will address strategies to leverage SOCIAL STYLE® in the undergraduate business communication classroom and in her consulting practice.
- Dr. Judy Jones Tisdale, Clinical Professor of Management Communication at the UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), will offer 17 years of experience teaching SOCIAL STYLE® as a leadership tool in MBA and executive education communication courses.

Experiential Learning Through a Business Communication Competition: Do You Have the C-Factor?

Maria Wolfe; Theomary Karamanis
Cornell University

This presentation describes the C-Factor competition, a recipient of the 2020 Gold Quill Award of Excellence in the category of Communication Training and Education. Cornell students from three business schools participated in this experiential learning activity testing their business communication skills. This competition can be replicated by other business communication programs to significantly enhance students' applied skills. In addition to describing our experience with this event, we will share the competition materials (promotional and marketing materials, description of its three rounds, and surveys to evaluate results), which should be of a significant practical value for any faculty interested in planning a similar activity for their students.

The C-Factor competition was an event to bring together students from three business programs. In 2016-2017 the Cornell SC Johnson College of Business (JCB) was formed through a merger of the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, the School of Hotel Administration, and the Johnson Graduate School of Management.

JCB became the largest business school in the US, with more than 3,000 students, 220 faculty, 40,000 alumni, 15 graduate programs, 2 undergraduate majors and 14 undergraduate concentrations. As any merger project, the College now faces the challenge of finding tangible opportunities to bring its three Schools together in a meaningful way. Thus, the C-Factor was proposed and implemented as a new initiative in the form of a cross-College student communication competition, with faculty from the three Schools developing and judging the competition, and students from the three programs competing in it and enhancing their skills in the process.

With experiential learning entrenched in our College's mission and practice, we created a competition as an extracurricular experiential learning activity. We set out to find the top three business students with the most advanced communication skills (the ones having the "Communication Factor" – hence the competition's name). Research shows positive results of student competitions on student learning, including increased student engagement and satisfaction, and increased learning of concepts and skills. Students learn more, but differently than in their regular classes. Competitions create a real-world experience, integrate theory and practice, and shift learning responsibility to the students (Cappelleri & Vitoroulis, 2013; Mitchell, Dori & Kuldell, 2011; Corner et al., 2006).

The C-Factor competition consisted of three challenges over two days: Auditions (Round 1), Boot Camp (Round 2), and Finals (Round 3). These challenges were designed after we obtained data from a pre-competition survey of registrants. The goal was to design the challenges according to the participants' level and experience (we wanted the competition to be tough and challenging, yet reasonable). Details of each challenge will be outlined in the presentation.

We decided to adopt the format of reality TV talent shows, such as the X Factor, America's Got Talent, etc., which are popular with our target audience (the X-Factor, for example, was ranking among the top 3 TV shows in the 18-49 age group during all its seasons of airing). To the best of our knowledge, there are no local, regional, or national student competitions using this type of format.

The nature of our target audience dictated this choice of an experiential learning activity over a seminar, online workshop, or other traditional academic format. Students' psychographic profile (cultural familiarity with a TV show format, competitiveness, expectations for immediate feedback, and preference for "fun" attributes) guided our choice of format. Traditional business school expectations usually dictate competitions to follow conservative case competition norms. Therefore, anything against those norms is perceived as exciting and intriguing to the student audience, and the competition results proved that the event was a success.

After piloting C-Factor in Spring 2018, we conducted post-competition surveys that showed it was an enjoyable and valuable out-of-class learning experience for our students, albeit challenging. In evaluating the competition results (beyond determining the winners), the participants surveys demonstrated higher than target scores on all the competition objectives:

1. to achieve high level satisfaction with the competition
2. to enhance participants' experience with students from other Schools
3. to enhance participants' business communication skills

Additionally, we achieved our goal to institutionalize the competition as a regular event for subsequent cohorts.

The C-Factor competition is a valuable example of experiential learning outside of classroom. Moreover, it can be easily replicated by faculty in other business programs when they set a goal of creating a new experience to enhance communication skills among business students, complementing their formal education in the long run. Finally, faculty who are looking for an innovative approach to bring together different cohorts of business students (e.g., undergraduates and MBA students) in a fun and meaningful activity will find that this competition provides a unique opportunity for such interaction. This project can be versatile in its adaptation to the specific needs and limitations of other business programs.

Face-to-Face Teaching Has a New Face: Online, Remote, Hybrid, and Hy-Flex

Paula Lentz
University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire

Janel Bloch
Northern Kentucky University

Peter W. Cardon
University of Southern California

Linda Cresap
Minot State University

Ashley Keller Nelson
Tulane University

Dirk Remley
Kent State University

This panel presentation continues the Academic Environment Committee's history of presenting annually at ABC on a topic relevant to the academic environment for teaching business communication.

Theme

The Academic Environment Committee wants to discuss the academic environment in this time of COVID and how we have adapted our teaching and adapted to our changing academic environments.

Background

In March 2020, the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID) threw higher education into crisis. With little time to plan and adjust to this significant pedagogy shift, faculty were forced to move classes into a Web-based environment, and many attempted to simulate their face-to-face classrooms in this setting. Our best-laid plans for the spring semester were upended, and we went into an emergency mode to deliver the remainder of our classes online, with varying levels of resources or training.

Some professors were successful with their course delivery, and others feel that they did the best they could under the circumstances. Some students were not happy with the final weeks of their classes, and in some cases, students stopped engaging altogether because of this new teaching model. At the same time, while the situation was far from ideal, many faculty and students did succeed and may be wondering whether to consider permanent online or hybrid course delivery even after students return to physical campus spaces.

While the spring semester is behind us, the coming academic year will be a watershed moment for higher education, its institutions, and its faculty as we all grapple with the effects of lost revenue, lost students, furloughs, staff reductions, a poor economy, and other pandemic-related impacts and figure out how we move forward. Because administrators have told their faculty to prepare and teach their summer classes online and to have a plan in case of an online fall semester, faculty have needed to shift their focus from basic online training and tools and incorporate course design and assessment of learning.

Purpose and Goal

The Academic Environment Committee is proposing a panel to address some of the most pressing issues we are facing as we think about a future of teaching in a COVID-19 culture. Our goal would be to use that information to fulfill the purpose of our committee—providing support for our members regarding the academic environment issues they face.

Members of our panel will work in teams to discuss the following four topics. Panel members will offer anecdotal evidence about practices, their advantages, and their disadvantages.

1. Adapting course delivery and assessment models (e.g., hy-flex, synchronous, asynchronous)
2. Meeting tenure, promotion, professional development, and accreditation requirements
3. Navigating schools' cost-cutting measures (e.g., furloughs, layoffs)
4. Examining how state governments' guidelines and restrictions affect what to do

We want to share the many lessons our committee members have learned from this emergency shift to rapid online learning and learn from our audience about their successes and challenges as well.

Outcomes

Based on the diversity of our committee (tenure-track/term faculty, institution type, institution size, geographic location, etc.), this panel will likely offer takeaways for all attendees. This approach would certainly showcase the committee's work and commitment to timely topics of interest to ABC membership.

In addition to offering attendees the opportunity to learn from their colleagues, we plan to use the panel as the starting point for additional research that will then be disseminated more widely among ABC's membership. Future work will include a survey to ABC members and non-members, a paper, and a follow-up presentation on the results at ABC 2021.

From the Classroom to the Boardroom: Developing Leaders to Do the Right Thing

Peggy R. Odom-Reed, SPHR
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Theme

The proposed topic, "From the Classroom to the Boardroom: Developing Leaders to Do the Right Thing" aligns with both the Innovative Instructional Methods and Social Responsibility, Civic Engagement, Sustainability, and Business Ethics tracks. As part of an upper-level undergraduate Persuasive Business Communication course and graduate-level Management Communication course, the author challenges students to address real and recent ethical issues in the hospitality industry. To promote experiential learning, students engage in role-play as the company executives, presenting at a Board of Directors meeting led by an industry executive who engages in role-play as the Chairman of the Board and collaborates with students who role-play as fellow board members.

Purpose

The session presentation will discuss a creative education-industry approach for business communication instructors to teach business ethics and develop students' persuasive communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. This pedagogical approach emphasizes learning and discovery through role-play in a business simulation.

Goals

By completing this session, participants will understand how to use and adapt this multi-component assignment in your business communication curriculum. It also will identify the necessary resources to facilitate your students' learning and performance. In particular, the session will focus on the following goals:

1. To use this assignment to teach students to communicate strategically and to develop persuasive oral and written arguments
2. To understand how this assignment emphasizes ethics education and aligns with the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) standards
3. To familiarize business communication instructors with the assignment design including the learning objectives, deliverables and rubrics, and assignment resources
4. To discuss the value and logistical challenges in creating a simulated board meeting and virtual feedback experience

Methodology

The author created and introduced the board meeting assignment during the AY19-20. Considering most universities transitioned from in-person to virtual instruction in spring 2020, the session will discuss the project design from its initial hybrid (FtF and virtual) format with undergraduate students in fall 2019 to a completely virtual Zoom experience with graduate students in spring 2020. Through implementation in both courses, the author has utilized this assignment with 19 teams consisting of 37 (45%) undergraduate students and 45 (55%) graduate students. Some key methodological differences between the two semesters are noted below:

- Hybrid vs. Completely Virtual Format: With the fall 2019 implementation, the author had industry executives who led the board meetings via Zoom while student presenters and board member participants were co-located in the same classroom. This hybrid approach allowed for a smooth transition to a completely virtual format in spring 2020.
- Three- to Four- vs. Five-Member Executive Teams: Based on smaller class sizes in the fall 2019 semester, students self-selected into ten undergraduate teams including seven four-member teams and three three-member teams. In contrast, students self-selected into nine graduate teams, with five members per team in spring 2020.
- Written vs. Virtual Feedback: For the initial launch in fall 2019, the author asked the industry executives to provide written constructive feedback to the teams. In spring 2020, the industry executives returned for the last day of class and offered virtual feedback to the teams.

Expected Takeaways/Outcomes

Participants will gain information on how they can use or adapt this assignment to develop students to address ethical issues and learn how to lead with integrity. In particular, the session will consider the importance of the education-industry project design and resources to facilitate student learning and minimize possible barriers. Drawing from experience in introducing the assignment in a hybrid environment in fall 2019 and transitioning to a completely virtual environment in spring 2020, the author will share valuable insight about key differences, opportunities, and challenges. Participants also will learn how they can complement students' learning experience by including a post-assignment virtual feedback component.

Innovative Instructional Methods, Teaching Focus

How Trained Coaches Plus Technology Tools Result in Better Public Speakers than Either One Alone

Caron L. Martinez; Sara Weinstock
American University

This proposal falls under adaptation (keeping up with communication trends for greater student preparedness) and technologies (probing the influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), voice recognition, and other innovations).

Experiential learning as developed by Carl Rogers addresses the learner at three levels: intellect, social skills, and feelings or intuitions. Technology can aid in developing intellect, but the development of social skills and feelings/intuition necessitates human interaction. Motschnig-Pitrik argues that computer-supported learning ("e-learning") works best in combination with peer-to-peer interaction. She writes that person-centered learning and effective teaching practices is expanded "by enriching it with elements of computer-supported learning ("e-learning"), resulting in a blended approach: person-centered e-learning (PCeL)" (Motschnig-Pitrik, 2005). At American University's Center for Business Communications, we took this approach to our sophomore Business Professionalism course and our seniors and graduate students presenting their consulting projects to clients. By requiring not only engagement with virtual tools to improve public speaking but follow-up appointments with peer consultants for practice and feedback that went beyond voice-related weakness, we saw higher scores and qualitatively better presenting skills.

In thinking about the acquisition of elements of public speaking - pitch, rate, elimination of fillers - as discrete skill sets, it was helpful to associate the speaking improvement process with the process of language acquisition. Apps like Duolingo can be a useful supplement when you are learning a language – but not a substitute for actual conversation. The technology can help you learn some words and basic sentence constructions, but it won't enable you to leap into a conversation in a new language. As with language acquisition, we discovered through our research that more improved Pitch Vantage scores were directly related to time on task - students who spent longer utilizing the platform earned higher improvement measures than those who spent less time on the platform. In addition, those students who then worked with peer consultants showed the greatest improvement of all.

We will share results of our exit survey, in which students self-reported their experience with PitchVantage, and engage participants in how to integrate that knowledge to develop a dual approach to public speaking improvement using both tech and human feedback.

In spring 2020, the business school deans tasked us with moving all of our presentation coaching for the spring semester to an online platform. Like many of our university colleagues, we chose Zoom for its functionality and easy interface. The ability to listen to presentations in a main room and then separate easily into a virtual "breakout room" meant that with two seasoned coaches, we could offer feedback on slide design, delivery, and content with teams as soon as they finished presenting. Added

opportunity for reflection was provided by Zoom's recording function, which creates a link in the cloud that students can access, review, and use for self-awareness that reinforced the speaking notes we gave them. We found substantial improvement with the combination of professor feedback in the main room, followed by tailored team coaching in the breakout room, and then viewing of the recording to enhance awareness of the feedback from all sources.

Takeaways include the following:

- Tech tools such as online platforms (Zoom) and voice-recognition coaching (PitchVantage) are most effective when used synergistically with trained peer consultants to amplify learning
- The self-reflection features in both PitchVantage and Zoom increase self-awareness of students' strengths and weaknesses and launches their own verification of the follow up coaching they receive
- Leveraging a social aspect through human-to-human coaching increases outcomes by focusing on speaking issues the tech may not address (i.e., filler words or accent remediation).

Keeping it Short and Sweet: Teaching the 'Short Message' Writing Format in a Business Communication Classroom

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Baylor University

Seth Frei
Texas State University

Theme

As business communication instructors, it is important that we continually adapt our teaching strategies to the needs of our students. These needs are driven by the changes in the business world and the forms of communication predominantly used in the workplace. This innovative instructional method is a response to the increased use of short-format messaging used in the workplace as a primary form of communication.

Purpose

Teamwork is a continuously evolving communicative process, most recently experiencing a transition to the virtual world as employers urge collaboration between cross-functional organizational members who may live on the other side of the globe from one another. Along with this shift in teamwork processes is a transformation in communication styles designed meet the up-to-the moment needs of today's professionals. This leads to collaboration software where short and frequent messages are preferred over those that are long and wordy, creating faster progress and more satisfying results for professionals (Mehandru, 2019).

Team messaging applications like Slack and Google Hangouts as well as team productivity and workflow management software such as Trello and Asana have revolutionized how work gets done. These workspaces help "manage productivity and improve team efficiency" (Johnson, 2018, para. 3). These platforms allow team members to post announcements and connect other digital tools all in one space. To keep everything organized and all team members on the same page, these workflow spaces rely on frequent, short messages between team members. Team collaboration software reduces time spent on email and meetings (Slack, 2016).

To keep up with the pace of business advancements and communication needs, it is imperative that students learn to communicate effectively in the forms they anticipate using in the workforce. With this in mind, this class activity for business communication students helps them to practice short-form, professional messaging. In addition to learning the form and function of short messages, students learn media richness theory and the implications of effective messages in various forms. Media richness theory suggests that "rich" communication mediums, such as face-to-face, have more useful features

than "lean" media, such as simple text messages (Daft & Lengel, 1984). With the increase in short-format messaging in the workplace, this activity uses media richness theory as a basis for decisions on the richness of information to include in these messages.

Goals

Learning Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate and critically evaluate professionalism in short written communication.

Learning Outcome 2: Students will learn the needs of various channels for written communication.

Learning Outcome 3: Students will be able to explain media richness theory and its relation to the short-format messages.

Methodology

This activity has four parts and can be completed within a 40-50 minute class session. Each part builds on the previous part, so it is helpful not to skip parts of the activity, but rather to complete them all in sequence.

Part 1: Split the class into teams of three-four students. Have them read the following scenario, and after they are done, ask them to write a chat message chain showing POOR communication and professionalism.

Scenario: Your team has a big presentation tomorrow, but you have everything prepared and everyone has gone home for the evening. At 7p.m., your supervisor calls you to say that the client has made some last-minute requests. Text one of your teammates to tell her about the changes and discuss how to get the work done. Note: This text chain should be an example of POOR or ineffective communication.

Part 2: Have a class discussion where a selection of the teams talks about their chat message chain. In this discussion, as the instructor, you can go over the reasons this is a poorly executed message (time, emotion, length, rapidity/number of messages, grammar, tone, emojis, images).

Part 3: Have the teams take the same scenario as they used before and instead of a poor communication message, now have them write an EFFECTIVE chain. After they write the message, have each team present the chat message thread to the class.

Student example of what you may receive (Do not share this with students):

> Boss just called. Client wants more graphs for tomorrow's deck. Are you available right now to work on this together? [7:03 p.m.]
> I'm out at dinner but will be home by 9. [7:05 p.m.]
> I can make something real quick then or help insert into the slides. Want me to loop in Sam or will you? [7:06 p.m.]
> Thx for quick reply. Sam is going to make one graph and I'll get yours after you get home. [7:10 p.m.]
> Do you think we should use Excel or ??? [7:11 p.m.]
> Let's use Canva to make it pop 🎉. Send me anything you have pls. [7:15 p.m.]

I'll hop onto the workflow as soon as I'm home. [7:15 p.m.]
No worries. Enjoy your dinner. [7:17 p.m.]

Part 4: As a class, discuss media richness theory. This theory demonstrates that there are certain media that might be more or less appropriate for a given scenario because each media only allows a certain amount of "richness" of information (Daft & Lengel, 1984). Below are a few questions to prompt this discussion:

1. Where do you think chat messages fall on the media richness scale?
2. Do you think chat messages are an appropriate way to communicate in the workplace?
3. If chat-style messages are your only option, how can you ensure they convey your message accurately?
4. How can you enhance the richness of messages even within constraints of a particular program?

Part 5: Have a class discussion to create a list of 'best practices' for short-messages including text messages and online chats in the workplace.

Outcomes

Many students may be learning about these professional team collaboration software programs for the first time but will likely already be familiar with various media for team communication used for past group projects. While students have perhaps interacted in short message formats, most will not have considered the heuristics of practical decision-making and intentional efforts related to the short-message format. After learning about collaborative workflow processes, short-format messages, pitfalls, and best-practices, along with media richness theory, students will be more prepared for the evolving professional world.

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Innovative Instructional Methods, Teaching Focus

Learning In and Out of the Human Fishbowl

Theresa Wernimont; Jenny Morse
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This workshop assimilates techniques associated with transparent design (Winkelmes, Tapp, & Boye, 2019) and flipped classrooms (Gomez, 2018) to create a high-impact learning experience. High-impact practices facilitate deep learning by promoting student engagement (Kuh, 2008), and are often associated with seminars, internships, capstone projects, or service-learning that prepare students for the workplace. High-impact practices can also be integrated through collaborative assignments and writing-intensive courses.

Lack of resources and time, however, often discourage instructors from creating such experiences for students. In this workshop, attendees will explore ways to easily design activities and assignments that foster student engagement and enhance their performance while relying on peer-to-peer observation and feedback to ease grading and oversight. Attendees will be immersed in a process similar to what their students could experience. Instructors could adapt the process to a variety of assignments with different learning objectives and course delivery modalities such as face-to-face classrooms, hybrid models, or online.

The primary purpose of the multi-part experience is to demonstrate how students can practice collaboration and gain an understanding of the skills necessary to perform more effectively in teams during future courses and their careers. Students might practice conducting efficient meetings, recognize communication styles, strengthen interpersonal communication skills, and engage in active listening behaviors. Students could collect information through observation, synthesize concepts to develop informed views, analyze an audience and compose a well-organized, clear, courteous, and concise message with content appropriately adapted to offer advice to that audience.

Pedagogically sound instructional strategies proven to increase student learning outcomes, especially for traditionally underserved populations, are applied throughout the students' experience progressing through a multi-phase project. Instruction and assessment rely on transparent design principles and the integration of formative assessment techniques building to summative assessments. Students could engage through discussions, group writing assignments, peer reviews, and reflection.

Workshop attendees will be asked to read a couple of brief articles before the workshop. Then they will be split into small groups to participate in abbreviated versions of exercises with content appropriately modified for an instructor audience. The process is what could be used to design experiences to encourage students to prepare for, engage in, and reflect upon the learning experiences created during class sessions to meet a variety of objectives. Upon completion of the activities, participants will better understand how to offer and prepare students to collaborate in peer-to-peer learning opportunities and assess the process and deliverables. Examples of workshop documents for guided peer observations or reviews and rubrics will be provided.

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Meet Me in the Middle: Using Mid-Term Evaluations for Instructor and Student Success

Abby Koenig
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For better or worse, student evaluations have become a standard in higher education (Seldin, 1984; Doyle, 1975; Centra, 1993). The validity and usefulness of such evaluations, though, has come under much scrutiny of late. Even student evaluations that are tested for validity and reliability still prove unfair to female instructors and instructors of color (Esarey & Valdez, 2020). Despite an endless debate over the fairness of such evaluations, they are often used to assess instructors' teaching abilities, their potential for contract renewals, and tenure, among other professional advancements. Last year, the American Sociological Association and 17 other professional organizations, including the American Historical Association, urged universities and colleges to reconsider these practices.

In addition to the potential for bias, these evaluations tend to be a pre-determined set of questions, often solely based on learning objectives that the students may or may not be aware of. Instructors are then asked to take, predominantly, quantified results and incorporate them into future classes with new student dynamics and unique challenges. Also, there is still little convincing evidence that instructors change their teaching style based on the results of these evaluations alone (Centra, 1973). As one semester closes and another begins, last semester's evaluations may feel like just that: last semester.

However, mid-semester evaluations, while not the norm, may offer instructors more insightful and actionable feedback, while giving students an opportunity act as change agents in their own education. Soliciting mid-semester student feedback can also encourage more accountability by the students as they reflect upon the course (Wickramasinghe & Timpson, 2006), resulting in higher end-of-term evaluations for faculty. Mid-semester evaluations can potentially be incorporated immediately, improving the course for instructor and students.

In this presentation, attendees will learn the value of incorporating mid-semester student evaluations into their business and professional communication courses, what types of questions spark insightful responses from students, and how to then analyze the evaluations constructively. Further, attendees will learn how to then report back to the students on the results of the evaluations to empower students to changes their own learning styles. This step—reporting the results—is key to allowing students to feel invested in the process and has been seen to cause higher satisfaction in the course overall. Finally, this presentation will detail a classroom example in which the presenter conducted mid-semester evaluations and then used the results of the survey as a method for teaching data analysis and data storytelling. Students in the class were not only given an opportunity to improve their own coursework, but they were also given a unique opportunity to work with their own feedback, and that of their peers, ethically and to report back on the results.

Attendees will walk away from this session with (1) a set of tested mid-term evaluation questions, (2) timeframes and available tools for administering mid-term evaluations, (3) an assignment example to use the collected data, (4) and a sample student presentation in which the data was analyzed and meaningfully presented.

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My Favorite Assignment I-IV

D. Joel Whalen
DePaul University

Howard Leland Smith
University of Tennessee at Martin
Intergenerational Communication

Christina Iluzada
Baylor University
Assigning a Networking Plan

Matari Jones Gunter
Texas State University
BizCom Bizfeed (Show Us What You Learned)

Xiaoli Li
University of Dayton
Choose a Technology to Use for Team Communication and Collaboration

Amy Newman
Cornell University
Creating a Personal Leadership Vision

Bruce Kingma
Syracuse University
Entrepreneurship and Data Visualization

Emily Goenner
St. Cloud State University
Evaluating LinkedIn Profiles

Susanna Shelton Clason
University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College
From Hard Copy to Online: Instructional Handout

Kathryn Anne Canas; Georgi Rausch
University of Utah
From Z to X and Beyond: How Understanding the Five Generations in Today's Workplace Impacts Communication Strategy

Trent Deckard
Indiana University
Communication Square Dancing: Developing a Pitch

Ruby K. Nancy
University of Minnesota Duluth
Team Report to Presentation

Danny Rubin
Rubin Education
How to Share Your COVID-19 Story of Resilience

Barbara Davis
University of Memphis
It's in The News

Elena V. Chudnovskaya
Texas Tech University
Business Consultants Battle Royal!

Michelle Migdal
Florida Atlantic University
Hot Topics: Introduction to Persuasion

Alima Dostiyarova
Declaration of Your Personal Mission: Persuasive Message Video Recording

Emil Towner
St. Cloud State University
Interactive and Artificial Intelligence Video Presentation Practice in Business Communication

Theresa Wernimont
Colorado State University
Raising the Stakes: Shifting Peer Review from Formative to Summative Assessment

Michael Meredith
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Using Standalone Slides for Student Self-Critique

Heidi E. Huntington
West Texas A&M University
Implementing Team-Based Learning in the Business Communication Classroom

Aaron Thomas Phillips
University of Utah
Harnessing Cognitive Lightning to Create on-the-fly Green Marketing

Laura Lambdin
University of South Carolina
Multicultural Competence Review

Jessie Lynn Richards
University of Utah
Strategizing Werewolves

Amber Messersmith
University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Helping the Reader and Writer with an Author's Note

Gina Lyn Genova, Esq.
University of California, Santa Barbara
One Minute Mini-Speeches

Janet Seggern
Lehigh Carbon Community College
Persuasive Letter Writing

Lorelei Amanda Ortiz
St. Edward's University
Fortune 500 Informative Presentation Assignment

Sheila B. Lalwani
Bentley University
Social Media Literacy: A Primer for Business Communicators

Ryan P. Fuller
California State University, Sacramento
Communicating for Impact

Ana Lucia Magalhaes
State of Sao Paulo Technological College
Word Classes: Still Worth a Look

Suwichit Chaidaroon
National University of Singapore
Students' Case Writing: A Wiki Approach

Bethany Dailey Tisdale
University of South Carolina
Trends in Corporate Culture Individual and Team Research

Susan Luck
Pfeiffer University
Take Someone to Lunch

Sarah Clements
University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Using Infographics to Teach Professional Skills

Laura Barrett
University of Kansas
Writing for the Business School Blog: Telling an Engaging Story to a Diverse Audience

Christina J. Moore
Texas State University
The Triple Play for Improving Team Performance

Yingqin Liu
Cameron University
Making Individual Commitment Matters in a Group Research Project

Marie-Louise Brunner; Stefan Diemer
Trier University of Applied Sciences, Institute for International and Digital Communication
Let the Cat Out of the Bag! - Raising Intercultural Awareness with Hedgehog, Giraffe and Co.

Christopher McKenna
Stephen F. Austin State University
Persuasive Messaging via Italian Opera, Horror Novelists, Pop Stars, and the Rainbow Fruit Company

Andrew Hunt
Ohio University
Real News, Fake News

Raihan Jamil
Zayed University
Turning the Table: A Classroom Focused Tool to Teaching Crisis Communication and Strategies for Business Students

Robyn Albers
Zayed University
What Do I Want and Who's Going to Give it to Me?

Reid McLain
Hankuk University of Foreign Studies
Remote Interview Activity Using Flipgrid

Sandra Dean
Jacksonville University
Resume and Cover Letter Speed Dating

Payal Mehra
Indian Institute of Management Lucknow
CEOs And Apologies: Lessons in Crisis Communication

Joshua Lenart
University of Utah
So, You're Assigning a Literature Review: A Moves-Step Framework for Helping Students Engage More Meaningfully with Literature

Peter W. Cardon
University of Southern California
Should Organizations Engage in Global Diplomacy? The Case of the NBA and China

Junhua Wang
University of Minnesota
Teaching Business Correspondence with Simulations

Jenny Morse
Colorado State University
Reflection Comments: Students Review Feedback, Assess Their Own Performance, and Plan for the Future

Ryan Wold
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
What's the Deal with Dishes?

Leslie Ramos Salazar
West Texas A&M University
Teaching Healthcare Business Communication with Edublogs

Andy Spackman
Brigham Young University
Don't Just Take TED's Word for It

Mark Evans
Texas State University
Applying Improv Comedy Techniques to Teaching Business Communication

Tara Moore
Elizabethtown College
Finding Crisis Communication in My Fandom: A Researched Report and Oral Presentation

James Ward
Fort Hays State University
Icebreaker- Find Someone Who Lives in a Town with a Population of Less than 1000 and is the Barbed Wire Capital of the World

Scott Springer
Brigham Young University - Hawaii
Start-of-the-Semester Video Discussion Board

Ann Springer
Brigham Young University - Hawaii
"Personal Website Creation Makes for A Perfect Final Exam"

Courtney Hawk
University of South Florida / Hawk L&D Innovations
Communication Potluck

Linda R. Macdonald
Dalhousie University
The Cookie Report: Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Marion Philadelphia
University of Southern California
Overcome Cultural Barriers and Foster an Inclusive and Productive Team Work Process

Aiste Ptakauske
The Ethnic Kitchen Consulting
The Virtual Business Professional Project: A Means of Honing Business Students' Virtual and Cross-cultural Communication Skills

Alisa Agozzino
Ohio Northern University
Under the Lights and the Pressure: On-Camera Crisis

ABC's My Favorite Assignment's (MFA) unique format makes it a member favorite. Here's how it works: Presenters have only 3-minutes to share one of their favorite assignments before the timekeeper rings a bell signaling time's-up. Then, an MFA tradition happens, the audience shows their appreciation by giving the speaker Thunderous Applause. The sessions are fast, high energy, and attendees get ideas they can take back to their classroom.

MFAs have been featured in the Business and Professional Communication Quarterly since 2007. As a bonus members can download teaching materials from the ABC website—lecture slides, assignment instructions, grading rubrics, video links, and sample student work—so they can easily bring their favorite assignments from the conference into their classrooms.

One of the treasured benefits of ABC membership is to share ideas with fellow business communication experts and network. ABC's Teaching Committee has sponsored the popular My Favorite Assignment (MFA) sessions since 2006.

Nobody Cares About You: Teaching Students How to Turn Job Interviews into Intelligent Conversations

Andy Spackman
Brigham Young University

Finding a job to apply for is a lot easier than actually getting a job. Sites like Indeed.com make the search easy, and with LinkedIn recruiters can find you. Books like Steve Dalton's *The 2-Hour Job Search* show how quickly this can all happen. But once our students are sitting across from someone in an interview, how can they stand out as a candidate?

It may seem like the purpose of a job interview is to talk about yourself: your skills, education, and experiences. But students need to remember: "Nobody cares about you." Their purpose in an interview isn't to prove how awesome they are. Their purpose is to show how their awesomeness aligns with that organization's needs.

To flip an interview, to make it a "you" conversation instead of a "me" conversation, requires preparation. First, students should consider 6 questions about the organization they're applying with and its environment:

1. What or who is it?
   Who are the people, where is it located, and what is its history, culture, and brand?
2. What does it do?
   What is the core business or value proposition?
3. Who does it do it with?
   Who are the customers, suppliers, and competitors?
4. How well does it do it?
   What is the competitive, financial, and strategic outlook?
5. What's happening to it?
   Consider strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Also consider other factors or models, like PESTLE, Porter's Five Forces, disruptive innovations, etc.
6. What's your role?
   How do the previous five questions affect the job you're applying for?

Second, to research these questions students should take 3 steps:

1. Do the obvious.
   Explore the organization's website and social media. Google them.
2. Go beyond the obvious.
   Anyone can google a company. Differentiate yourself by digging deeper using your library's business and news databases.
3. Talk to people.

Use and expand your network. Learn from people in the organization and industry.

Finally, 1 reminder:

You don't actually need to know the answers!

The point isn't to show off how much homework you've done. The point is to be able to have an intelligent conversation, and sometimes this is more about uncovering questions than finding answers.

Interviews are not tests; they're conversations. By preparing for and engaging in intelligent conversations with recruiters, students can demonstrate their passion and differentiate themselves as candidates. By turning the interview into an audience-centric conversation, they can move recruiters to see them as someone who is already involved in the industry, rather than just another student who needs a job.

This presentation will outline a framework for teaching students this strategy and show them how to connect with resources available through their university library that will help them employ it. It will also describe a theoretical basis for the strategy which can be found in interdependence theory and the psychology of impression management (Barrick, Shaffer, & DeGrassi, 2009).

Studies of impression management typically show self-promotion tactics to be more productive that other-focused tactics, such as ingratiation, other enhancement, or opinion conformity (Proost, Schreurs, De Witte, & Derous, 2010; Peck & Levashina, 2017). However, some studies show ingratiation produces a greater positive effect on perceived fit and hiring recommendations than does a "me"-focused strategy like self-promotion (Higgins & Judge, 2004). In addition, interviewers value transparency, and manipulation is counterproductive when perceived (Roulin, Bangerter, & Levashina, 2014; Stern & Westphal, 2010).

The audience-centric interview strategy discussed in this presentation seeks to avoid these pitfalls by pursuing self-promotion from within an other-focused frame, resulting in positive affect and liking from reciprocity and similarity attraction (Varma, Toh, & Pichler, 2005).

Preparing Students for the Workforce: Do They Feel Prepared?

Carol S. Wright; Jamie Keith Humphries
Stephen F. Austin State University

A student's college career is fraught with tests, writing assignments, and presentations. Each of these experiences results in an assessment of how well a concept has been learned. Hopefully, the student has gained sufficient knowledge, retained it, and applied it in a business setting. However, these activities do not necessarily mean that the student is ready to enter the workforce." Students might have the knowledge, but are they prepared to enter the "real world?"

Some would argue that students are not ready for the work force because they don't have the work experience. A study by Pew Research found the typical college student (under age 21) are less likely to have worked for pay than any previous generation of students. In fact, only 35% of 16-19-year-olds worked during the summer months, and only 19% of 15-17 year old had worked at all in the past year (Busteed, 2019).

Most universities offer career guidance to help with the transition to the workforce, but a 2017 Strada-Gallup polls shows that only 60% of all students have used resources from their college's career services offices, and only 35% of seniors report that they have never used them.

Gallup, Inc. (2018) reports, "Interestingly, student who are likely closest to transitioning into the workforce – juniors and seniors – are no more confident than first-year student and sophomores that their education is equipping them for the workforce" (p. 9).

Purpose

The purpose of this exploratory study is to determine if students taking an online professional development course feel prepared to begin their job search.

Methodology

This study assesses college student perceptions of their preparedness to begin looking for a job upon graduation. Using a convenience sample of students enrolled in two online sections of a professional development course in Fall 2019 and Spring 2020, responses from a reflection assignment are introduced. Combined enrollment in the two courses was 62, and 54 students completed the assignment (completion rate of 87%).

The course used for this study is a required class for the General Business Major and the content is divided into three areas:

- Career Preparation Assignments – resume draft, instructor critique, career services critique,

group discussion on resumes, application letter, elevator speech, mock interview with career services, LinkedIn profile, resume revision
- Personality Types and Self-Awareness Reflection Assignments – identify self and others in work situations
- Emotional Intelligence – reading and application of current business topics

At the time of the semester, only the first two divisions were completed, so student responses did not include specific issues with emotional intelligence. The course can be considered writing intensive and does reinforce proper business communication. At the conclusion of the two sections, students were asked to complete a written reflection on their career search to date.

Findings

Results from the students' written reflection were compiled and reported here. First, students were asked if they had ever created a resume and application letter for a professional position. Of those who responded, 38 (71.7%) responded positively and 15 (28.3%) responded negatively. One student did not answer the first question. Of those who had completed these documents, 18 (47.3%) believed their documents were effective. Most believed this because they had been awarded the job.

Students were also asked which assignments were the most helpful for their career search. Multiple responses were allowed, so students were able to choose more than one assignment.

Student Responses

Most Helpful Assignments

Resume critique by Career Services - 33.3%
LinkedIn profile - 25.9%
Resume - 18.5%
Mock interview with Career Services - 16.7%
Personality tests - 13.0%
Application letter - 9.3%
No response - 7.4%
Activities with Career Services - 5.6%
Elevator speech - 1.9%

Students also provided open-ended responses to justify why they found the assignments useful. Students were also asked to identify areas where personal improvement was needed. These responses varied widely.

Summary and Conclusions

The Professional Development course, offered as a capstone-style course for general business majors, is deemed beneficial by students. Most students indicated they needed the additional focus of fine-tuning their resumes before entering the job market. Having multiple parties provide input helped to strengthen their end product. Many students also found that creating a professional social media presence using LinkedIn was also beneficial.

Although most students understood the importance of each of the career preparation assignments used in the class, they had not successfully completed these before. Because the class is offered as an online class and many of the students are non-traditional, the concepts introduced in the class helped to update skills for a more technologically-based job search. The extra practice helped to build students' self-efficacy as they approach graduation.

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Innovative Instructional Methods, Teaching Focus

Preparing Students to Provide and Receive Meaningful Feedback in a Collaborative and Inclusive Learning Environment

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University of Arizona

Theme, Purpose, and Goals

As peer coaching and 360-degree evaluation methods become more prevalent in the workplace, students with the skills to both provide and receive constructive coaching will have a distinct advantage for ongoing professional growth (Wiles, 2018). This research will assist educators in preparing their students to provide meaningful peer feedback. The lion's share of research on this topic focuses on undergraduate students and written work (Nilson, 2003; Simonsmeier, Peiffer, Flaig, & Schneider, 2020). Our research aims to give instructors tools to develop effective processes that create inclusive and collaborative learning environments in which students on respective undergraduate and graduate levels can enrich their writing and oral deliverables and enhance opportunities for professional development.

Reciprocal feedback promotes active learning. Having students conduct critiques actively engages them in a discussion about their own and others' work (Inman, 2015). Such exercises encourage them to share responsibility for their learning and improvement. Peer reviews can create a healthy level competition and encourage students to work harder in creating more polished deliverables (Maeda, 2009; Shaw, 2015). When students see both strong and weak assignment examples, they also have an opportunity for self-evaluation. Critiques can help build a sense of shared purpose, generate positive interactions between students, and foster trust among members of the class.

To model effective coaching, instructors often benefit from integrating multiple channels of feedback from other instructors, industry professionals, and former students (Marcel, 2017). By providing a supportive, feedback-rich environment, referred to by Gratton and Erickson (2007) as a gift culture, instructors can build meaningful coaching into the fabric of a class dynamic.

Methodology

Through a discussion of relevant research, we explore factors that influence perceptions around giving and receiving feedback such as culturally-bound communication norms, gender identities, psychological safety, and self-presentation styles (Inman, 2015; Mayo, Kakarika, Pastor, & Brutus, 2012). Taking these elements into account, strategies for promoting honest, productive dialogue are proposed. Presenters will share examples of formal and informal exercises designed to leverage peer coaching activities as a means of assessment and student skill development. These feedback-targeted assignments vary across dimensions of size, messaging style, and channel but all seek to inspire students' openness to coaching and communication competence in delivering constructive messages. Ultimately, these exercises encourage growth mindset, accountability, mutual support, and resilience (Miller & Slocombe, 2012).

Feedback-Rich Environment

To better promote the gift culture in our undergraduate and graduate courses, we use a combination of feedback from peers, teaching assistants and preceptors, instructor, executive and alumni guests, as well as student self-reflection. Receiving feedback from multiple channels provides various perspectives from which students may learn.

We also employ a combination of assignments to weave the feedback-rich environment throughout the course. Our formal feedback mechanisms include team 360 evaluations, peer coaching, and written messages. Students evaluate themselves and their teammates multiple times throughout the semester on their teamwork skills. Each student is assigned a peer coach who helps them process feedback and holds them accountable for creating and implementing action items for improvement. In addition, students write a formal message to one another to assist each other in enhancing their professional credibility.

Informal feedback is delivered to students through formative class discussions around writing assignments and presentations, pulse surveys, and people's choice awards. We use student writing samples and impromptu presentations to guide the class on overall course concepts. Pulse surveys measure understanding and provide the instructor with feedback on how students are learning. We also use people's choice awards to add an element of competition and celebration into our feedback methods.

Outcome

With this research in mind, educators can better prepare their students to provide meaningful feedback that will enable every student to embrace peer coaching in their learning journey. This information will enhance student learning and create a classroom culture of inclusivity and collaboration.

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Taking the Express Lane: Offering Effective Business Communication Mini-Courses

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Our most effective business communication courses replicate the concepts and skills students will encounter in the workplace. Long known as one of the most rigorous courses in the College of Business curriculum, a successful business communication class will offer students a wide range of critical thinking, rhetorical, and applied techniques. As instructors of these classes, we see proficiency developed in these techniques over a period of time, as students practice concepts across a variety of exercises, assignments, and collaborative workshops.

Although often resisted for its perceived inability to allow in-depth engagement with learning concepts, accelerated learning is increasing in effectiveness and popularity (Choe at al., 2019; Vlachopolous, 2018; Kucsera & Zimmaro, 2010; Anastasi, 2007). Shorter terms are desired both for the perceived flexibility they offer to students (Hall, 2019) and the revenue-generating possibilities they present to higher education institutions (Lapovsky, 2018). These positive perceptions correlate to measurable outcomes: students enrolled in accelerated business courses often show better academic outcomes in 8-week classes as compared to the same classes delivered in the traditional, 15-week format (Thornton, Demps, & Jadav, 2017). These outcomes generally persist whether course delivery is online, hybrid, or traditional format (Ferguson & DeFelice, 2019; Harwood, McDonald, Butler, Drago, & Schlumpf, 2018).

As both institutional and student perceptions align regarding the desirability of accelerated courses, and the research indicates that positive perceptions exist regardless of the method of accelerated course delivery, instructors are challenged to offer rich and responsive business communication classes in the accelerated format. This presentation offers suggestions for maximizing student engagement, instructor-student contact hours, and positive academic outcomes.

In our experience and research, we have discovered that using a multichannel approach to deliver course content and provide feedback is key to student engagement, especially in the accelerated format. In addition to an LMS, instructors employ email, web, and microblogging and social networking mobile applications, and so leverage students' perceived inclination to multitask, whether in the face-to-face classroom, hybrid, or online environment.

The internet is rich in instructional video materials, which can be easily incorporated into learning modules; however, augmenting these publicly accessible videos and voiceovers with videos and voiceovers tailored to individual course assignments and exercises more deeply engages students in the material. Students are less likely to disconnect if their own instructor is talking to them on their laptops or smartphones.

Of course, bespoke video and voiceover presentations may take more preparation time. But the gains in engagement and positive academic outcomes can be worth the investment in time. Three elements to consider when designing one's own instructional videos and voiceovers: cognitive load (videos/voiceovers are brief—two short videos are preferable to one longer video, sound, lighting, background noise, etc. are appropriate); interactivity (guiding questions, scaffolding); and signaling (onscreen text, icons/symbols, emphasis).

Another strategic component for student engagement and positive academic outcomes is group and collaborative learning through extensive use of threaded discussions, peer revision, student-to-student feedback, and group presentations. None of these discussion assignments need be extensive or overly complex; multiple low-stakes discussion assignments keep students focused and increase proficiency within the accelerated timeframe.

Feedback and opportunities to respond (OTR) can clarify, amplify, and underscore key takeaways. A shorter semester may, at first blush, appear to make that goal more challenging. However, providing a greater percentage of feedback through multiple channels (written comments, recorded video and voiceover comments, email, Zoom, WebEx, etc.), we are able to maintain or even increase the number of instructor-student contact hours in the accelerated learning environment. Offering feedback-on-feedback helps "close the circle" and reinforce concepts and skills. Combined, these suggestions maximize student engagement, instructor-student contact hours, and positive academic outcomes in the accelerated business communications course format.

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Innovative Instructional Methods, Teaching Focus

Teaching Students to Analyze Strategic Communication Campaigns:
A Wiki Approach

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A strategic communication campaigns course could achieve one of its learning objectives by allowing students to see the successes and failures from past initiatives before students actually develop their own campaigns. Students' collaborative learning when critiquing past campaigns constructively can also help improve their insights into campaigns' development and message formulation. Such collaborative learning can be facilitated with web 2.0 technology known as wikis, or "collaborative editing tools supporting the creation of cohesive artifacts authored by many individuals (Ioannou, Brown, & Artino, 2015, p. 36)." Wikis have been used as a constructivist teaching strategy for students to conduct brainstorming, collaborative writing, and creating shared knowledge base or references to name a few (Hsu, 2007).

Wikis have been widely documented as an effective instructional tool to enhance students' collaboration (Alghasab, Hardman, & Handley, 2019) even beyond the online discussion forums (Ioannou, Brown, & Artino, 2015) as the platform allows for peer interaction and sharing of knowledge among students (Augar, Raitman, & Zhou, 2006; Boulos, Maramba, & Wheeler, 2006) resulting in learning assignment being highly motivating for students to complete (Wheeler, Yeomans, & Wheeler, 2008). Unlike traditional class papers, Wikis allow students to practice writing in its social contexts as the immediate audiences, their peers, and the ultimate audience, the readers of final artifacts are present (Lundin, 2008). Most importantly, wikis have been used extensively in corporations and large organizations as a proven effective knowledge management tool (Standing & Kiniti, 2011), hence the collaborative communication on this web 2.0 platform is an essential skill for students of strategic and organizational communication (Wagner & Schroeder, 2010).

In this paper, an online collaborative wiki assignment will be discussed as an example of students working together to research and analyze strategic communication campaigns in Southeast Asia using such relevant theoretical frameworks as social marketing, diffusion of innovation, and entertainment education, etc. Students in a large metropolitan university in Thailand were asked to write their wiki pages to present their analyses to the whole class entirely online. Then students took turn to critique each other's campaign analyses. The instructor's intervention to enhance students' collaborations (Cho & Lim, 2017) and to help minimize students' reluctance to edit each other (Wheeler, & Wheeler, 2009) will also be outlined.

After the completion of this assignment, an online survey was conducted, and sixty students responded to the questions voluntarily. Findings suggested that this wiki approach to strategic communication campaign analysis offered great potential for students to learn collaboratively online. Students reported higher motivation to learn from each other once they knew that their work would be shown as a Wiki page. In addition, a correlation between students' learning styles and the learning outcomes from this

activity was analyzed. With the great pressure to conduct more online teaching, the empirical evidence on students' learning in this study has highlighted a great potential of using this wiki collaborative assignment as an active online learning tool for teaching strategic communication virtually.

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Team Writing and the Triple Bottom Line: A Collaboration with the Forest Service for Enhancing Workplace Preparedness

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In almost every business or technical field, all major academic and professional milestones (senior theses, conference papers, journal articles, grant proposals, dissertations, etc.) are based on one's ability to communicate effectively in writing. And indeed, as Clokie and Fourie (2016) and numerous others have argued, employers are increasingly interested in hiring graduates with strong communication skills and significant teamworking and team-writing experiences (Brewer, Grady, & Watson, 2017; Chakraborty, 2009; Chase et al., 2020; Gray, 2010; Jackson, 2013; Remedios, 2012; and Wesner, Smith, & Austin, 2018). In an effort to provide students with more robust team-writing and organizational communication instruction, this research presentation chronicles an innovative pedagogical method for coordinating a multi-participant, research study in an upper division professional communication course.

Purpose

Centered around a collaborative partnerships with governmental and nongovernmental organizations, students enrolled in this course work collectively to write a technical report, which is comprised of various sections including: fee schedules, ROI analysis, a review of potential grant funding organizations, stakeholder value(s) assessment, and a community outreach and action plan. In the example discussed in this presentation, the class partnered with the United States Forest Service (USFS) to generate a report on several proposed trailhead repairs and upgrades that the USFS superintended is looking to implement at a popular, heavily-trafficked trailhead. The resulting document was presented to the USFS and was included as a supplementary scoping report, which complements their ongoing efforts to improve conditions on the national forest. The specific outcomes of this presentation demonstrate steps for guiding students through the research, analysis, and consensus building stages of writing a robust technical report while collaborating with its various partners.

Long used within business administration, management, marketing, accounting, and other related fields to encourage everything from corporate social responsibility to environmental health and wellness, this study utilizes the triple bottom line (Elkington, 2001; Vanclay, 2016) and the Delphi technique (Hsu & Sandford, 2007) to provide business majors and professional communication students with a framework for:

1. Framing a task or project around a research question, which guides the work in a comprehensive and systematic manner,
2. Providing students with an opportunity to partner with real clients and produce actual, workplace documents (as opposed to simpler, memoranda or conceptual documents),
3. Developing a decision matrix to incorporate client and stakeholder values for project planning

and decision making, and

4. Evaluating a project, suggesting a series of alternatives, and recommending a course of action to the partnering organization.

Significantly, this presentation provides professional and business communication educators with a toolkit for enhancing student preparedness for the workplace by helping them learn to better adapt to the needs of their employers and/or clients.

Methodology

As a research method, the triple bottom line (TBL) concept is an increasingly important framework for evaluating the sustainability of an idea, a product, or service. When used in student research, a TBL line approach attempts to balance the social, environmental, and economic dimensions of a project in a given community or organization. Recently, the TBL has received an array of attention spanning everything from water supply planning (Griffith & Ickert, 2014) to city-wide sustainability initiatives occurring in cities like Cleveland, Ohio and Grand Rapids, Michigan (Slaper & Hall, 2011). As Taylor and Fletcher (2005) assert, the TBL utilizes "features of the assessment process [...], multi-criteria analysis, [and] input from technical experts as well as non-technical stakeholders [...to suit] differing needs and resources" (p. 1). As such, this presentation also describes how students can use the TBL framework to suggest project alternatives that are appropriately suited to the needs of their client(s) and vested stakeholders.

Outcomes

The takeaway of this presentation will provide business communication faculty with a method for facilitating a semester-long research project in a comprehensive and systematic manner while ensuring that students are exposed to a holistic framework for accounting for some of the multidimensional challenges that they will encounter when writing about any large-scale project, such as the one described herein. Ultimately, this study demonstrates how collaborative partnerships, coupled with a strategic approach for organizing research, can be highly-engaging for students and greatly improve their abilities to write and research in teams within any workplace settings.

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Innovative Instructional Methods, Teaching Focus

The Art of Brevity in Professional Communication

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In the long tenuous relationship between higher education and the workforce, a lot of hand-wringing has occurred regarding the way that students are taught to write in college vs. how they are expected to write in the workforce. This invariably has led to an underprepared crop of entry-level graduates who, "struggle in their transfer of writing skills learned in college to the writing tasks of the workplace" (Kohn, 2015) One employer recently noted that recent graduates have a, "real issue with putting together short, concise, and clear written communication about something, whether it's a project or a problem that they're trying to solve. This is a real problem, and it's getting worse, not better." (Sparks, 2018)

Examples from an array of fields exist that argue the virtue of saying a lot in a little space. The field of medical writing (Brevity is the soul of wit, 2016) touts Twitter, with its strict character limits for posts, as, "an ideal medium to share information" (p. 33) and the Federal Bureau of Investigations has noted the benefit of the TL;DR (Too Long; Didn't Read) method of writing, as Millennial law enforcement officers are less likely to read longer messages that provide more information than is needed (McGookin, 2016). Oseid (2009) identifies Abraham Lincoln as a paragon of the effective use of brevity in the practice of law and Laroque (2008) argues that brevity is vital for success in writing for newspapers and periodicals.

The use of short writing assignments has been demonstrated to be successful (McMillan, 2014) and faculty (Yagoda, 2011) have made note that students lacking in confidence in their writing often default to writing more than is needed in an effort to buoy that lack of confidence. While this problem cannot and will not be solved in a brief presentation at the 2020 Association for Business Communication Conference or in its proceedings, faculty are well served to teach the virtue of brevity in professional communication and to demonstrate why two of the standard six questions of non-fiction communication (Who? What? When? Where? How? Why?) are best left unanswered.

In teaching professional writing, many default to the journalistic method of covering six seemingly essential questions: Who? What? When? Where? How? Why? However, while that may make for good journalism, it often makes for bloated, overly long professional writing that includes more information than is needed.

To demonstrate this, imagine a scenario: you own a small call center in a rural area which provides inbound technical support services for a third-party software provider. Your facility is approximately 2000 square feet in size and contains an open space that houses 18 workstations; a single-user, unisex restroom; a breakroom; and your office. You have approximately 40 employees who work a combination of full-time, part-time, and on-call as needed. The facility is staffed 24 hours a day seven days a week with the number of staff on site varied between each of the three shifts.

The facility is floored with an inexpensive, industrial carpeting that needs replacement. You decide the replace the worn carpet but doing so will require the facility to close for approximately 48 hours, as the workstations must be removed in order to replace the carpet.

In order to update the affected staff, you decide to write a memo announcing the carpet replacement and consequent short-term closure. In doing so, you'd be tempted to follow the standard journalistic model but doing so extends the message by approximately 33%, as two of the six questions do not warrant attention. As well, addressing those questions may cause more headaches than they are worth.

In explaining the closure to the staff, detailing Who will be affected is essential, lest staff arrive for work to find the facility torn apart without notice. At the same time, informing staff What is happening is vital, as a notice of a temporary closure of a business that is normally open around the clock without any explanation would worry staff about their future employment. The affected staff would need to know When the closure is occurring in order to avoid a wasted trip to the facility and Where, while assumed to be understood by the audience, is best served to be noted in the memo. At this point, the readers would understand What is happening, Who is affected by it, When it is happening, and Where it is happening. Are How and Why necessary?

In this case, no. Detailing How the facility will be prepared, How the old carpet will be removed, and How the new carpet will be installed is not consequential to the staff and writing that content would be a waste of time and effort. At the same time, detailing Why the carpet is being replaced is not only equally unnecessary but could also prove harmful. Aside from offering equally unnecessary information as How, answering the question of Why could create feelings of enmity. Staff displeased with their pay and benefits may already be offended by the owner's desire to upgrade the facility instead of offering higher wages and better benefits and making note that the upgrade was made for a reason such as lowering the amount of taxes paid on the business' profits would exacerbate those feelings.

Law enforcement has long utilized the idea of "Bottom Line Up Front" (McGookin, 2016) and many industries clearly expect similar writing. Teaching students the benefits of brevity is essential. Long form writing will always have a place, but that place is not everywhere at all times; sometimes, less is best.

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Innovative Instructional Methods, Teaching Focus

The Pedagogy of Peer Review in Business and Professional Communication

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Since the 1970's, peer feedback has been a staple component of composition, creative writing, and writing-across-the curriculum courses (Flynn, 2011). Variously constructed as peer review, peer critique, peer editing, peer evaluation, and workshopping, these peer learning activities are introduced at different points of the writing process, take different forms, and have different purposes. But in each case, the method involves exposing a document to other readers as part of the writing process.

Research and practice have shown that peer review is valuable to both writers and reviewers. For example, peer review helps writers see how readers engage with and make sense of their writing, thus facilitating better decision making (Herrington & Cadman, 1991); it also helps writers structure the writing process thus improving their "revision behavior" (Covill, 2011). Equally important, as reviewers construct advice to writers, the reviewers often achieve a better understanding how they can improve their own writing (Henry & Ledbetter, 2010).

In the business communication literature, most discussion of peer evaluation focuses on evaluation of peer contributions in team-based projects (for example, Dyrud, 2001; Gueldenzoph & May, 2002). Very little scholarship addresses the value of peer review of writing, even though business communication instructors have long used peer evaluation of writing in their courses (Lynch & Golen, 1992). One notable exception is Holst-Larkin (2008), who has shown that peer review is a powerful way to help business communicators envision an audience, a key element of any business communication strategy.

The purpose of this panel is to advance the discussion of peer review of individual student communication in business communication classes, looking at key questions such as these:

- What kinds of assignments and activities are best suited for peer review in business communication, and what kinds of peer review activities are best suited to specific assignments or learning goals?
- What kinds of scaffolding and instructions to students can improve the quality of peer reviews?
- How might the affordances of an online class lend itself to peer review?
- What are some strategies for using peer review in high-stakes professional writing projects?
- What unique opportunities for peer review does a business communication course provide?

Speaker 1 will analyze best practices in peer review and provide guidelines for enabling students to provide high value peer reviews and to use the peer review process as a tool for learning.

Speakers 2 and 3 will address peer review in specific contexts. Speaker 2 will discuss the value that peer review adds in an online course and offer advice for structuring peer review effectively. Speaker 3 will analyze how peer review helps writers better understand genre conventions in professional writing.

Finally, speaker 4 will introduce a novel use of peer review in business communication: peer review of audience listening behaviors.

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Innovative Instructional Methods, Teaching Focus

Transformative Learning: Starting a Student-Run Business Podcast

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Transformative learning theory is for adult learning and utilizes disorienting dilemmas to challenge students' thinking, providing positive-growth experiences (Mezirow, 1998, 2000, 2009; Kreber, 2010). Students are then encouraged to use critical thinking and questioning to consider if their underlying assumptions and beliefs about the world are accurate (Clancy & Vince, 2019). Disorienting dilemmas often occur in the context of academic learning environments, as teachers provide space to critically engage with new ideas. As students collectively dialogue and engage with each other about their new perspectives, transformation can take place, especially if students act on their new skills and beliefs (McCord, Houseworth, & Michaelsen, 2015).

As a faculty and student group, we decided to explore business communication channels that students would be interested in following. The marketing team conducted an informal survey to determine where students prefer to consume business news and information. The study results indicated that most students turn to websites and podcasts, rather than published material (other than "forced" readings given by their university professors). Because of these survey results, our marketing students decided to explore other business communication platforms. To start, our student-led web design team decided to develop a professional, visually interesting website to establish and increase online readership.

Additionally, students launched a podcast series entitled Measuring Success Right. The podcast allows students the opportunity to conduct live interviews with well-established business professionals and well-known communicators, such as Hal Gregersen, Liz Wiseman, and Whitney Johnson. Our podcast is a weekly show, which offers students a platform to contact, invite, follow-up, and thank guests on a regular basis.

As a team, we also determined the importance of maintaining a consistent brand. Incorporating the ideas of our designers, editors, podcasters, and writers, we created a logo and style guide for Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Measuring Success Right (MSR), and our website. This brand consistency encourages consumer awareness across all communication platforms. Every semester, students re-evaluate how the MSR brand is faring for the podcast, making any necessary changes to stay current with our business student and young executive audience.

Transformative learning takes place as the students market the podcast and perform interviews, learn sound design, and experiment with visual design strategies to further the brand. One student commented: "This term, I am planning to work on the newly rebranded 'marketing' team, as the Marketing Team Coordinator. My role will be to organize the team, plan meetings, delegate assignments, follow-up on projects, and coordinate with other teams and the MSR leadership to keep our marketing on track. Within these team goals, individually, I hope to develop leadership skills, improve my communication skills, develop skills for planning and organizing team meetings, and learn

how to keep a project fun and engaging for those involved while also helping them stay on task and reach their individual goals. I also hope to continue developing my understanding of the power of social media and how it can be a positive tool for spreading uplifting and meaningful content." This is the essence of transformational learning in business communication.

This workshop will give you the skills to start a podcast and ideas on how to encourage students to transform into great business communicators.

Turning Students into Storytellers

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This presentation will come primarily from my own experience and my learning about and observing from others how to teach storytelling. Storytelling is one of the best ways to elicit audience interest and make content memorable, but students are often flummoxed about how to tell an engaging story and do sometimes question the necessity of storytelling in business communication. Instructors can show them the why and the how, with the potential to greatly improve the effectiveness of their communication.

When I first learned about the importance of story-telling, perhaps because of my English Literature background, I naively and simply told students to incorporate stories into their presentations. What I learned was that this practice is not intuitive, perhaps especially for business students who are not English majors and may not enjoy stories as much as I do. I learned that I must teach students how and why to tell stories.

It's helpful for students to hear multiple presentations that use stories well, and in this presentation, I will show clips of some of these presentations. Often students don't analyze why they liked a presentation or what the presenter did that as especially captivating or helpful, but if an instructor asks them to pinpoint it, they can see that stories are powerfully educational.

In addition to showing students other presentations with engaging stories and helping them to see that their own presentations can be enriched with stories, they must learn how to write a story. To do this, I have them think about the story in three parts: introduction, conflict, and resolution. In the introduction, they should give enough details so that the audience can picture the story. The conflict is crucial, and it is the part that students most often omit. But conflict is what makes an audience want to listen to a story. Without conflict, there is no story. I tell students that the conflict should make an audience wonder curiously, "How is this going to end? What is going to happen?" Finally, storytellers must explain how the conflict resolved and bring it back to the point that the story serves. The story shouldn't seem irrelevant to the content of the presentation; instead, it should help illuminate some part of the presentation.

Finally, I have found that practice is crucial. I have started distributing familiar topics to small student groups. From "texting etiquette" to "sports safety," I try to choose topics that students already have experience with and knowledge of. Each student group must then come up with a story that illustrates a point that they would make if giving a presentation about the topic. Then students come to the front of the class, share their stories, and receive feedback on the three parts. Was their introduction sufficiently detailed so that the audience could envision it? Was there a conflict that made the audience curious and interested? Did the story relate to the topic in a meaningful way?

It's also important for students to see the instructor telling stories, so since I have been thinking about how to help students to become story-tellers, I actively think about incorporating at least one story into every class lecture. They need to see me modeling story-telling so that they can understand how they can do it, too. When I first introduce the concept of story-telling, I do so at the end of a class in which I have told two stories. I ask students to reflect upon what content throughout the class has been most memorable to them, and their acknowledgment of the stories being impactful helps them to internalize the importance of this concept that we learn and practice throughout class.

This presentation will empower instructors of business communication to teach their students how to incorporate stories into presentations as well as cover letters and interviews.

Virtual Reality (VR) Story-telling: Developing Students' Global Mindset with Google Tour's Creator App

Larissa Ramos
University of Miami

This session will discuss the piloting of a 360 Virtual Reality (VR) Tour Assignment using Google's Tour Creator application, aimed at developing or enhancing students' global mindset, cultural intelligence, and digital story-telling abilities, through the use of free VR technology. Upon researching the culture and history of the selected global site, students develop an engaging and coherent virtual reality tour. The assignment is relevant across disciplines (Business Communication, Management, International Business, Writing and Rhetoric, Communication, and Multimedia Communications) and engages students in working with Virtual Reality/VR technology with low costs (approximately $12 per individual VR Google glass/cardbox per student) with no student knowledge of Computer Programming required.

The assignment invites students to create and guide a virtual audience through an interactive "virtual tour" of their favorite public space to visit around the world, such as a hike across the Himalayan Mountains, a vacation resort in Peru, or a tour of the Swiss Alps. Upon researching the culture and history of the selected global location, students develop a digital story-line, integrating 360 images and written descriptions of each point within the tour, tailored to the needs of a virtual peer audience. Following the completion of their written tour and 360-image selection, students story-board their digital story, adding audio narration, sounds and/or background music to accompany the 360-images and "point" descriptions. To encourage scaffolding, agile thinking, and the iterative process of revision, students peer evaluate two peers' virtual tours, exchanging information about each other's cultural backgrounds, sharing insights about their cultural history, and providing feedback as users who experienced another virtual tour (a peer review rubric is provided for guidance). For instance, as students showcased historic sites from their home countries, ranging from China, Nepal, Peru, and the United States, peers often asked questions about cultural practices and traditions, both formal and informal, based on those country's institutions and cultural dimensions.

This virtual exercise challenges students to think strategically about the relationship between media, text, Virtual Reality, and story-telling, within a global context, and to develop coherence in digital story-telling. Following revisions made to the draft virtual tours and sharing of the link of the final tour with their peers, students write a two-page reflective paper or Reflection blog, supporting their rationale for the strategic choices they made in constructing their tour, from visual, audio, and written choices and reflect on their ability to logically and creatively guide a peer viewer through multiple points within the tour, while overcoming challenges naturally associated with not only engaging but also sustaining viewer interest from the beginning to the end of the virtual reality tour. Students have the option to publish their tours, keeping it private, or deleting it upon completion. All images and audio used must be selected in advance and publicly available to avoid copyright infringement. For this reason, critical to student success is ensuring that students select a location for which 360 images can be easily accessible. This assignment was selected for the 2019 University of Miami Faculty Showcase and has promising

applications to facilitate students' development in the areas of logical reasoning and coherence, digital story-telling and digital rhetoric, and developing or enhancing cultural intelligence and global mindset while experimenting with Virtual Reality tools.

When Perceptions Collide: Designing a Multi-Disciplinary Course

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One of the emerging interests in 21st century education is the multi- or inter-disciplinary approach. California State University, Fullerton is currently experimenting with such a course as a new entrant into its General Education package.

"Explore Core" is a series of courses currently undergoing approval at CSU Fullerton. These courses provide a multi-disciplinary approach (as opposed to an interdisciplinary approach) to a single topic. The pilot is a course called "Teens in Trouble." The course examines what it means to be a troubled teen from the lens of four different disciplines: Biology, History, Child and Adolescent Studies, and Business Communication. We were able to mesh the priorities of a business communication course to the priorities of STEM, Health and Human Development, and Humanities courses. Even courses as dissimilar as Art and Engineering have met the challenge of working together to serve students' educational interests.

The California State University system recently experienced a series of mandates from its Chancellor's office requiring substantive changes to the General Education structure, effectively eliminating what many felt are core educational experiences. To address some of these omissions the General Education Task Force recommended the development of the multi-disciplinary Explore Core course series. The course series was meant to introduce students to a variety of disciplines by examining their different approaches to a single topic. Exposure to different disciplines, particularly those students won't normally willingly engage in, may encourage them to be broader in their thinking, select a major they had not considered in the past, or even encourage them to double-major or minor in a different discipline.

Most of departments affected by the Chancellor's mandates were Humanities-based, most notably the History department. Disciplines at little-to-no risk, like Engineering and the Business School, were anxious to support those areas hardest hit by the mandates. When the General Education Task Force discussed the Explore Core idea, Biology, History, and Child and Adolescent Studies agreed to work together. Business Communication asked to be included as well and was accepted although it was initially unclear what that discipline could add to the conversation.

Although initially we had considered the course interdisciplinary, resistance from programs that had team-taught interdisciplinary courses forced us to reassess what we wanted to accomplish and determine that it was more of a multi-disciplinary approach. However, we wanted students to understand where all these different academic approaches mesh and where they diverge, so we also worked, reworked, and reworked again a portfolio assignment with a final reflection component to help students develop that kind of synthesis. It was at this point that two of us, Child and Adolescent Studies and Business Communication, realized that our planned approach wasn't going to work with the others.

So, a year and a half into the project, we both completely overhauled our segments of the course to something that allowed students to be equally engaged in all four disciplines.

Eventually, we hope to make this a standard component of the GE package. Thus, as we developed our Teen in Trouble course, we began to recruit faculty from other disciplines to develop their own "Cores." We received a surprising number of submissions with concepts that span all the Colleges in our University. Other Cores currently in the pipeline include a "Fear and Fantasy" course that includes Visual Arts, American Studies, Child and Adolescent Studies, and Mechanical Engineering; a "Truth" course that includes Liberal Studies, Philosophy, Mechanical Engineering, and Biological Science; and a "Migrant Lives" course that includes History, Literacy and Reading Education, Economics, and American Studies. A course on "Disability and Design" is in the planning stages.

After working on the Teens in Trouble concept and helping to develop the other cores, we've made some discoveries to facilitate multi-disciplinary work.

1. Some disciplines can afford to be more flexible than others. Embattled disciplines generally cannot afford as much flexibility since they are defending the quality and content of their disciplines. Thus, it falls on programs that are generally not noted for their flexibility, e.g., business and engineering in this example, but also not as embattled to show their own range by adapting to the needs of the others.
2. Multi-disciplinary courses work best in a modular structure. Since this project began, two of the initial Teens in Trouble members have been replaced by colleagues who have their own interpretations of the theme. For example, the initial theme for the History segment of Teens in Trouble was children enrolled in Indian Schools at the turn of the 20th century. When that instructor left the project, she was replaced by an instructor whose theme is Hitler Youth. Because the course is structured in modules, we can plug and play as necessary.
3. Pushback is inevitable. Although the concept behind Explore Core was meant to support programs that struggle, some programs perceive it as a threat. In addition, administration support can be conditional. Be ready to accommodate when necessary, and to back off if the temperature is too hot or too cold. If the model is successful, some of those concerns may be assuaged in future.
4. Trust your colleagues. Because our disciplines are siloed and there aren't many opportunities to interact with colleagues from other Colleges unless we are involved in university politics, we often find it difficult to put our trust in faculty from other Schools. The initial Explore Core Corps was somewhat blessed because several of us knew at least one of the others from previous committee work. We discovered much to our delight that we all complemented one another's working styles unusually well, possibly because the skills required in each discipline are part of the "whole" individual we want our students to be when they cross the stage.

Your Online Toolkit: Mastering the Art of Teaching in the Virtual Landscape

Caitlin Hills; Lauren D. Bell
University of Arizona

This presentation will focus on effective online instruction tools. The purpose of this presentation is to share with audience members effective and engaging strategies in online instruction, focusing on online collaboration.

As online instruction becomes more popular, it is important to note the differences between traditional on the ground instruction and online instruction. Generally, online students are more diverse in age and socio-economic status. They are often juggling work, family, and academic obligations. In order to make online instruction stimulating to these learners, instructors must rely on various communication platforms to establish relationships and stay connected.

This presentation will also be useful to instructors who traditionally teach in the classroom, but for various reasons (COVID -19, for example) have to pivot their instruction to online.

The goal of this presentation is to provide participants with a toolkit of innovative online exercises and tips to ensure their online classes are robust and their students are active participants in their own online education.

By utilizing both synchronous and asynchronous instruction on multiple platforms such as Zoom, D2L, and Slack, we have developed a template to ensure a deep connection with each student. In addition, by ensuring students receive feedback on their deliverables within 48 hours and answering every student inquiry within 24 hours, students feel valued, and the instructor is just as available to them as traditional in-person instruction.

Some examples of the valuable practices that will be discussed are:

- Establish personal relationships with each student by assigning an ice-breaker personal introduction assignment to be posted on the Discussion Board, so that all students can "meet" each other.
- Create assignments that include a peer review element so that students have the opportunity to work directly with one another.
- Construct a nurturing online community by checking in with students regularly.
- Ensure that expectations are established so that students can get the most out of their online learning experience.

Methodology

Through a discussion of best practices, class experience, and student feedback, presenters will discuss the tools needed to succeed in online instruction. The presentation will include snapshots of online presentations and will explore several assignments from Eller Business Communication classes. The presentation will culminate in an audience participation portion in which attendees can share their own experiences with online instruction.

Outcomes

Participants in this presentation will be able to use the "online toolkit" to inform their own online instruction, thereby improving the delivery of instruction and increasing student engagement.

A Bridge Too Far? The Challenge of Pragmatic Accommodation to Western-oriented Decision-making Meeting Styles for Japanese Professionals

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Decision-making meetings offer participants the opportunity to exert influence within an organization or upon business ventures. Likewise, an inability to participate has a disempowering effect. Effective participation in a decision-making business meeting requires the communicative ability to take turns, manage topics and resolve conflict, all of which behaviors tend to be performed differently across L1 cultures (Aritz & Walker, 2014; Mergel & Williamson, 2018). Therefore, successful intercultural meetings in which participation is maximized require some or all participants to display pragmatic tolerance and accommodation.

Two things appear to make this easier. The first is a disposition towards pragmatic adaptability. People able to create L2 social identities seem especially adept at this. In her longitudinal study of Internet retailer Rakuten, Neeley identified such a characteristic in many of the company's Southeast Asian and South Asian employees coining the term 'global literacy' to describe how phlegmatically they greeted the company's sudden implementation of a corporate English policy (Neeley, 2017). The second facilitator of pragmatic accommodation appears to be the extent of the difference between the L1 norms of the meeting participants. The closer the norms are, the easier they are for meeting participants to accommodate to.

That Japanese L1 speakers of Business English as a lingua franca (BELF) experience difficulty in participating in intercultural decision-making meetings suggests that both factors often work against them. Due to the historical economic dominance of western business, many meeting contexts in international business now adopt the pragmatic norms of L1 English groups or more general western-oriented pragmatic conventions. This is likely to be the case, for example, in the internal meetings of so-called global corporations whose origins and/or headquarters are in western countries. However, those norms of turn-taking, topic-management and conflict resolution are very dissimilar to the conventions of L1 Business Japanese meetings. Nor do Japanese tend to find pragmatic accommodation to western meeting styles easy. At Rakuten, far from accommodation, Neeley found that English was seen as a threat by many Japanese employees not only to their communicative norms but to their Japanese identity and the identity of the company itself.

As a result, reports of disempowerment, of an inability to participate effectively or to influence the outcome of western-style meetings, are common in the needs analyses carried out as part of English communication training programs at Japanese corporations (Takino, 2017; Tanaka, 2003). But the same negative evaluations can be found about BELF interactions with Japanese in reports by western participants. Ehrenreich, for example, reported how German L1 businesspeople complained of "a lack of

directness and clarity" and "different floor-taking mechanisms" in their English meetings with Japanese (Ehrenreich, 2016).

However, the problem of pragmatic accommodation in decision-making meetings between Japanese and people using western styles of communication has significance beyond the disempowerment of Japanese BELF users and the confusion of their western counterparts. There is evidence that other East Asians share similar discursive practices with Japanese (for example Aritz & Walker, 2014; DuBabcock & Tanaka, 2017). And analyses of the two styles – Asian and western – reveal a degree of incompatibility not readily overcome. Intrusive turn-taking and assertive rhetoric common in western-style discussion has a tendency to dominate the more cooperative and harmonious Asian style of decision-making group discourse (DuBabcock & Tanaka, 2017; Tsuchiya, 2016). And while BELF researchers have argued that differences in communication styles are accommodated more easily by non L1-English speakers (Kankaanranta & Planken, 2010), much of the evidence put forward for this view has been drawn from different non L1-English groups with similar pragmatic norms, not across the western-East Asian context (Louhiala-Salminen et al., 2005).

As global business increasingly requires multicultural groups to communicate effectively together, the pragmatic differences in decision-making meeting styles between Japanese BELF and western BELF present a barrier to such communication. In this presentation, evidence will be examined from both the presenter's primary data collection as well as secondary research to show how Japanese and western pragmatic norms differ in the decision-making meeting practices of turn-taking, topic management and conflict resolution. How those practices are differently and often negatively evaluated by the other side and how negative outcomes may arise will then be examined. The implications for business English communication training in Japan and for global businesses wishing to improve their communication outcomes with Japanese partners and employees will also be discussed.

A Comparative Analysis of Organizational Supports to Asian Expatriate Overseas Adjustments

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Expatriate adjustment has been primarily focused on examining the relationships of cross-cultural adjustments and the identified predictors (e.g., language abilities, culture distances, and organizational supports) in Western context. There has been an increasing trend that large number of Asian Multinational Corporations (MNCs) have expanded their global markets and operations on a large scale. In comparing with language and culture distance as the determining factors that are likely to affect expatriate adjustments, organizational support received relatively little attention and the results are inconclusive. Research on the effect of organizational support has shown that corporate trainings before departing and on-the-job are likely the determining factors. Shen and Darby's (2006) study has concluded the importance of corporate training before and/or after the departure on the success of overseas assignments and adjustments. Gao's (2008) finding however suggests that the outcomes of the cross-cultural training had only a moderately significant impact on expatriates' adjustment, although Chinese multinationals tend to provide limited training to expatriates.

With such inconclusive findings, the present study attempts to fill the gap from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. That is, the present study reports findings of an empirical research from quantitative and qualitative perspectives that examine the impact of organizational support on Asian expatriates' overseas assignments between three Asian countries (China, Japan, and South Korea). In quantitative, we examine the relationship between the perceived organizational support on corporate training and the expatriate adjustments to overseas assignment while the qualitative data will look into the analyses of open-ended questions that (1) address the type of organization support received before taking on the overseas assignments, (2) comment on effects of the organizational support, and (3) suggest improvements to be made in order to enhance their professional development.

Involved in this study are 248 overseas executives including 100 of them from mainland China, 100 from Japan, and 48 from Korea. The online questionnaire was posted via Rakuten Insight Singapore Pte. Ltd. (Hong Kong) website. The questionnaire, designed by the Principal Investigator, was in English and then translated into Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans. The respective co-researchers were invited to check whether the translation was in line with the English version by using back translation method. The questionnaire consists of five parts. The quantitative data, examining the effect of organizational supports on expatriate adjustments, was drawn from Part 1 and Part 4 in that Part 1 consists of 6 sub-statements in relation to overseas adjustments and Part 4 contains 7 sub-statements of organizational supports. The qualitative data, coming from Part 2 and Part 5 of the questionnaire, looks into the in-

depth analyses drawn from the open-ended questionnaire answers between three countries. Part 2 contains 4 open-ended questions in relation to the time to adjust to the new environment, factors inhibiting overseas adjustments, successful strategies in copying with the difficulty and ways of improving it. Part 5 contains 3 open-ended questions about the types of organizational supports, its effects, and suggestions to enhance expatriates' future professional development.

To answer the quantitative aspect of the relationship between organizational supports and expatriates' adjustments, the Pearson's correlation coefficient was performed. The result reveals various degrees of correlation. In general, of the seven sub-statement, only a mild correlation was found between the effects of the organizational supports and the expatriates' overseas assignments except three sub-factors; that are corporate knowledge training and information communication technology (r=.423 and r=.424, p<.01), as well as the stipulation of language policy of English-language working environment by the headquarters (r=.50, p<.01). As for the in-depth qualitative analyses, a thematic approach was applied to examine and compare the effects and types of organizational supports provided by the three researched countries and how expatriates felt about the organizational supports onto their future professional developments.

Investor Communications: An Analysis from an Audience-Conscious Communication Perspective

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Theoretical Framework

The author wants to analyze investor communication issues from an audience-conscious (oriented) communication perspective with referring to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA is a theory constructed by Norman Fairclough. This Norman Fairclough's theory made an analysis of texts, seen in the theory as parts of social events, which are not simply the effects of the potentials defined by languages (which can be regarded as amongst the abstract social structures), but it can be produced from social practices or the orders of discourse. The orders of discourse are networks of social practices such as various types of social element which are associated with social life, on the foundation of social structures like languages, etc. This study focuses on certain CEO's message expressed on an integrated report of a Japanese corporation acting globally and attempts to identify a way to interpret the influence of certain translated wording on global investors, referring to CDA.

Purpose and Objectives

In January 2019, the integrated report (an annual report which intends to explain how certain company's current operations may affect its long-term profits, referring to numerical financial matters) of Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG), the largest banking corporation in Japan, was awarded by GPIF (Government Pension Investment Fund, a huge Japanese government pension fund organization with its investment assets of JPY150 trillion) as one of the higher scored reports. A main reason for the above award was that MUFG intentionally used some words in the CEO's commentary part of the integrated report in the English translation version, which are different from relevant words in the Japanese original one to the extent that both Japanese and English versions retain the same context. This seems that MUFG preferred the investors and shareholders in both home country and overseas to easily and correctly understand its business environment and current management issues. An integrated report is an annual report for the investment market including customers and shareholders, and listed companies are required to prepare it by relevant local laws. Thus, an integrated report is a statutory communication channel for the purpose of investor communications. As you may know, in the financial field, the modern investment industry has constructed a long and complex investment chain between investee companies, distributors (banks, securities companies and asset managers, etc.) and ultimate beneficiaries (end investors). Especially, main communication components in the investment chain are relating to the ones between investee companies and end investors via distributors. This shows that there is a need for a global company to use the English translated message for global investors, which enables a direct communication among them. This also means that there is another need for the translated wording which is somewhat different from the original wording in home language in order to communicate smoothly and directly with the global investors. In other words, by using different wording

of certain key messages in the English version, we can see that MUFG ensures that every investor (both Japanese and foreigner) understands effectively, efficiently, and concurrently their messages in the integrated report. In addition, it is necessary for global investee companies like MUFG to ensure that each investor correctly understands their messages regardless of which cultural and educational backgrounds each investor has. In short, MUFG tried to convey their CEO message accurately, directly, and concurrently to every investor in the world by using intentionally different wording in the Japanese and English versions respectively from a point of audience-conscious communication.

The author took up this theme in the 84th ABC annual conference in 2019 in Detroit but analyzed this issue mainly from a point of the issue of "persuasion or manipulation" in business discourse. However, the author couldn't analyze this matter more in detail from a discourse perspective at that time. This time, the author intends to add an audience-conscious communication perspective to the research methodology with referring to Critical Discourse Analysis.

Research Methodology

The author shall analyze the said communication issues from an audience-conscious communication perspective with referring to the Critical Discourse Analysis.

(Preliminary) Results

The investor communication channel is a one-way communication method from the upstream side (issuers of securities) to the downstream side (end investors) and almost all investor communications have been performed through distributors to date. Such communication structure can be regarded as one of the orders of discourse from a point of CDA. Based on the previous research by the author, translation issues create communication gaps between investors internationally. Thus, MUFG seemed to challenge to change the orders of discourse by using different wording in the English translation version of the integrated report from that in the Japanese original version so that every investor in the world can understand the CEO message accurately. As a conclusion, we are in a position to see that it is important for global companies to understand that there are differences in the cultural background and industry environment as well as professional knowledge in specific fields between its home country and overseas investors.

Linguistic Approaches to International Business Communication

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Baruch College, City University of New York

Stefan Diemer; Marie-Louise Brunner
Trier University of Applied Sciences, Institute for International and Digital Communication

Sofie Decock
Ghent University

This panel presentation will explore applied linguistic approaches to the diverse field of international business communication. Linguistics can inform business communication in genre, vocabulary, morphosyntax and semantics, from business negotiations and sales talk to e-mails, customer care, and global company websites. Linguistics helps us to understand the impact that multilingualism has on business interactions, team leadership and intercultural negotiations. Corpus analysis and multimodal discourse studies permit the delineation and refinement of new genres, such as social media communication and virtual business meetings. Data-driven quantitative linguistic analysis allows us to study the development, application and impact of automatic translation and interactive bots.

The panel will comprise two parts:

1. Presenters will illustrate their individual linguistic approaches to international business communication:

   Sofie Decock has been researching digital business communication, focusing on complaints, reviews and webcare. She analyzes discursive and linguistic patterns in these genres and examines how discursive strategies and linguistic features impact the credibility of the complainer and customer satisfaction, particularly in an international context.

   Stefan Diemer will present his data-driven research on intercultural negotiations and provide examples of analyses of social media communication across borders. His presentation will illustrate the strategies that companies use to increase customer engagement and to create rapport and how these strategies vary in international settings.

2. The second part of the panel will consist of a roundtable forum for discussing linguistic approaches to international business communication with the aim of defining fields of investigation, providing best practice examples from practitioners, and stimulating exchanges among researchers from various disciplines.

McDonald's and the Country-to-Country Communication Changes Caused by COVID-19

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Covid-19 is a global pandemic that has altered the daily lives of almost everyone on the planet. Due to this, corporations have had to restructure how they do business and how they communicate effectively with potential customers; the McDonald's corporation is no exception. Due to its status as one of the world's largest multinational corporations, McDonald's offers a fascinating look into how Covid-19 caused businesses to communicate about an unprecedented global crisis. This presentation examines how McDonald's communication during Covid-19 has been both independent and dependent on national and regional culture.

McDonald's overall communication focus on three main areas with customers: the dining experience, the menu, and the impact on the community. The changes to these areas of communication have been analyzed through interviews with franchise owners and through content analysis of corporate and country specific web pages. Through these methods, patterns emerge that demonstrate how a country's culture drives the specific communication changes noted for Covid-19. Only countries where web pages could be easily translated into English were included for comparability purposes. The United States, Brazil, the Netherlands, India, and Australia were selected for this presentation based on the previously stated criteria as well as on the availability of external information on the McDonald's corporation in these countries. Each of these countries also demonstrated unique communication and policies not seen in other areas of the world.

Content analysis for each country's the web page included analyzing the front page, stories, and menu portions. While the different county pages used the same font, had the golden arches logo in the top left-hand corner, and contained messages about Covid-19, the similarities ended there. During the pandemic caused lock downs, each message and page were displayed and tailored to impact each audience. The United States' page focused on imagery of the food items itself as being a source of normalcy. In the Netherlands, peaceful scenery was used to invoke feelings of peace, calmness, and hope while India and Brazil focused on vibrancy to match their cultural style. Australia also used its front page to promote outreach efforts.

The McDonald's menu selection is famous for having country specific options, but effects of Covid-19 can be seen in limiting many of these items. The Netherlands had to eliminate specialty offerings, opting for more cost-efficient products, but Australia expanded their menu to bring in even more customers with essential foods. The United States saw zero alteration to the advertised menu online, but many stores individually posted about limited menu options. The choices made on showing cuts on the website or leaving it up to individual stores is very telling in how McDonald's communicates both to its customers but also to its franchise owners.

The area with the greatest variance is community outreach. McDonald's franchise owners, other corporations, and even consulting services have been involved. The "Thank You Meals" program in the United States has been a prime example of this with many similar programs being rolled out around the world. The Netherlands focused efforts on post quarantine innovations to create a safer atmosphere for guests. Brazilian McDonald's tried to encourage social distancing in the country but temporarily separating its iconic golden arches. McDonald's wants their outreach efforts to be seen to positively influence people to buy their food be it for their philanthropy or through personal benefits. This communication is two-fold with the primary method being directly notifying consumers of free food possibilities but also allowing media outlets to give McDonald's the golden spotlight.

Just like Covid-19, McDonald's is a global entity that almost everyone recognizes and has experienced, and just like Covid-19, McDonald's has been adapting to people and circumstances in 2020. This presentation seeks to specifically analyze how McDonald's adapts its communication to five specific countries within the overall corporate communication areas: the restaurant experience, the menu selection, and the community impact. As the post-Covid-19 era begins, the way McDonald's has dealt with these changes, both successfully and unsuccessfully, are key to understanding how communication impacts a business during a crisis unlike any seen before.

Intercultural and Global Communication, Research Focus

On Writing Proposals for International/Intercultural Business Communication Books: A Comparative Analysis

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David Allen Victor
Eastern Michigan University

Richard Babcock
University of San Francisco

This panel describes and analyzes the writing process in preparing proposals for international business communication books. Our analysis is based on the following completed, in progress, and future international and intercultural business communication books:

(a) Victor, David. (1992). *International Business Communication.* New York, NY: HarperCollins.

This was the first book published on international business communication. It set forth the LESCANT model identifying the seven areas that need to be taken into consideration in order to communicate effectively and efficiently within national cultures. These LESCANT variables are: Language, Environment, Social Organization, Context, Authority, Non-verbal, and Time.

(b) A series of "The Seven Keys to Communicating in ….

b1: Kelm, Orlando R., Hernandez-Pozas, Olivia, & Victor David A. (2020). *The Seven Keys to Communicating in Mexico: An Intercultural Approach.* Georgetown University Press.

b2: Yamada, Haru, Kelm, Orlando R., & Victor, David A. (2017). *The Seven Keys to Communicating in Japan: An Intercultural Approach.* Georgetown University Press.

b3: Kelm, Orlando R., & Victor David A. (2016). *The Seven Keys to Communicating in Brazil: An Intercultural Approach.* Georgetown University Press.

These pocket sized books show how to systematically apply the LESCANT model and approach in designated countries. That is, the books provide comprehensive and operational guidelines for communicating with and in the specified country. A contract has been signed for additional books on other countries.

(c) Du-Babcock, Bertha, & Babcock, Richard. (2021). *The Art of Intercultural Business Communication* by Routledge (tentative title suggested by the publisher).

The proposal for book was accepted by Routledge in December 2020 and is scheduled for complete in June 2021. The book expands the language-based communication model to include IB (international business) expertise-based and intercultural-based communication zones. This expansion provides the basis for developing a comprehensive framework for interpersonal, International, and intercultural business communication. The book also addresses how language, IB expertise, and intercultural competency levels and intercultural attitudes affect organizational communication and how these variables differ in affecting global, multi-domestic, and transnational industries.

The objectives of the session focus on two areas. First, we address the process of writing a book proposal that will lead to a book contract. This part is designed especially for those who may be considering the possibility of writing a book, but also should of general interest to all others who are interested in the writing process. The panel members will interactively address the following questions: (1) the motivation for writing the book; (2) the process of developing, including the updating and revising along the way, and outline for the book; (3) the major challenges and how they were overcome, (4)   the identification of the market for the book, including courses, number and level of students, text or reference book; (5) responses, if required, to referees; (6) coordinating the writing process with co-authors; and (7) the writing style and level.   In addition, Du-Babcock and Babcock will show the Rutledge submission form and then show and discuss their responses.

Second, we will relate the book proposals to the field of international and intercultural business communication. To do this, we will trace the evolution of the field of international business communication from 1992 as illustrated by the first book published on the topic, three pocket sized books at intermediate stages, an in-process book manuscript, and future books.

Victor's 1992 book defined the new and emerging field and presented an enduring framework by identifying the 7 essential variables (LESCANT model) necessary for successful international business communication. The follow up and forthcoming books illustrate and show how to apply the LESCANT variables in particular countries. Du-Babcock and Babcock were inspired by analyzing the fit of the language-based communication model with LESCANT. Only language is found in both models. Thought introspection over time, they gradually found that E from LESCANT was a fit with IB expertise-based zones and SCANT from LESCANT a fit with intercultural-based zones.

Our Corporate Core Values are the Same Worldwide: Translation and Adaptation of Corporate Communication in Multinational Corporations

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NHH Norwegian School of Economics

A set of articulated corporate core values is frequently used as a corporate communications tool. While the aim of using corporate core values in internal communication might be to align employee behaviour with corporate strategy, external use of such values provides the opportunity to paint a picture of the corporation that is likely to appeal to external stakeholders, be it customers, investors, or new talents.

For multinational corporations (MNCs), implementing a set of core values that is shared between headquarters and all international subsidiaries might serve a unifying function, both internally and externally. However, international deployment of a set of core values raises the issue of recontextualisation, i.e., that the meaning of the values might be altered when they are transferred across cultural borders (Brannen, 2004). This can be explained by the fact that people see the world through their cultural lenses, and that within each society, people tend to interpret signs in a similar manner (d'Iribarne, 1989). It is thus questionable to which degree a set of corporate core values can be said to be shared throughout an organisation if the meaning of each value may be perceived differently between headquarters and subsidiaries, and between subsidiaries.

In multilingual MNCs, local languages become additional filters that the communication must pass through from headquarters to subsidiaries. But instead of posing an additional challenge, these linguistic filters could potentially reduce the possibility of recontextualisation. It has been argued that translation is the key to successful transfer of corporate communication (Tréguer-Felten, 2017). Through instrumental translation the translator strives fulfil the intended communicative function of the target text, which can be the same as that of the source text, or a different one (Nord, 1997). This entails adapting the text to the local interpretation framework of the target stakeholders (Tréguer-Felten, 2014). Nevertheless, many companies are reluctant to adapt strategic content (Helin & Sandström, 2008; Barmeyer & Davoine, 2011; Tréguer-Felten, 2014).

The French multilingual multinational that will be studied in this presentation, state that they have chosen to let their corporate values be "adapted into the language of each of our 16 countries of operation and implemented according to the local context". The data consist of the corporate core value statement in English on the Group's international website (the source text) and different language versions of the corporate core value statement (target texts) published on subsidiary websites. The goal of this study is to compare the local target texts with the source text from the headquarters and discuss aspects of the source texts are adapted and which aspects are maintained.

This study aims to contribute to the budding stream of literature that investigates the role of interlingual translation when organisational practices travel and is part of a PhD project intended to contribute to

Erika Darics and Jonathan Clifton's (2018) call for case studies to show practitioners "how the insights of applied linguistics could be applied to management practice".

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Text Mining to Analyze Spoken Vocabulary Tasks

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Background

Most Japanese companies have a problem: a shortage of human resources with the needed language proficiency to participate in professional conversations where English is essential. There are not enough workers with comprehensive skills and a good command of World Englishes, English as Lingua Franca; skills conveying understanding and subtle nuances of English expressions, and the ability to take logical action (Koike et al., 2010; Terauchi et al., 2015).

The number of Japanese companies expanding their businesses globally is still increasing (JETRO, 2019). This trend can be seen not only in the Tokyo metropolitan area but also in regional prefectures such as Hokkaido. It is obvious that there will be many opportunities to use English in business in the near future. Naito et al. (2007) researched how much demand industries in Hokkaido have for English. They found that besides English skills, abilities like situational adaptability, active listening, critical thinking, and problem-solving are also crucial.

It is necessary to improve English skills because desired abilities at work are diverse. University students have fewer opportunities to use English in such scenes as business meetings and negotiations.

What issues will students face when they first enter the business world? Shibata (2015) states that students were confident speaking in English as volunteer interpreters at overseas business meetings with thorough preparation. However, they had a hard time understanding what customers said. Students also had difficulties responding to customers instantaneously. Therefore, the students need to practice using communication strategies such as asking to repeat what they said, confirming what they said, rephrasing what they said, etc.

Previous Studies—Introducing a Speaking Training and Outcomes

Naito et al. (2018) introduced the "3x3 table English training", which is a method to learn English focusing on communication at business scenes. This usually works in pairs. One student looks at the screen, which projects a 3x3 table containing information (i.e., numbers, fruits, vegetables, etc.). The student explains what they see to their partner, who isn't looking at the screen and must reconstruct the information from the auditory explanation.

If needed, a teacher gives some instructions such as how to explain things, which a partner doesn't know. Like "There is a large circle. Inside the circle, there is a square. There is a number '3' inside it.", it is easier to explain things from a high level working down to a more detailed level. Also, cross-checking or confirmation work is necessary as well as using simple English words to bypass situations in which the student doesn't know the vocabulary.

The main feature of this training is that information becomes more complex each time. This requires students to not only use simple English but also think critically about how they convey information. Through this training, students can improve their English proficiency, communication skill, and logical thinking abilities. After the training, the number of the students' spoken words increased (Naito et al., 2018). Their positive feedback was shown in the responses to a questionnaire that was conducted before and after the training. However, it is unclear how much the students' quality of speech was improved by the training. The results from two previous research (Naito et al., 2018) and Naito et al. (2019) led to our current research.

Method

The purpose of this study is to investigate the changes in students' speaking proficiencies. A one-minute-speaking test before and after the training was conducted on a total of 210 students at four universities in Hokkaido in 2019. The task given in this test was to describe a picture containing several objects. The instruction was given in students' first language (Japanese) for clarity. Similar to a speaking task of English proficiency tests such as TOEIC S/W or TOEFL, teachers would not moderate or facilitate their speech during the test. We qualitatively analyzed the results of the tests by using text mining.

Results and Discussion

The following are what we found:

1. The verb "be" was frequently used.

   It seems that be verbs are frequently used because the students can convey information quickly and correctly using a combination of be verbs and nouns, not general verbs, without confirming the English skills of their partners. Using be verbs with nouns is one of the characteristics of Japanese grammar.

2. The verb "be" was used more in the post-test, and students used more sentences than phrases.

   Typical English word order is "subject + verb + etc.," but typical Japanese word order is "subject+ etc. + verb." A verb usually comes to the end in Japanese sentences. In addition to the characteristic of Japanese grammar mentioned above, using noun phrases makes

communication faster than using full sentences. English education in Japan focuses on grammar, however, it is necessary to convey information or respond to questions quickly in business situations. It is suggested that it is better to practice how to utter phrases promptly when thinking about their future careers.

3. When students used phrases, not sentences, they explained details such as positional relationships between the items in the squares and described the items themselves.

   It is important to specify where the items are in "3x3 table English Training". Therefore, students tended to begin by explaining in which square each item.

4. Students expressed sizes such as large, small, short, etc. in the post-test.

   The post-test shows that students used time efficiently to tell the size of the items in addition to where the items were. They improved in English and were able to convey information accurately.

5. Students used "I" and "you" more in the pre-test, which wasn't seen in the post-test.

   The reason may be that the students can look at things objectively. The students changed their minds from "how 'I' see" in the pre-test to "how 'they' see" in the post-test.

6. Students tended to construct sentences logically.

   The students convey information in the following order, a positional relationship, sizes, and colors. This makes their partners understand logically.

The task required to describe several different objects as if they were relaying the information to those who did not see them, so we understand that conveying the location of a thing functioned as showing a transition of explanation. During the test as well as training sessions, we found that students at a lower level often called out names of the objects they saw. (ex. Smartphone.) However, simply naming them was insufficient in terms of preciseness and details. To accomplish this task, students needed to be able to tell the location of an object first, and then what and how it was. (ex. "Left. Smartphone.," "On the left, there is a smartphone. The screen is black.") Besides, this description task would not require transitional words unlike a task of logical explanation. Therefore, naming a location worked as a kind of discourse markers and showed a transition.

In addition, the task was to explain a static condition of objects--not an active state that someone is doing something. To describe a static state, the use of the verb "be" was crucial.

It is also said that Japanese speakers tend to acquire use of be as a copula (NP+V(be)+NP (ex. Ken is a student.), NP+V(be)+AP (ex. She is happy.)) at a relatively early stage of learning English (Shirahata, 1988). As the data in our study showed, the frequent use of the be verb was observed. Consequently, taking into account the two things mentioned above and looking back at the original data, we concluded that learners who use the be verb in the task were able to convey in sentences.

Future Study

These qualitative changes or improvements made the learners describe items simply, logically, and comprehensively. As a result, they seem to be able to exactly convey items in the 3 x 3 table to their partners. For further research, we will compare students who improved their English communication skills and students who didn't after "3x3 table English training" and see for whom this training is suitable.

"3x3 table English training" is developed to increase the transmission rate of speech through repeated practice. As far as watching the results of training, it is suggested we need to consider communicating using phrases, which is lacking in Japanese English education

Acknowledgement

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The Transliterate Lives of Foreign Aid Recipients

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John Riddell, in his book *Does Foreign Aid Really Work?* defined foreign aid as material technical skills, financial grants, concessional loans disbursed to fund specific projects such as infrastructure, education, and lately terrorism (p. 28). Riddell's (2008) work chronicles the rise of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the context of domestic politics as central to shaping aid practice. In this one-dimensional discourse, donors determine the needs of aid recipients without regard to their (recipients') needs. By dint of design or (in)action, aid recipients continue to be excluded from practical conversations about their own wellbeing. Sidelining the lived experiences of aid recipients and privileging the knowledge of the donor class has contributed to the slow pace and unrealized promise of foreign aid. Donors ought to recognize the experiential knowledge of aid recipients as legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, designing, and disbursing aid. Transliteracies draw explicitly on such knowledge in the form of tales, chronicles, and narratives instantiated in various media, rituals, and ceremonials. Such a multi-dimensional approach to foreign aid would challenge the embedded rhetoric of neutral social scientific principles and practices commonly relied upon by donors.

Background: Evolution of Foreign Aid

Historically, enacting foreign aid was motivated by identified needs in a particular community. Over time, however, foreign aid began to traverse into areas of human rights, accountability, and demand for equity (Taylor, 2013). This shift from meeting needs to holding recipients accountable to a standard prescribed by donors altered foreign aid and rendered it an interest driven apparatus. Donors would pilot programs in one place and then, based upon the success of those programs expand and replicate them elsewhere without addressing the social material conditions of the aid recipients (Sridhar, 2008). This rendering of foreign aid as apparatus resulted in products and services that are technologically delivered but not materially responsive. While there is nothing wrong with the role of technology in solving problems, prioritizing technology subverts human concerns and fails to account for the lived lives of individuals (Benjamin, 2019; Noble, 2018).

As an apparatus, foreign aid has been designed and constructed by donors, with the "stated intention of making the aid process more efficient" (McNeill, 1981, p. 14). Because donors have designed it, it invariably clears their threshold of efficiency. However, it leaves out aid recipients as key stakeholders in this donor-receiver relationship, and, as a consequence, traffics in essentialist descriptions of the people it purports to serve. This essentialism emanates from ostensibly objective sources that carefully select and compile ideas that classify and define people and communities – sources such as the CIA World Factbook, the World Bank Living Standards Measurement, and the United Nations Human Development Index, among others. Knowledge from these sources is more encyclopedic and static than it is experiential and dynamic. Hence it yields interventions that are categorically and conceptually constructed. Ferguson (1990) for example, shows how, in the 1970s, donors based their aid to the

country of Lesotho on the idea that it was a peasant subsistence society, thus completely negating the fact that for more than a century, Lesotho had exported labor and agricultural goods to South Africa (p. 70). The rationality of development discourse, he argued, is driven less by facts on the ground than by the interests of the donor apparatus. And it is connected to donor reliance on a delimited technological expertise that marginalizes and thereby diminishes the participatory mechanism necessary to know a people, based on relationship-building.

In this presentation, I will examine the business communication practice of foreign aid more broadly and interrogate how it marginalizes the very people it exists to serve. I will give concrete examples of how two aid agencies that prioritized understanding recipients' technologies of self has changed the calculus on donor-recipient relationship with satisfying results for both (Walwema, 2020; Melé, 2012). Conceptually, I extend Thomas' (2008) concept of transliteracy beyond the ability to read and write across a broad range of media to account for the meaning making practices that people engage in through various media. Because transliteracy, as indicated by the prefix trans-, encompasses "everyday activity" it manifests in interactions and expressions of meaning among people, texts, and acts which are cultural expressions of people's technologies of self (Stornaiuolo, Smith, & Phillips, 2016, p. 68; Foucault, 1992). Thus, I suggest that designing and disbursing foreign aid would look different if donors engaged the transliterate lives of foreign aid recipients. At a minimum, it will end the deficit approaches to foreign aid that are exacerbated by a limited interpretive framework shaped by limited assumptions about people.

Transliterate lives are not technology-centric but rather are expressions of a people's historical and contemporary contexts arbitrated by a broad range of easily accessible media. Ultimately, I argue that a transliteracies focus can help illuminate people's lives so that donors and recipients engage in an equitable relationship that does not privilege donor over recipient. After all, recipients are better able to articulate their interests, a concept consistent with equity, social justice, and ethical business practice.

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Transdisciplinary Collaborations Between Professors and Professionals in Japanese Business Communication

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Now the whole world is facing an unprecedented crisis, the spread of COVID 19. In order to overcome this age of crisis, all the related fields need to collaborate. In particular, considering the economic slowdowns we might have during and after the coronavirus infection, it is especially important to work on the countermeasures and research agendas through transdisciplinary collaborations between academia and business.

Recently, transgressing disciplinary boundaries or transdisciplinarity is becoming a most significant agenda in many research disciplines, including Applied Linguistics and Professional Communication. In the discipline of professional communication, collaborations transcending academia (not only transcending disciplines within academia) will greatly contribute to identifying shared problems and goals, formulating legitimate knowledge, collaborative analysis, and interpretation of data and even publication (Perrin & Kramsch, 2018). There are also interesting empirical studies, for example, on how corporate financial reports can increase their communicative potential with their stakeholders (Whitehouse, 2018).

On the other hand, in terms of transdisciplinary collaborations, Japan is very much behind. The author, as a director of a Japanese association in the field of business communication, has been facing the challenge of how to maximize and incorporate contributions from business professionals into research.

In order to clarify the (potential) obstacles, she has been conducting in-depth interviews with Japanese scholar-practitioners (practitioners engaged in research as well) on the challenges they face when they try to conduct research, the opportunities they enjoy, and the goals both professors and professionals could share in the future. The data based on 10 in-depth interviews has been analyzed, using the Modified Grounded Theory Approach (M-GTA) (Kinoshita, 2013). In this analytical method, basic concepts are formulated from the transcribed data in the open-coding stage, and they are then related to each other and categorized into larger groups in the selective coding stage.

The results revealed both challenges and opportunities at the individual and at the organizational level, respectively. The challenges at the individual level include concepts such as "difficulties in time management" when they are engaged in research, while those at the organizational level include "confidentiality barrier" (the difficulties of sharing the latest information with academia due to confidentiality), and "lack of understanding by Japanese corporations" partly because their contribution to academia is not considered as a part of their performance evaluation, and "peer pressure" for extra-corporate activities that do not produce immediate profits.

On the other hand, opportunities include the possibility of "raising corporate reputations" as well as "individual reputations." In particular, from the perspective of CSR, collaborations between professors and professionals might lead to mutually beneficial outcomes, including collaborative formulation of CSR guidelines. Those at the individual level include "learning new approaches or theories from academia" and "(indirect) contribution to educating and fostering new generations" through sharing their practical experiences with academia.

The interviews also disclosed some gaps between what academia and business professionals expect; the studies led by academia are sometimes not practical enough nor measurable enough from a business point of view.

In this presentation, all of the challenges and opportunities collected from the interviews will be shared, with a special focus on the challenges rooted in Japanese culture and how transdisciplinary collaborations might contribute to the current times of crisis.

When Ready-made, Core Common Ground and Shared Sociocultural Knowledge are Not Available: Timing and Time Perception in Intercultural Business Communication

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Abstract

Research on lingua franca English (LFE) has led to a paradigm shift in understanding linguistic communication in intercultural and global environments. Viewing LFE as a socially constructed practice, rather than a new hybrid language, means that notions of power relation, correctness, and intelligibility can be interpreted differently. This study proposes an alternative approach to LFE discourse by including socio-temporal cognition as a unit of analysis.

Purpose

In a constructivist perspective, discourse is central to social construction (Potter and Wetherell 1987). Language derives its meaning from the way it works within patterns of social relations and elements of social process, in turn, influence the way an account of the world and ourselves can actually live across time (Shotter & Gergen, 1994). Constructivist analyses of empirical data in LFE environments have shown that interactants in various business settings negotiate, compromise, collaborate, and consequently develop situated new norms that are intersubjectively shared in situ (Canagarajah, 2006). Nevertheless, because of the twofold nature of LFE (i.e., both locally-contextualised and globally-decontextualized), interactants rely less on linguistic resources and more on sensory resources. As a consequence of this, members of a community of practice negotiate strategies to deal with linguistic and cultural differences often by way of integrating them into forms of shared sensorial repertoires (Kalocsai, 2014) including timing and perceptions of time. Such LFE strategies are globally pervasive and locally constrained.

Goal

The present study aims to shed light on LFE business communication practices in Europe and East Asia from a sensory-pragmatic perspective.

Methodology

Analyses of LFE construction phenomena suggest two factors that distinguish lingua franca communication from second language or foreign language interactions: a) speakers' meta-cognition of their own lingua franca English practices (Mauranen, 2018); b) speakers' perception of (spatio)temporality (Canagarajah, 2018).

Methodologically, recent developments in the study of social action call for a two-way expansion of the dimensions of analysis. On the one hand, socio-cognitive research in second language acquisition (Atkinson, 2014) and contemporary cognitive science research of group performance (Muntanyola-Saura, 2014) have drawn the attention on social actors' cognition of temporality as a discursive tool creatively embodied. On the other hand, studies on lingua franca interactions and critical applied linguistics have pinpointed the constraints imposed by ready-made temporal definitions.

Shuttling across communities and borders oftentimes invokes influences from different cognitions of time, which shape the interactants' individual repertoires alongside their sense of being part of a dynamically changing social community. When approaching lingua franca discourse, temporal repertoires should be conceived as situated, ecological, emergent rather than fixed entities.

Language mechanisms in lingua franca and in natural language environments are the same but work differently. LFE speakers try to organize their own discursive frames, develop their own temporal lexicon, establish rapport with each other, and attempt to set up shared temporary norms. In doing this, they do not dismantle language; rather, they co-create it temporarily to facilitate the communication process.

Against this backdrop, the limits of most lingua franca discourse-analytical approaches have increasingly become apparent. New methodologies that encompass both the language hybridity and the pragmatic synergies of lingua franca interactions are needed for a "more comprehensive understanding of how discourse practices interrelate with body practices in the material world" (Bargiela, 2013: 41). A neo-constructivist (building on Potter, 1996) approach suggests turning the spotlight on participant's cognition as well as on the resources that participants draw from in order to overcome the constraints that different perceptions of time and environment might impose on the making and retrieval of meaning.

Outcome

Our data demonstrate that on the jobsite various types of LFE interactions are constructed in relation to the participants' background (social) knowledge of temporality as well as the linguistic and sensory resources available in the situation. This results in a shift from passive risk-avoiding to active linguistic behavior.

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Building Intercultural Understanding: International Student Teams from the United States and the United Arab Emirates Create Business Communication Guides

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The United Arab Emirates (UAE) declared 2019 as a Year of Tolerance. During this year, several initiatives occurred to demonstrate that the UAE promotes the acceptance of others and serves as a bridge of communication between different cultures. Instructors from the United States and the UAE saw the Year of Tolerance as an opportunity to build global relationships between their students. After a pilot project in 2019 demonstrated a significant increase in student cultural competence, instructors worked to build a 6-week intercultural and international project for the semester beginning January of 2020. While obstacles abounded, including different university calendars, time zones, and cultural differences, the instructors found that students gained a great deal in terms of intercultural competence, business communication, and writing skills.

Three instructors, two in the US and one in the UAE, designed a 6 to 8-week project for their students in fall of 2019. By the time the project began in January 2020, they were joined by two instructors in the UAE and an additional instructor in the US. These six instructors used Google docs in order to submit student names and create international teams composed of three students from each country. The lists of students were then shared in their classes so students themselves could add information like email and phone numbers. The group members used WhatsApp to communicate casually and email or Google Docs to work on the actual document for the project.

Prior to the start of the project, instructors collaborated on task schedules, assignment ideas, and possible due dates for various parts of the group project. This was one of the challenging aspects of the project, as all the universities involved (4 total) had different semester start dates, holiday breaks, and student expectations. Even the courses were different, as some of the courses were business communication courses while others were beginning technical writing courses and still other intercultural communication courses. There was much to consider and negotiate in order for the project to commence.

Students were asked to create a business communication guide for doing business in the UAE and the USA. Specifically, students were tasked to:

1) Communicate casually via WhatsApp with group members in order to get to know one another. Exchange pictures and videos of their life in either the US or the UAE and communicate various aspects of culture such as family life, school, holidays/vacations, etc.
2) Conduct research on several topics of how to do business in the UAE and the USA. Topics will be assigned by instructors to each group.
3) Create a business guide for doing business in the US and UAE. Group members will collaborate to write and design a guide of 6-9 pages complete with visuals, a cover, table of contents, and references.

During the project, the UAE closed all universities for 4-weeks in order to stall the spread of the coronavirus. Instructors had to readjust due dates and expectations for students, while acknowledging how beneficial it was for students to see a realistic international collaboration where not only time zones must be navigated but a global epidemic.

At the conclusion of the project, students wrote reflections about their experiences working with students in another country and the challenges they faced in collaboratively writing a business communication guide. Their reflections and thoughts about the project demonstrate that students saw the project as critical to their understanding of intercultural communication and how difficult it can be to collaborate across borders on writing projects. This experience positively impacted students' cultural competence and business communication skills.

By communicating with each other casually and as a part of a class project, students were able to create more realistic perceptions of student life in the Middle East and the United States. This project helped both US and UAE students to realize that their perceptions of each other were often not based in reality. Instructors hope that by sharing their experiences and a template for others to conduct similar projects, more students will benefit from actual engagement in intercultural communication and international business projects.

This presentation reviews the various steps instructors used to create and facilitate the intercultural/international business communication project between students in the United Arab Emirates and the United States. The presentation includes a discussion on how other instructors might pair their students for international projects and the creation of class assignments that promote tolerance among cultures.

A Neoconstructivist Approach to Lingua Franca English Business Discourse

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Analyses of LFE construction phenomena suggest two factors that distinguish lingua franca communication from second language or foreign language interactions: a) speakers' meta-cognition of their own lingua franca English practices (Mauranen, 2018); b) speakers' perception of spatiotemporality (Canagarajah, 2018).

Methodologically, recent developments in the study of social action call for a two-way expansion of the dimensions of analysis. On the one hand, socio-cognitive research in second language acquisition (Atkinson, 2014) and contemporary cognitive science research of group performance (Muntanyola-Saura, 2014) have drawn the attention on social actors' cognition of their own use of lingua franca through as a prerequisite for interacting with the (social) world. They consequently develop a negotiated lingua franca English through a socio-cognitive interface. On the other hand, studies on lingua franca interactions and critical applied linguistics have pinpointed the constraints imposed by ready-made spatial and temporal definitions. Shuttling across communities and borders oftentimes invokes influences from different cognitions of time and space, which shape the interactants' individual repertoires alongside their sense of being part of a dynamically changing, fluid space or community of practice. When approaching lingua franca discourse, temporal and spatial repertoires should be conceived as situated, ecological, emergent rather than fixed entities. Language mechanisms in lingua franca and in natural language environments are the same but work differently. LFE speakers try to organize their own discursive frames, develop their own temporal lexicon, establish rapport with each other, and attempt to set up shared temporary norms. In doing this, they do not dismantle language; rather, they co-create it temporarily to facilitate the communication process.

Against this backdrop, the limits of most lingua franca discourse-analytical approaches have increasingly become apparent. New methodologies that encompass both the language hybridity and the pragmatic synergies of lingua franca interactions are needed for a "more comprehensive understanding of how discourse practices interrelate with body practices in the material world" (Bargiela, 2013: 41). A neo-constructivist (building on Potter, 1996) approach suggests turning the spotlight on participant's cognition as well as on the resources that participants draw from in order to overcome the constraints that different perceptions of time and environment might impose on the making and retrieval of meaning.

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Preferences for Written and Spoken Expressions of Thanks Among American Professionals

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Gratitude has been the subject of academic research for many decades with hundreds of studies dedicated to it (Tesser, Gatewood, & Driver, 1968). Gratitude is connected to many aspects of well-being, including self-esteem, mood, life satisfaction, pro-social attitudes, helping behavior (Adler & Fagley, 2005; Grant & Gino, 2010; Wood, Froh, & Geraghty, 2010).

Some management consultants call gratitude expressions the "critical responsibility" of managers and that such expressions of gratitude should be frequent, sincere, and specific (Baehr, 2015; Bregman, 2012). Yet, research about gratitude in the workplace is relatively undeveloped (Waters, 2012). In particular, there is little to no research about how and when professionals should use written versus spoken expressions of thanks.

As a result, our team conducted a study of American professionals to explore preferences regarding written and spoken expressions of thanks. In Study 1, 58 professionals in diverse roles journaled about their gratitude experiences for one month. The professionals responded to our various prompts throughout the month. Three of these prompts focused on their experiences with written and spoken gratitude expressions. Findings in this exploratory study formed the foundation for a larger survey study. Therefore, Study 2 involved a survey of 1,202 American professionals that represented a broad range of gender, age, income, region, and organizational size.

We found that written thanks are particularly valued because it shows time and effort, involves reflection, allows specificity, can be reminisced, can serve as documentation of success, is particularly suitable for major accomplishments and efforts, and can be shared with others easily. On the other hand, spoken thanks is particularly valued because it is stated in the moment, is more casual, is well-suited for smaller efforts and minor accomplishments, allows more verbal and nonverbal expressiveness, and can be a form of public recognition. Overall, in high-effort and high-accomplishment situations, the most preferred forms of gratitude expressions, in order of importance, tend to be: spoken thanks just to you; handwritten thanks only to you; written thanks in digital form just to you; spoken thanks in front of others; written thanks for others to see; and handwritten thanks for others to see. One interesting finding is the extremely common desire for handwritten thanks. Roughly one-third of American professionals prefer this form of thanks. Further, this is unaffected by generation – Millennials are just as likely to value handwritten thanks as members of other generations. We provide a variety of implications for research and practice.

Both studies affirmed the deep-seated desire of nearly all professionals to be thanked for their efforts and accomplishments. Professionals value thanks in the moment and often cherish it later, particularly in times of challenge and adversity. In line with our expectations was a general preference for private

thanks, with roughly two-thirds of professionals preferring private thanks exclusively and women being more likely to express this preference when receiving thanks from bosses. Further, a large majority of professionals are bothered when they don't receive the thanks they feel is deserved. Our study generally shows that the workplace is full of missed opportunities to thank others and that professionals hold a variety of expectations for private-versus-public thanks.

We offer several recommendations for future research and recommendations for practitioners. For example, we recommend further research that frames gratitude expressions in terms of social comparison theory and media synchronicity theory. For practitioners and students, we employ a variety of approaches to teach and train professionals and students to improve their expressions of gratitude. Of note, the findings from this study inform and supplement these various approaches. We discuss the following recommendations: (a) understand the trade-offs of spoken and written expressions of thanks; (b) learn to give personalized, one-to-one expressions of thanks; (c) write a gratitude journal; (d) write thank-you notes under a variety of scenarios; (e) engage in role-playing exercises; (f) interview professionals about preferences; and (g) ask trainees and students to share their feelings during gratitude expressions.

Collaboration Skills and the Value of Targeted Instruction

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NACE's 2020 Job Outlook Survey found that 86.3% of employer respondents want to see evidence of the "[a]bility to work in a team" on an applicant's resume (2020). How to prepare students in collaborative best practices remains a rich area for conversation in our discipline. Business communication instructors may agree with the long-held assertion "that our students learn a great deal through collaborative projects" (Porter, 1990, p. 18); however, instructors need to take time to not only design and assign group projects but also to scaffold collaborative learning through additional modules of targeted instruction. Based on my student surveys, the "how-tos" of group work are often missing from students' experience, especially in business and technical writing courses designed for English majors. This presentation will explore student perceptions of how they have been trained in collaboration skills, and it will include examples of how instructors can offer targeted instruction to support student transfer of skills and growth in student self-efficacy in teamwork.

Business communication scholars have argued that students need more than collaborative assignment opportunities. Students of business communication benefit the most from team projects when instructors carefully scaffold collaborative strategies (Frederick, 2008; Vic, 2001). With these assertions in mind, I have tested a hypothesis: professional writing students at liberal arts colleges may frequently participate with group projects meant to prepare them for the workplace, but they rarely receive sustained training in best practices for dealing with the challenges teamwork presents. My IRB-approved study surveyed 44 students, mostly English-Professional Writing majors, in a Technical Writing course. At the start of the course, students commented that they had previously learned collaboration by doing rather than via intentional instruction. In effect, they had not yet received intentional training in collaboration skills despite years of persevering through collaborative project assignments.

My writing students' self-assessment of past training shows a theme: either they do not recognize collaboration training as such, or they have not received scaffolded training. One representative student reflected on her past collaboration training like this: "I have been assigned group projects and [was] motivated by the grading system." Another student voiced a commonly held opinion: "I don't believe I've ever received any 'training' so to speak. Teachers and professors have always sort of assigned the project, told us to work together/communicate, and then let us go to work on the project." Based on these findings, I have designed a collaboration unit that coaches writing students through challenges that teams often face.

My presentation offers a literature review to prove that writing students require substantial, intentional instruction in collaborative techniques. The poster talk includes an overview of the types of collaboration advice available in three popular business and technical writing textbooks. I share a range of collaboration training options, including the Gallop Strengths assessment, a product that my college uses, one that offers a "Team Strengths Map" that helps teams to better understand how they

interrelate. I also explain how students can learn to use the app Teams or the free app Trello, both of which prepare students for jobs that expect experience with project management software. In additional to technology, simple conversations are vital to successful collaboration. My presentation talks about how to coach students through conversations with unresponsive or unreliable teammates. I also cover how students can role play difficult team conversations, as well as how to manage task assignments and meeting minutes. This session proposes that business communication educators must make time to move beyond an "exposure" approach to collaboration. Instead, instructors must teach best practices, intentional reflection, and self-evaluation.

Leadership Language: Creating an Empowering Organizational Culture

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Ineffective communication in the workplace can dramatically reduce employee productivity and prevent organizations from creating empowering organizational culture. Organizations need to commit to consistently examining the impact of the language used by their executives, managers, supervisors, and employees. Careful and consistent examination of workplace language allows an organization to determine what's working, what's not, and what adaptations need to be made to alter language so that it promotes increased employee productivity and strengthens organizational culture. Organizations can increase the strength of their workplace culture by committing to using leadership language to empower the members of the organization and create a more inclusive workplace.

Leadership language is a valuable communication tool that can strengthen our relationships and help us connect with those around us. This presentation examines three essential questions; 1) How do we use leadership language to empower employees, increase productivity, and drive intentional action in the workplace? 2) How do we use leadership language to effectively collaborate with others? 3) How do we determine the effectiveness of leadership language in creating an empowered and inclusive organizational culture?

The first step to understanding how to use leadership language is to establish a definition of leadership language that can be broadly accepted. For the purposes of this presentation leadership language is defined as; purposeful language that empowers others, promotes productivity, increases positive interactions, and motivates others towards action. The goal of leadership language is two-fold; to make an impact and to communicate a message. Leadership language consistently focuses on how the message can best be delivered to reach the target audience and how that audience will receive the message, in this case the audience is members of your organization. Leadership language promotes growth, confidence, awareness, and effective communication in the workplace. Participants will be introduced to a four-step process used to create a leadership language strategy that can be implemented though interactions with employees to make an impact and communicate a message. This strategy creation is an iterative process that promotes purposeful communication between executives, managers, supervisors, and employees. Managers utilizing leadership language are able to more effectively connect with their team members because their focus is on the employees' needs. Leadership language puts the receiver first and develops the message to meet the receiver instead of demanding that the receiver meets the message.

Leadership language is powerful collaborative tool and can be used as a bridge to unite teams, especially when team members are accustomed to using industry specific language that may be unfamiliar to those they are collaborating with. Using leadership language in the workplace is a collaborative process that shapes the overall vision and purpose of an organization. Too often team members aren't focused on how to communicate with one another and spend excess amounts of time miscommunicating ideas

causing frustration and low productivity. When teams focus on leadership language as a communication tool, they can eliminate much of that frustration by motivating and supporting one another facilitating effective collaboration experiences. In this presentation we will discuss leadership language in teams and examine some workplace scenarios where leadership language can be used effectively in organization and how we can quantify that effectiveness. Participants will be presented with two methods that organizations can use to quantify the impact of language on employee empowerment and organizational culture. These methods can be used by any business to measure the growth of their corporate culture and help determine if they are achieving their goal of an empowered organizational culture through the use of leadership language.

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Organizational Communication, Research Focus

A Content and Framing Analysis of COVID-19 Pandemic Business Disruption and Closure Messages

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The COVID-19 pandemic has been an unprecedented multi-dimensional crisis of not only public health, but business, economics, information, and government competency. Although a crisis like no other in scope, magnitude, and spread of misinformation, stakeholders in this case have been no different in expecting relevant, actionable information from business leaders, including customer email, wide-media distributed open letters, and press releases providing notice and updates on business closure and disruption. COVID-crisis letters and email to customers have several purposes: to announce disruptions to expected services and workarounds; to reassure employees and customers about health and safety precautions, to outline continuity plans and policies, and to express solidarity with stakeholders and their communities (Harris, 2020). Because what a company says and does in its crisis response is instrumental to building trust, even when as now there are no attributions of organizational responsibility, outreach to people affected by the pandemic has come with the need to not only align crisis messages with the rest of the organization's communication and values but meet stakeholder expectations by responding in ways that acknowledge stakeholder uncertainty, comfort them, and ease their fears. Crisis communication toolkits and guides appearing in March and early April 2020 stressed the need for business leaders to care and build trust and understanding through expressions of empathy. Public policy organizations such as the Brookings Institution, for example, emphasized the need for business leaders and their response plans to show "empathy, unprecedented optimism, and flexibility that will lead business out of crisis" (Stokes, 2020).

Empathy, the reaction of one individual to the observed experiences of another (Davis, 1983), has long been seen as a key dimension of crisis communication and has been shown to determine stakeholder responses to crises and crisis communication (Schoofs et al., 2019). Although expressions of empathy can have an impact on perceived powerfulness, depending on the stage of a crisis and the type of communication required at each stage, the experience of empathy with an organization minimizes the negative impact of a crisis on organizational perception (De Waele et al., 2020). Empathy, a motivator of prosocial behaviours through increased concern for others (Davis, 2005), is multidimensional—a construct comprising both cognitive components (the ability to understand viewpoints and take another's perspective) and affective components (an emotional response to the emotional state of another individual) (Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004; Blair, 2005; Schoofs, et al., 2019).

This study attempts to examine North American businesses' crisis strategies at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic through a content and linguistic analysis of mass circulation CEO open letters and targeted customer email by assessing (i) how, if at all, the empathy called for by policy organizations is expressed by type and degree in initial business closure and disruption notices at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic in North America; (ii) the kinds of frames that have been predominantly used; (iii) the kinds of main and sub-themes; (iv) the keywords used in the responses; and (v) how the pandemic and the CEOs

who stand in for their organizations in this stakeholder communication are rhetorically constituted in the dataset. By collecting and analyzing the contents of 50 randomly-selected multi-sector business mass-circulation CEO open letters and targeted email notifications to customers, this study used initial coding and refining coding to identify and evaluate the frames used in messages appearing from March 12, 2020, just before the declaration of a U.S. national emergency, to April 12, 2020. The ten frames that commonly occurred were as follows: informational (operational changes and precautions), social responsibility (health and welfare, aid and support for employees), philanthropic (monetary and in-kind donations, deferral of fees and commission), commitment to customers, empathy (cognitive), empathy (affective), multi-level leadership/partnership/solidarity, support and gratitude for frontline crisis response, historicizing/new reality, and resiliency/recovery. In addition to these major (or master) frames, the samples in the dataset were also coded for sub-themes, such as positivity/encouragement/self-help, which are often used to communicate with target audiences and have a strong influence on reader perception (Reber & Berger, 2005), an important corporate goal. Unlike some of the public relations materials used by companies when they face crises, open letters and email to customers in the dataset typically lack style features such as powerful, newspaper-like headlines, comprehensive lead paragraphs, third-person self-reference that Jacobs (1999) associates with the "appropriate news style" of the press release, a form intended for verbatim reproduction by the media. The samples in the dataset reveal a more personal approach and tone that does not refrain from emotional expression and presents the human face of organizations that share in the suffering and loss of their stakeholders. The findings contribute to existing bodies of research on framing and Harris, J. (2020, April 1). 7 brands getting email right during a crisis. Content Marketing the role of empathy in crisis communication, particularly in victim-cluster crises, and the discursive construction of the global pandemic and its localized impacts.

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An Experimental Study on the Influence of Persuasive Message Strategies on Less Empathetic Individuals

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Theme

Empathic concern has been identified as one of the key drivers for helping behaviors. Less empathetic individuals have shown to be less likely to donate for charitable purposes, to volunteer, and to engage in altruism (Willer et al., 2015). From a communication perspective, this raises two important questions: What are the mechanisms explaining this gap? And to what extent can persuasive message strategies help increase support for prosocial advocacy from less empathic individuals?

Purpose and Goals

Focusing on attitude formation in the context of prosocial advertising campaigns, the purpose of this study was two-fold: First, we aimed to explain why empathic individuals were consistently found to have a more favorable attitude toward prosocial advocacy. Using dual process theories (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), we hypothesized that involvement would mediate the influence of empathic concern on attitude toward an advocacy (H1). Second, we sought to identify visual and verbal message strategies that help reduce the empathy-related gap. The study examined how the situation of people in need should be framed to increase the support from less empathic individuals. We investigated the effects of depicting daily life situations where people in need are happy versus sad (visual message strategies) and the effects of presenting statistical versus anecdotal evidence (verbal message strategies). Drawing upon literature on trait theories of motivation (Scheffer & Heckhausen, 2018), we expected that less empathic individuals would hold a more favorable attitude toward prosocial advocacy when exposed to a sad daily life image compared to a happy daily live image (H2). Facial expressions of emotion cause emotional contagion in recipients. When someone displays sadness, recipients are likely to share that pain. This emotional contagion of sadness was theorized to increase sympathy for others and, as a result, to reinforce the motivation of less empathic individuals to help (Small & Verrochi, 2009). Moreover, we anticipated that anecdotal evidence would be more effective than statistical evidence (H3). Anecdotal evidence facilitates to group oneself with others (Zillmann, 2006). When less empathic individuals can relate themselves to others, they should feel greater motivation to engage in helping behaviors (Kang & Lee, 2017; Small & Loewenstein, 2003).

Methodology

Design

We conducted a 2 (daily life situation: sad vs. happy) x 2 (evidence type: statistical vs. anecdotal) laboratory experiment.

Participants

The initial sample consisted of 214 graduate and undergraduate students from a Swiss university. The students received a small reward in return for their participation.

Topic and Stimuli

In cooperation with the largest Swiss disability nonprofit organization, we tested a prosocial advertising campaign which addressed mobility issues of people with physical disabilities. Manipulation occurred in the image (sad vs. happy daily life image) and in a text paragraph (statistical vs. anecdotal evidence).

Measures

A German version of the questionnaire was developed using back-translation. If possible, we used empirically validated German translations for the items. Measures of attitude toward the advocacy, empathic concern, and involvement were obtained along with several control variables.

Outcomes

To test H1, we conducted a mediation analysis using the bootstrap procedure provided by Hayes. The indirect effect of empathic concern through involvement was significant since the 95% confidence interval for the mediation analysis did not include zero. The results support hypothesis 1 suggesting that involvement fully mediates the effects of empathic concern on attitude toward the advocacy.

To test H2 and H3, we performed a hierarchical regressions analysis. A significant interaction effect between daily life image and empathic concern was found for attitude toward the advocacy ($\beta = .209$, $p < .05$, $r = .367$). A follow-up analysis showed that the sad daily life image significantly improved the attitude toward the advocacy among less empathetic individuals ($\beta = -.214$, $p < .01$). The sad and happy daily life images were equally persuasive among more empathetic individuals ($\beta = .076$, $p = .383$). These results support hypothesis 2, indicating that the use of sad daily life images helps reducing the empathy-related gap in attitude toward the advocacy.

In contrast, the analysis revealed no significant interaction effect between evidence type and empathic concern on attitude toward the advocacy ($\beta = .038$, $p = .661$, $r = .251$). Hence, hypothesis 3 had to be rejected.

Overall, the present study explored the mechanisms driving the empathy gap in people's attitude toward an advocacy. Our findings indicate that this gap is partly explained by less empathetic individuals' lower levels of involvement in prosocial issues. Moreover, the results imply that the attitude toward prosocial advocacy can be improved among less empathetic individuals by exposing them to a sad daily life image. In terms of practical implications, this study suggests that campaigners should prefer sad over happy images in prosocial advertising campaigns.

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COVID-19 on Campus: How the University of Delaware Responded to Our New Reality

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COVID-19 is the definition of a PR nightmare for every organization. This is an unprecedented time of a chaotic pandemic, and many organizations had to decide how they would respond in the face of this time. Instead of doing a case study, this analysis actively critiques organizational communication in real time. New developments are made daily because of the fluidity of the situation. The University of Delaware's response to the COVID-19 crisis was chosen due to a unique role and relationship to the University of Delaware's communication efforts. The author happens to be an agent of UD's communication, as a UD Social Media Ambassador. She has her own UD branded Twitter and Instagram account, and UD uses what I post on these accounts on their main @udelaware accounts. Their job is to basically show both current and prospective students what a real student's life looks like at UD. It's an interesting job to have because it "shows off" all of the awesome stuff that UD has to offer to prospective students, but also shows current students how to get involved with activities on campus. UD's Office of Communications and Marketing also asks them to help them with any social media campaigns that they have running- whether it's photoshoots, video shoots, or making UD memes. The University of Delaware and universities in general are unique in that they are communicating to such a large amount of people in different regards. One of the key players in UD's communication to the public is the OCM, or Office of Communications and Marketing. The OCM is responsible UD's social media channels, which are viewed by prospective students, current students, faculty, alumni, trustees, and the general public. As such, this job cannot be taken lightly, and it requires diligence in creating content that people from all of these demographics want to see. Another large communicator from UD is President Dennis Assanis. President Assanis is responsible for communicating critical information to students, faculty, and staff in a professional manner. He sends out frequent emails about various important events and news about UD. Because UD needs to appease various audiences, its response to COVID-19 has been very interesting to analyze and critique as they could have done many things better, but they handled certain things well. The paper revealed that the Social Media Ambassadors were incredibly underutilized during this situation because peer-to-peer communication is something that students would have appreciated for support. The paper also revealed that the University of Delaware utilized their social media channels in different ways than usual and struggled to post new and relevant content in the face of online classes and an empty campus. Also, the paper revealed that the usual organizational chain of command with UD's employees and community was disrupted which caused some distrust and anger within the University that could have been avoided. COVID-19 has caused many problems for organizations worldwide, and its unprecedented nature makes it an optimal organizational communication topic to study.

Organizational Communication, Research Focus

Crisis-induced Government Learning: A Review of the Sanlu Infant Formula Scandal in China

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Background of the Study

The 2008 Sanlu Melamine Infant Formula Scandal in China

The Sanlu Group was one of the leading dairy companies in China. On September 11, 2008, a Shanghai based newspaper released a news report entitled 14 Babies in Gansu Sickened with Kidney Stones after Drinking Sanlu Infant Formula. It immediately triggered the biggest food safety scandal ever happened in China.

The Sanlu Group's infant formula products were contaminated by melamine, a toxic chemical used mainly in making plastic products. Melamine was adulterated into watered-down milk in the name "protein essence" (J. Chen, 2009, p. 109) to fool the nutrition inspection instrument. Using melamine had been an open secret in the dairy industry (Fairclough, 2008; Gale & Hu, 2009).

Government Handling of the Food Safety Crisis

When a crisis occurred, the public, politicians, and media will urge responsible people accountable (Broekema, 2018). Therefore, in governance of a food safety crisis, accountability is about examining the causes of the crisis.

By September, 4 babies were announced dead from the kidney disease caused by consuming melamine tainted infant formula and more than 54,000 were sickened. The head of AQSIQ was forced resign, and the party chief of Shijiazhuang municipal council was sacked from position (China Daily, 2008b; The State Council of China, 2008). By January 2009, 60 people were arrested (Gao, Knight, & al., 2012) and 21 of them were convicted of related crimes (Ghazi-Tehrani & Pontell, 2016). CEO of the Sanlu Group was sentenced to life in prison. Two dealers who added melamine to milk were executed (China Daily, 2008a).

Theoretical Framework

Crisis-Induced Organizational Learning

Pearson and Mitroff (1993) worked out a five-step approach to address crisis management (CM): signal detection, prevention, damage containment, recovery, and learning. The goal of CM is not only to prevent crises from happening, but to allow organizations obtain recovery faster and learn from crises effectively (Mitroff, 1994).

Can governments learn? Many research findings indicate that public organizations often learn poorly or slowly (Broekema et al., 2017; Deverell, 2010; Smith & Elliott, 2007; Stern, 1997). Repetition of the same mistake suggests an urgent need to achieve a better understanding of the dynamics of crises and learning and the relationship between them (Antonacopoulou & Sheaffer, 2014). In response to the constant challenges from food safety hazards derived from traditional and emerging causes, food safety institutions must equip themselves with new knowledge and translate the knowledge into implementation through organizational learning.

Research Questions

In the last decade, there was a significant increase in the scholarly research on food safety issues worldwide. However, most of these studies have focused on crisis management from business organizations' perspective. Learning in public organizations induced by food safety crises has been neglected. To address this research gap, this paper seeks to examine evidence of organisational learning in the Chinese food safety authority induced by the Sanlu melamine scandal with the following two research questions:

RQ 1: What loopholes were identified in the Chinese food safety regime in the Sanlu melamine scandal?

RQ 2: What evidence of organizational learning occurred in the Chinese government agency induced by the Sanlu scandal?

Methodology

Case Study Design

The case study method is an empirical research study that examines an existing phenomenon within its "real life context" (Yin, 1984, p. 23), especially when the researcher has to use multiple sources of evidence to clarify the blurred boundary between phenomenon and context. A case study aims to achieve understanding of the complexity of the research object by investigating and analysing a single or collective case, in which researchers are supposed to find out generality and particularity of the case by examining its nature, historical background, and political factors (Stake, 1995, 1998), which entails comprehensive and systematic collecting and analysing data (Patton, 2015).

Qualitative Content Analysis Approach

According to Krippendorff (2013), qualitative content analysis is an empirical method that examines textual data by interpreting its meaning. It can be used to examine text data abstracted from any meaningful matters like texts, images obtained from media reports and other sources in print or electronic form (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Krippendorff, 2013). Croucher and Cronn-Mills (2014) suggest content analysis can be used systematically to depict, make inferences, categorise informative messages in qualitative studies. This research method can be used empirically to analyse a perceived social problem and find evidence for change (Drisko & Maschi, 2015).

Data Collection and Analysis

The corpus data of this study consists of news articles and government documents and releases related to the Sanlu scandal and Chinese food safety laws/regulations, investigation report. Policy texts before or after the crises will also be included to present historical background and evidence of changes in the system.

To obtain data for the 2008 Sanlu melamine infant formula scandal in China, Chinese characters "三鹿事件" and "结石奶粉" meaning "Sanlu Incident" and "calculus milk powder" are used as key words to search Chinese news media websites. To collect government documents, same key words were used to search government websites. As a result, the study got 609 news articles and 166 official releases and other related documents on the Sanlu melamine scandal between 2008 and 2019. NVivo, text processing software designed to undertake qualitative content analysis (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013), was used to code and analyse the text corpus.

Findings

This paper identified the following problems in the Chinese food safety regime. The major contributing factors to the Sanlu melamine sandal were found to be unethical business practices in the Chinese dairy industry, the ineffective supervisory system, regional protectionism, restrained role of news media in China, and lack of accountability in the profession.

Plenty of evidence of organizational learning in the Chinese food safety authority has been identified. To address the fragmented food safety supervision system, the Chinese government restructured the China Food and Drug Administration. The segmented regulator design was integrated to one newly established food safety authority, the State Administration of Market Regulation. Within a year of the scandal, the first food safety law came into force in China (K. Chen, Wang, & Song, 2015). To improve risk management, crisis response, and other food safety related issues, the Chinese food safety authority is running several programs sending officials overseas to learn from advanced countries.

Organizational learning is a process rather than an outcome. Food safety remains a serious concern in China. The Chinese food safety authority still needs to address problems like loose inspection and testing, risk management (Jia & Jukes, 2013; Ross, 2012), double standards in food processing and law enforcement, controlled news coverage, regional protectionism in food industry.

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Organizational Communication, Research Focus

Discourse Analysis of the Medical Professional Talk: Presenting Information in Academic Communities

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In a study of needs analysis for English for Specific Purposes, there are three categories of needs that can be classified: the needs of discourse community, the needs of teachers and universities, and the needs of the learners. (Miyama, 2000). As English stands being the international language for communication, this is a vital point to consider in the medical field. In Japan, among many business circles, the social status of medical doctors is high compared with that of the US and Europe, so first, the needs of the discourse community among medical professionals should be analyzed in this study. Communication in hospitals will ascertain life or death; albeit doctors can assess the situation from symptoms or with the use of automated medical equipment, only patients can communicate their response to tests, medications, and any other concerns they may have which can affect treatment altogether. Sometimes the doctor's inefficiency for meaningful communication causes problems because communication becomes much more complex and convoluted when either or both interlocutors does not speak a shared lingua franca well. An example of this is the context of health care for indigenous people, who might not speak English as an official language. (Small, 2019). In the presentation,   doctors' communication with patients and with audiences in academic society as part of business communication are analyzed by recording and analyzing interviews with several doctors. In addition, possibility of categorizing the doctors in types of conveying information in business communication and academic societies are suggested.

There have been several studies that dealt with the identity of medical doctors in Japan. Some of them discuss the images of physicians ten years after graduation by distributing questionnaires to young physicians. For example, in a study focused on the self-images of the physicians, Furukawa et al. (1995) suggested that the identity of medical professionals and self-image of physicians were based on not only specialist qualifications and an M.D. degree, but also on other criteria such as conducting research, publication of articles, and presentations at academic meetings. Also, in a study observed the physicians' moral errors and technical errors while finding a model for self-control in the medical training system in Japan, Kato (2009) categorized physicians into two groups; a physician who had strong ties with the university and weak ties with the university. This is one of the catalysts for the classification in the current study.

If the structure of discourse produced by doctors with university affiliations is quite different from the discourse of doctors without these affiliations, suggesting those differences can help create some options for medical students to know what types of strategies they should take to learn in the medical field effectively, especially by the use of English as a medium of communication not only for academic purposes but also for proper diagnosis and dialogue between them and their future patients, what must be the choice they must make for their careers.

In the process of investigating how the medical doctors in Japan live in a kind of Discourse communities, the research refers to one of the theoretical models presented by Gee (1999).

He suggested that the Discourses are always embedded in a series of social institutions. Thus, it is useful to think about social and political issues. He also pointed out that the Discourses existed before each of us came on the scene and most of them will exist long after we have left the scene. Thus, the current research also refers to the way medical doctors prepare for oral presentations. In this research, the following research questions are set.

1. Is it possible to categorize the types of doctors' way of business communication including presenting information in medical society?
2. If so, what are the factors that relate to creating several types of presentation styles?

By giving interviews to several doctors who have strong ties with universities and who do not, the presentation will focus on whether the types of business communication including presenting information are related with the psychological factors or socio-linguistics factors in search for the answers to these two research questions.

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Organizational Communication, Research Focus

From Perception to Engagement: How LinkedIn's Champion Recruiters Frame Their Facebook and Website Discourse for Success

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Abstract

The traditional model for recruiting employees–live interactions and/or print advertising—has been dramatically disrupted by two forces: the rise of Millennials and Gen Z in the work force and the information technology revolution. As a result, e-recruiting has become an HR imperative second only to operational staffing. A substantial amount of research has been conducted on e-recruiting, but almost none of it addresses the all-important aspect of effective messaging strategy. To address this gap, our study will use framing theory to examine recruiting discourse on the websites and Facebook pages of five corporations recognized by LinkedIn as champion recruiters of young business professionals. We identified the three prime, issue-specific frames deployed in these online texts and then analyzed how the related rhetorical elements support the development of the frames' thematic core and enhance their suasory impact. The conclusion summarizes key findings and includes brief remarks on the somewhat differing rhetorical strategies used on the websites and Facebook.

Introduction

Corporate recruitment encompasses all communication-related activities intended to identify and to attract potential employees (Allen, Van Scotter, & Otondo, 2004). Leading up to the twenty-first century, corporations focused on the twin priorities of staffing and recruiting, which alternated between providing spokespersons for live presentations and composing purpose-specific texts for print media (Blackman, 2006). By the beginning of the twenty-first century, two forces were driving dramatic changes in the recruiting environment—a demographic shift in the workforce and the information technology revolution. First, Millennials and then Generation Z began steadily displacing Baby Boomers in the workplace (Fry, 2018). Of arguably more consequence is the information technology revolution. Although some significant differences separate these two now-dominant cohorts, as a result of the information technology revolution, they both matured using laptops, smart phones, and tablets connected in cyberspace to websites, Twitter, and Facebook. Both now-dominant cohorts comfortably negotiate a whole range of personal, social, work-related, and job-seeking activities in cyberspace (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). They also share expectations of a nurturing corporate culture and sterling corporate citizenship (Ferguson & Morton-Huddleston, 2016).

Literature Review/Background

Our literature review shows that research on the emerging field of cyber recruiting is considerable in some areas—like platform design, legal issues, and recruit responsiveness—yet extremely sparse in others (Maurer & Liu, 2007). Only a few studies focus on effective messaging, and that small corpus

concentrates on text richness theory and application (Frasca & Edwards, 2017). This study intends to bridge that gap by using framing theory to analyze recruiting-related texts from the website posts and Facebook pages of five corporations recognized by LinkedIn as champion recruiters of young business professionals: Deloitte, JP Morgan, Lockheed Martin, Oracle, and Target (Abbot, 2016). A frame is a highly compressed cognitive schema that foregrounds selected aspects of a text, and in doing so, increases the saliency of such key elements as commonplaces, visual displays, or thematic narratives, which in turn can introduce ideological commentary on how a society should ideally function, which in turn can decisively influence decision making (Entman, 1993).

The purpose of this study, then, will be to answer three research questions: R1) What are the core frames used on each corporation's website? R2) What are the core frames used in each corporation's Facebook posts? R3) To what extent is there framing congruence between the two platforms dictated by single corporate authorship, and to what extent is there divergence prompted by the differing rhetorical practices/approaches in those two discursive spaces?

Methodology/Analysis

This study encompassed two phases. In the first phase of this study, the researchers surveyed an array of texts posted on each corporation's website About Us section. The core frames were identified by examining those web texts for dominant patterns, repeated themes, phrases, words, and concepts. These repeated elements were synthesized, and the resulting frame concepts labeled as follows: empowerment, inclusion, and investment. The second phase involved an analysis of the rhetorical elements used to develop and to support the thematic core of each frame.

Our analysis of texts from the five corporate websites identified these three frame types:

Empowerment

These corporations use this frame to communicate how they systematically empower transformative career change for every individual they employ. This frame is mainly developed through commonplaces of past facts and future facts meant to demonstrate the superiority and relevance of their skills enhancement and advancement opportunities, through authority derived from awards and associations, and through written testimonial narratives.

Inclusion

These corporations use this frame to communicate how they strategically enrich their respective talent pool through their distinctly inclusive recruiting practices. This frame is mainly developed through the commonplace of past facts regarding efforts to include under-recruited groups (women, persons of color, persons challenged physically or mentally), the commonplace of future facts regarding internal and external initiatives to promote racial equity going forward, and testimonial narratives that personalize the success and benefits of their policies and practices.

Investment

These corporations use this frame to communicate how they aggressively invest in efforts to combat climate change and ensure the sustainability of their own enterprise. This frame is mainly developed through examples of ecological remediation sites, the commonplace of past facts regarding reductions

in emissions and waste and the commonplace of future facts regarding programmatic initiatives to reduce their environmental footprint.

Our analysis of the Facebook pages of the five corporations identified the following frame types:

Empowerment

Corporations used this frame to inspire employees to invent new technologies and to advance innovation. This inspiration with one company came in the form of awarding grants to university research faculty and PhD students.

Inclusion

Corporations used this frame to communicate commitment to inclusion and diversity through images, with one company incorporating a rainbow around its logo. Included with the images were personal narratives to inspire and encourage minorities. One company created a storyline with characters to intentionally increase interest among elementary aged to high school-aged women.

Investment

Corporations used this frame to assistant clients, employees, and the community to identify unrealized opportunities and provide a path toward solutions. These paths came in the form of education seminars or working with hundreds of nonprofit organizations worldwide, or using technology developed by the company to provide solar energy technology to underprivileged communities.

<div align="center">

Conclusion

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Our research takes a beginning step toward bridging the gap between the technological/managerial research and the rhetorical research in this field. The three core frames (empowerment, inclusion, and investment) embedded in both the website and Facebook texts clearly contribute to the recruiting excellence and success of Deloitte, JP Morgan, Lockheed Martin, and Target. These frames do so in large part because they associate these corporations with cultural values ostensibly shared with the targeted audience(s) by virtue of their innovative, proven mentorship programs that empower employee career success in the twenty-first century, robust advocacy of diversity and inclusion both in the workplace and in society as a whole, and extensive investment in the development and implementation of sustainable business practices. The presence of testimonial narratives in both the web texts and Facebook posts supports the empowerment and inclusion frames by humanizing the benefits of these efforts and thus adding an emotional appeal to those frames. The web texts' use of authority in the investment frames significantly enhances the credibility and legitimacy of messages regarding their corporate stance on the environment. The principal difference between the web texts and the Facebook posts lies in how these attributional associations are communicated. The website iterations of past fact/future fact commonplaces—almost exclusively in the form of written texts-- create a distinctive dynamism through their description of people, policies, and programs in action, which closely associates those actions with the five selected corporations. In contrast, this associative dynamism, while present in the Facebook posts, is largely projected through visual rather than verbal representations of people, policies, and programs in action and thus attaches/transfers that dynamism to the five selected corporations in a different perspective.

In the end, this study is about how these corporate rhetors move their cyber audiences from what is most likely a somewhat vague, but positive perception of the selected corporations to a readiness at some level to become engaged in the preliminary stage(s) of the employment application process for one or all five of these champions.

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Organizational Communication, Research Focus

"Good Order and Discipline:" When "Do as I Say, Not as I Do" is Not a Good Leadership Communication Strategy

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On March 24, 2020, while the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt was in the South Pacific, a coronavirus outbreak occurred aboard the ship of over 4,000 Navy personnel. The outbreak started with a few cases, but then the number of cases dramatically increased. Within a week, the ship was forced to sail to Guam. At that point (March 31), Captain Brett Crozier wrote a four-page letter to over two dozen individuals along the chain of command requesting that the ship's crew be evacuated and quarantined:

"Removing the majority of personnel from a deployed U.S. nuclear aircraft carrier and isolating them for two weeks may seem like an extraordinary measure. ... This is a necessary risk. Keeping over 4,000 young men and women on board the TR is an unnecessary risk and breaks faith with those Sailors entrusted to our care."

On April 2, 2002, Captain Brett Crozier was relieved of his command because the letter had leaked – and was published – by The San Francisco Chronicle. Crozier's removal was the decision of then-acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas Modly. Modly announced that he removed Crozier because he sent the letter over "nonsecure unclassified email" to a "broad array of people" rather than up the chain of command. "I have no doubt in my mind that Capt. Crozier did what he thought was in the best interest of the safety and well-being of his crew," Modly observed. "Unfortunately, it did the opposite. It unnecessarily raised the alarm of the families of our Sailors and Marines with no plans to address those concerns."

Modly followed up that announcement by flying to Guam and speaking to the ship's crew directly. During his 15-minute speech, Modly said of Crozier: "If he didn't think—it was my opinion, that if he didn't think that information was going to get out into the public, in this information age that we live in, then he was A, too naive or too stupid to be the commanding officer of a ship like this."

Modly continued, "I understand you love the guy. It's good that you love him. But you're not required to love him… Crew of the Teddy Roosevelt. You are no obligation to love your leadership, only to respect it. You are under no obligation to like your job, only to do it."

Modly's speech generated far more media attention than Crozier's letter, partly because of his attack on Crozier, partly because of the negative reaction the crew gave it. Modly tried to clean up things by issuing an apology. Unfortunately, his apology wasn't clear. Modly suggested that Crozier was not "naïve or stupid," but then followed up with:

"I believe, precisely because he is not naïve and stupid, that he sent his alarming email with the intention of getting it into the public domain in an effort to draw public attention to the situation on his ship. I apologize for any confusion this choice of words may have caused."

The problem with Modly's apology is that he has changed his mind about Crozier being naïve or stupid, to now believing that his behavior was purposeful. In other words, Crozier planned on the leak, thus intentionally going around the chain of command with his actions.

The apology from Modly did him little good. He resigned two days later.

Using media reports from ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Fox, the Washington Post, the New York Times, and the San Francisco Chronicle, as well as transcripts of Crozier's letter, Modly's announcement of removing Crozier, Modly's speech to the Roosevelt crew, and Modly's apology, I will present a case study of this crisis. I will use Benoit's Theory of Image Restoration to analyze Modly's apology after his speech attacking Captain Crozier.

Finally, I will discuss the major takeaway from this case. Acting Secretary Modly charged that Captain Crozier was not upholding good order and discipline when he sent out his letter. Yet, Modly's attack on Crozier demoralized the crew of the USS Theodore Roosevelt. That's not upholding good order and discipline, either. For a leader to be successful, that leader's rhetoric and actions must match. "Do as I say, not as I do" doesn't cut in the military – or any other organization.

Inherent Biases in Algorithms: An Ethical Obligation for Organizational Transparency

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Ethics has been a long-standing topic in business communication; most textbooks contain either a separate chapter on this topic or address this topic throughout the book. Publications in business communication about ethics have largely focused on how to teach students to apply ethical principles in business communication (Lehman, DuFrene, & Lehman, 2010; McQueeney, 2006; Pomerenke, 1998; Speck, 1990). Research published about ethics in corporate communication includes a study about ethics in financial reporting and how these reports communicate ethics to the public (Camiciottoli, 2011). Topics of ethical communications become even more complex in the digital age, as with the artificial intelligence there is a question of agency and responsibility. One such study focuses on Artificial Intelligence in Applicant Tracking systems and discusses how to teach strategies to write for one's advantage considering the algorithms of these systems (Amare & Manning, 2009). Another study discusses artificial intelligence's role in using voice command for planning business meetings (Porter, 2017). While these studies acknowledge that algorithms add a new aspect of business communication we need to account for, neither of these studies address the ethical aspects of communication to the public on how companies use algorithms for decision making. As these algorithms are mostly proprietary, how they make decision about major areas of life, such as healthcare and criminal justice, is concealed and this lack of transparency should be studied. Although algorithms are software representations of mathematical computation and concepts of "common understanding," once they are fed with data and produce results, they lose their impartiality and are just another human-produced artifact requiring critical interpretation and assessment.

Because of their increasing role in decision making, algorithms are becoming a new form of political authority (Amoore & Raley, 2017). Many vendors of ubiquitous algorithms describe their products utilizing metrics that are represented to be fact based, objective, and rational. These descriptions are based on assumptions that the models represent "the real world" and are complete and accurate. Appealing to improved efficiency and accuracy, these algorithms leave no room for multiple realities. The ethical framework used in the creation of an algorithm will influence the interpretation and results produced by the algorithm. Current vendor publications concerning algorithms are void of the ethical framework used by the creators of the algorithms. Transparent business communications about the ethical framework used in creating and the judgment of input and output data is required to enable understanding.

This paper will examine the ethical issues of algorithmic bias used in many areas of daily life and essential services such as healthcare, criminal justice, and governmental resources that inherently include built in societal prejudices (Ledford, 2019) and will describe the current state of business and other organizations communication practices about the algorithms they deploy in delivering their services.

First, the presentation will discuss the results of three case study analyses of how algorithms used in three major areas of life have been shown to be biased. One case of algorithmic bias is illustrated by a widely used algorithm in the healthcare sector which according to Obermeyer, Powers, Vogeli, & Mullainathan (2019) unwittingly exhibits significant racial bias. This healthcare algorithm which is classified as a commercial risk prediction tool was designed to reduce healthcare costs by directing the allocation of resources to the patients who were likely to benefit most. Instead, the algorithm has been shown to disadvantage minorities (Noble, 2018). The second case of algorithmic bias reviewed is about criminal risk assessment algorithms that essentially try to determine the trajectory of a person's life (Hao, 2019). The resulting impact of this is that communities that have disproportionally been targets of law enforcement such as the poor and minorities will receive high or bad scores from these criminal risk assessment algorithms. The third case reviewed in the presentation is an algorithm (VI-SPDAT) used by many municipalities to match the most vulnerable homeless people with appropriate housing (Eubanks, 2017) by assigning a vulnerability score to individuals. However, the objectivity of this system can be questioned because it depends on the degree of applicants' disclosure and the degree of trust an applicant has in the authorities. It is well documented in the literature that the poor and minorities have lower levels of trust in the police and other governmental institutions.

Second, the presentation will explain the current communication practices used by organizations utilizing algorithms. This part of the presentation will focus on the results of the analyses of company disclosures regarding their use of these algorithms on their websites. An overall lack of transparency will be established followed by an ethical argument for why this transparency is needed in business communication. This lack of transparency is visible in many organizations and is also accompanied by an extreme emphasis on numbers and facts as if numbers alone can tell the whole story of the human condition. For example, the developers of the VI-SPDAT algorithm discussed above go to great lengths on their organization's website to explain the statistical refinement process of their product, use of experts and their feedback to legitimize and show the benefits of using their algorithm. However, their description does not address the actual logic used to create its output or address the ethical framework or issues of culturally driven biases affecting participant disclosure while filling out the applicant forms.

The outcome of this presentation is that attendees will become more informed and hopefully not accept output from an algorithm on its face value alone and as a result reject these algorithms as a new and automatic form of political authority until the ethical framework used is transparently communicated. Attendees will also be suggested to incorporate discussions of the implications of algorithms into their business communication and ethics curriculum to improve their students' critical thinking in this age when algorithms permeate all aspects of our daily lives. These discussions then can result in the developing an ethical framework around artificial intelligence and the use of algorithms to ensure inclusiveness for all members of society.

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Organizational Communication, Research Focus

Organizational Information Seeking in the Time of COVID-19

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This mixed-methods study in-progress explores how the global COVID-19 pandemic is impacting the ways in which employees seek the organizational information necessary to do their jobs. In December of 2019, a novel Coronavirus was first observed in Wuhan, China, and has since spread to 216 countries and territories with 4,628,903 cases and 312,009 deaths as of May 18th (WHO, 2020). The disease associated with the virus has been named COVID-19 (CDC, 2020), and on March 11th, the COVID-19 outbreak was characterized as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020).

 The main way to control the potential impacts of this pandemic is through means labeled "flattening the curve", or "using protective practices to slow the rate of COVID-19 infection so hospitals have room, supplies and doctors for all of the patients who need care" (Maragakis, 2020). The primary way to flatten the curve is to limit contact between individuals as much as possible, best achieved by through "social distancing" or "keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home" (CDC, 2020). In order to encourage social distancing, beginning in early March 2020, individual states in the United States began implementing "Stay at home" or "shelter in place" orders (Ortiz & Hauck, 2020). By April 6th, 2020, 43 states had implemented such orders, with the remaining 7 states (Arkansas, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming) garnering public pressure from Surgeon General Jerome Adams to also implement these orders (Kamisar, 2020).

As such, many employees began working from home in order to effectively socially distance, some by choice and others due to official orders from their state. This change, and its quick implementation, has led to changes in the ways in which employees communicate. The specific area of interest outlined in this study is that of organizational information-seeking. Miller (1996) identified five distinct information-seeking tactics that organizational newcomers use to gain necessary information: overt, observe, third party, indirect, and testing. While employees during the COVID-19 pandemic may not be new to their position, many were quickly thrust into a "new normal" of working remotely, often with little to no preparation or experience in "working from home." This in-progress study explores how changes due to COVID-19 have impacted how and when employees seek relevant organizational information. Specifically, the study asks participants (who must be working remotely for the first time due to the pandemic), to complete Miller's (1996) information seeking strategy measure as it applies to their current work-from-home position. In addition to the information seeking measure, respondents also report demographic information, information regarding their position, employer, and job responsibilities, as well as their work from home "set-up" (Wi-Fi, dedicated work-space, access to needed software and hardware, etc.). Further, respondents are asked to complete a series of open-ended qualitative questions that will provide more information on the specific challenges and strategies for information seeking during what is, for many, a rapid and massive change in organizational functioning. Final data and analysis will provide much needed information on this extremely timely and important topic.

Perception vs. Reality: Misinformation and Disinformation in Corporate and Workplace Communication

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David W. Leapard, "Speaking of Misinformation, Let's Talk Reverse Mortgages!"

A relatively new instrument has recently appeared on the financial scene called a "Reverse Mortgage." The industry has recruited TV stars, including Henry (The Fonz) Winkler and Tom Selleck, to extol the virtues of this relatively new concept. These celebs are not completely lying, but they are only presenting one side of the picture.

What really is a reverse mortgage and how does it work? Beyond the endorsement of Winkler and Selleck there is more to the story and further examination needed. One of the first questions to examine is who needs a reverse mortgage and why? Beyond that, how do they work and are they as beneficial as the celebrities proclaim them to be? In my 25 years of teaching Personal Finance at the university level I often reminded students that if something seems to be too good to be true it probably isn't. While there is a grain of truth to the reverse mortgage concept, it needs careful examination if one is to avoid its pitfalls.

The prime target for these mortgages is older people whose homes are almost paid off, if not completely. These folks have spent 25 to 30 years or more making their mortgage payments on time and have gradually accumulated an estate with those payments. With a reverse mortgage the lender will offer the borrower a large amount of cash which may be taken incrementally or in a lump sum. The lender will frequently point out that the proceeds derived from the reverse mortgage are completely tax free. That is the absolute truth since the reverse mortgage is a loan and the proceeds are not taxable income. They also will often point out that the borrowers can remain in their home for as long as they live, which is also true. What they often forget to tell you is that it is a requirement and that the

mortgage is due in full on the sale of the property should they decide to sell and relocate or downsize before they die.

Can a reverse mortgage ever be a positive for the borrower? Perhaps—in a situation where the owner is in an end-of-life stage and is not likely to sell or seek another property. Be advised, however, that when it comes time to settle the estate after death the mortgage company will be represented at the settlement and will receive payment in full before proceeds from the estate are disbursed. Thus, if the property is valued at $500,000 and the reverse mortgage accumulation is $200,000 it will be subtracted from the value—reducing the estate to $300,000. These mortgages are legitimate instruments but require careful examination before acceptance.

Naomi Warren and Peter W. Cardon, "How Transparent are Vendors About the Algorithms for Job Hiring Software?"

Hundreds of software vendors are developing platforms to help recruiters more effectively attract and hire talent. These platforms include hiring functions such as testing and assessment, applicant tracking systems, video interviewing, and recruitment CRMs. Increasingly, these platforms also include automated tools to improve efficiencies. Many vendors suggest these automated tools decrease human biases. These automated systems rely on algorithms, often built on AI capabilities, to make decisions and recommendations about prospective talent. Still, the rate at which automated systems has developed has outpaced opportunities for assessments by independent researchers (Rahavan et al., 2020).

There are many high-profile examples of algorithm-driven, automated systems failing. For example, Amazon experimented with an automated system to read job résumés and create short lists of the most highly qualified candidates. They found that the systems often discriminated against women for software developer and other technical roles. This was in large part because the systems relied on a corpus of résumés that were written mostly by men, and this data fed and informed the algorithms (Dastin, 2018). Yet, many current vendors of algorithm-driven systems now claim they remove human biases and support fairer and more inclusive hiring practices (Yager et al., 2019).

We are currently examining the claims of dozens of these software vendors, including Eightfold AI, HireVue, Textio Hire, Entelo, Gap Jumpers, and pymetrics. We are evaluating the textual and visual information (i.e., pictures, video, charts, and other graphics) on their websites (including their blogs), YouTube, white papers, and other publicly accessible information to explore the following: (a) What claims do they make about fairness (including overcoming bias) in the hiring process? (b) What claims do they make about the outcomes of using their technologies? (c) How do they describe and label the technologies? (d) How easy is it to find information about the algorithms and their development? (e) What forms of persuasion do they rely on in terms of logos, pathos, and ethos? (f) Whose voice do they use to provide information about the algorithms? (g) Overall, to what extent do the claims inform, misinform, and disinform potential users of the technology?

We are adopting several research frameworks to help us address these questions (Arnold et al., 2019; Raghavan et al. 2020; Freelon & Wells, 2020; Moreira & Eiró-Gomes, 2019). From the work of Raghavan and colleagues (2020), we are adopting their evaluation of pre-hiring AI algorithms as far as assessment types, data used to develop and inform the algorithms, information about the validation process, and guarantees. Further we are adopting Arnold and colleagues' (2019) more general work about the information that all vendors should provide about AI algorithms, which they suggest should involve

required labeling that is similar to food labeling (Arnold et al., 2019). Finally, we adopt the frameworks of Freelon and Wells (2020) and Moreira and Eiró-Gomes (2019) to explore the nature of misinformation and disinformation in these vendors' claims about the algorithms that support their products.

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Susan L. Luck, "On the Outside but Thinking We're In: Information, Misinformation, Disinformation and the Lack of Knowledge That Drives our Opinions"

Once upon a time, so the story goes, US citizens could read the daily newspapers and watch the evening news, confident that what they read and heard was, as Walter Cronkite said as he signed off each night, "the way it is." Information was information, and what they were told were all the facts. Today, charges of misinformation and disinformation, which Bennett and Livingston (2018) defined as "intentional falsehoods spread as news stories or simulated documentary formats to advance political goals" (p. 1), abound. The rise of social media has seen these two terms bandied as accusations between individuals and groups as an attack on those who have different views. Hemsley, Jacobson, and Gruzd (2018) explored whether social media and the information it spread was good or evil, concluding "the determination of good and evil depends on where you stand." For most of us, where we stand is on the outside, looking in, confident that we know "the way it is" when we know nothing at all.

Even in the 18th century information spread as "news" was a powerful influence on society. In 1787, Edmund Burke coined the term "The Fourth Estate" to refer to the media and its explicit capacity of advocacy and implicit ability to frame political issues. The public was unaware that, as McChesney (2004) summed up, very little of what they received was the whole story. Instead, McChesney argued, the "market Uber alles" (p. 175) dictated that what the public gets as "facts" follows what the public themselves want to believe.

Humans like to divide complex issues into simplistic ones, choosing a villain often simply because we can feel superior to him. William James noted in 1896 in the first of his "Will to Believe" lectures that most

people accept a belief without identifying any evidence to support that belief, while Langer (2014) noted "most people react emotionally and call it thinking" (preface). While we may think that we have the facts and know how to distinguish information from misinformation and disinformation, we're fooled into making judgements based on little evidence of events, which are themselves presented to us via media whose main value is entertainment.

In my presentation, I will bring an insider's view of the parts of stories not broadcast to the public. These come from my 20+ years as an arbitrator and mediator and an additional four years as a television news writer. Possible inclusions—based on the chair's decision—include the following:

- The Duke University Lacrosse Case, wherein Duke's faculty was quick to judge the lacrosse players on national media based on conformational bias, unaware that Durham, NC, police officers were already working with NC Bar Investigator Katherine Jean. They also were unaware of most of the facts that would bring down Mike Nyfong yet found themselves convinced they had the information to conclude the players' guilt or innocence.
- One of the Wells Fargo cases, wherein what the public saw as unethical behavior was actually the result of a corporation too big to understand each department's impact on each other.
- A common and well-meaning HR law that allowed an unscrupulous financial advisor to keep defrauding people of retirement money.

Information, misinformation, disinformation, and "knowledge" are discrete terms, but their meanings exist only in the interrelationships between these concepts. Without "information," for example, there can be no "misinformation." "Knowledge" may consist entirely of "disinformation." My presentation will explore these interrelations by examining several recent legal actions that bring the concepts into sharp focus.

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Privileging Interaction Over Perfection - Does it Matter?

Mollie Hartup
Kent State University

A sense of belonging on a college campus has been defined as "students' perceived social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, and the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and important to the campus community or others on campus such as faculty, staff, and peers" (Strayhorn, 2019, p. 4). For college students, a stronger sense of belonging may lead to deeper engagement with studies, persistence, and success, while a lower sense of belonging is associated with lower persistence (Gopalan & Brady, 2019).

COVID-19 disrupted higher education during Spring 2020, forcing many students enrolled at physical colleges and universities to depart their campuses and finish the school year remotely through online learning. Ceremonial events were cancelled, including commencement and other celebrations. Students, especially seniors, lacked traditional means of closure to the school year. Various colleges and universities responded by implementing virtual year-end ceremonies. However, often these "virtual events" consisted only of a video for the viewer to watch.

The present study explores the experience of the college student who attended at least one virtual event in 2020. To what extent did attending such an event further a student's sense of belonging? To what extent did interaction (or lack thereof) during the virtual event impact the perceived benefit of the event?

A mixed quantitative and qualitative survey was distributed to graduating seniors who attended at least one interactive event during their final semester of college and incoming freshmen who attended at least one interactive virtual event in their first semester. Results will be explored.

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Organizational Communication, Research Focus

Research Roundtable

Meg Barnes
University of Mississippi

Karlee Posteher
California State University, Monterey Bay

Junhua Wang
University of Minnesota

Sushil K. Oswal
University of Washington

The research roundtable invites participants with expertise in a theory or method of business communication research to describe a current project, explain their approach and data, and indicate the project's implications and/or applications. The aims of the research roundtable are to: Provide a forum for communicating research in business communication; exchange ideas on research projects, theories and methods; share expertise; ask questions on a 'sticky' problem; form research collaborations; keep abreast with developments in the field.

Each presenter will describe their project in 5 minutes, and they will then break up into thematic groups for further discussion.

Meg Barnes, "Resume Writing, Nudging, and Generating Impression"

This research uses a social-cognitive framework to compare effects of resume formats on reviewers using both traditional and self-presentation resume formats. The implications of the outcomes of the study are expected to contribute to literature and inform resume writing, scanning, and reviewing practices. The presentation will discuss the study, brainstorm follow-up, and seek ABC collaborators for future resume studies.

Karlee Posteher, "College Sports Recruiting Amidst a Pandemic"

The purpose of this study is to explore which computer-mediated communication is used to facilitate coach/recruit communication amidst the COVID-19 pandemic within the American college sports industry. This is a continuing study in its early stages aimed at understanding the creative computer-mediated communication of those involved in the recruitment industry to continue to work through the pandemic.

Junhua Wang, "Using Corporate Public Discourse to Practice Power: An Integrated Approach to the Deconstruction of Inclusion and Diversity Report"

This research examines ten diversity and inclusion (D&I) reports from a linguistic perspective. It develops understanding of different illocutionary actions adopted, investigates common rhetorical moves used within the D&Is, sets a research model for examining public discourse from an integrated linguistic and rhetorical approach and sheds light on teaching effective corporate business reports in business communication.

Sushil K. Oswal, "Pandemic Effects on Information Design"

This study analyzes the communicative purposes, audiences, and approaches of publications of advisory and informational documents from major organizations, such as the CDC and the WHO, on the COVID-19 pandemic. The variety of purposes encompassed by these publications provides a valuable opportunity to examine information design.

Small Business vs. Big Crisis: Examining Small Businesses' Crisis Communication During COVID-19

Lucia Sigmar; Marsha L. Bayless; M. Shane Allen
Stephen F. Austin State University

Abstract

This study examines approximately 60 business messages sent to clients and customers by small businesses in rural, East Texas in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors investigate channels of communication, strategies, and rhetorical moves, as well as the timing and content of these messages, during the internal and instructional stages of the crisis. The results will show how small businesses used crisis communication strategies to influence their constituents and mediate the risk to their business environments.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 was an unexpected event that drastically altered lives across the United States beginning in late January. By March, public K-12 schools were closed, and colleges and universities switched to online modalities in midterm. Restaurants were expected to cancel dine-in and offer curbside pickup or delivery. Some businesses deemed non-essential were ordered closed down such as hair salons, nail salons, and gyms, as were other businesses with close contact between customers and business workers. While many white-collar workers were able to transition to working remotely from home, others were not so fortunate which resulted in job furloughs, layoffs, or job loss. Within weeks Congress passed the Paycheck Protection Program to offer small businesses payroll protection for their employees (Niquette, Jacobs, Sasso, & Levitt, 2020).

Purpose

The communication strategies that businesses typically employ during disasters depends on the stage of the crisis; initially, internal messages attempt to build a positive view of the business, but later messages instruct customers in how to respond to the crisis (Lehman, DuFrene, & Walker, 2018). To establish the extent to which and how businesses communicated with the public, the authors collected messages from businesses in smaller towns and communities (many of them rural), during the internalizing and instructing stages of crisis management during the COVID-19 pandemic that reached East Texas in mid-March of 2020. Many of these businesses announced new business hours or procedures or were in the unfortunate position of closing down indefinitely.

This study analyzes these messages from a variety of businesses to determine the communication channels, strategies, and the rhetorical moves that were used in communicating in a time of unprecedented crisis for all segments of society; it also examines the timing and content of these messages. Were customers warned to stay away? Were customers encouraged to continue doing

business and if so, how? Were any counterproposals or creative "work arounds" made to business procedures due to COVID-19? Was helpful information distributed to customers about dealing with the virus?

Findings and Conclusions

These research findings may add additional perspective on how businesses (and in particular, small businesses) can successfully communicate to their constituents during a crisis, and more importantly, how they may be able to mitigate damages at the outset and during a crisis.

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Student Research Panel

Geert Jacobs
Gent University

Erika Darics
Aston University

Stephen Carradini
Arizona State University

Victoria S. Nydegger Schrøder; Agnes Bamford
NHH Norweigan School of Economics

Dacota Liska
University of South Florida

Joelle Loew
University of Basel

This panel convened by Geert Jacobs, Erika Darics, and Stephen Carradini highlights contributions of students to business and professional communication scholarship on a wide range of topics and via a wide variety of theoretical lenses and methodological approaches. It offers an international perspective and provides a safe space for discussion and feedback.

Victoria S. Nydegger Schrøder, "The Translation of Corporate Values in Multinational Corporations. To Adapt or Not to Adapt?"

It can be challenging for multinational corporations (MNCs) to communicate efficiently and consistently across cultural borders. For multilingual MNCs, language becomes an additional filter that the communication must pass through. This PhD project explores the role of interlingual translation and adaptation of corporate communication in MNCs and investigates whether the linguistic filter might be a tool rather than an obstacle.

Agnes Bamford, "Global Paternity Leave; a Question of Equality or Ethnocentrism?"

This work in progress focuses on gender equality and cultural differences in multinational companies and aims to explore whether a recently implemented global paternity leave benefit is an example of

gender equality or ethnocentrism. This study represents a novel comparison, with a point of departure in linguistics, of how global parental leave is communicated and perceived in different socio-cultural settings.

Dacota Liska, "Anonymity, Expertise and Trustworthiness: The Credibility of Redditors in r/books Recommendations"

Research suggests that identity and credibility are crucial components of effective electronic word-of-mouth communication; however, discursive analysis of an understudied subset of these communications, recommendations on Reddit, suggests that discursive features associated with effective electronic word-of-mouth communication may vary depending on the platform on which they appear and the nature of the community producing and reading it.

Joelle Loew, "'As a Woman you Have to Find Other Ways to Earn Respect.' Capturing the Gendering of Work in Stories of Agile IT Teams in Switzerland, the UK and the US"

Part of an ongoing PhD project on professional communication in agile teams, this presentation focuses on narratives told by IT professionals in interviews on their experiences of working in such teams. I discuss the discursive strategies through which participants construct and orient to gender issues in their respective professional contexts to contribute to current debates on the gendering of work.

The Silent Echo, The Aspiring Voice: How Motivating Language Influences Employee Silence and Voice

Jacqueline Ann Mayfield; Milton Mayfield
Texas A & M International University

Robyn Walker
University of Southern California

Communication in the workplace – as in any relationship – requires a complex dance. At times people should speak up – to voice their ideas for how to make operations run more smoothly, to give new ideas on broaching initiatives, or just to give support for those who merit it (Burris et al., 2017; Van Dyne et al., 2003). But communication also consists of silence – of not voicing ideas. Voice and silence also can impact significant organizational negative outcomes such as performance and employee job satisfaction (Brinsfield, 2013; Van Dyne et al., 2003). Cases in point, it may be better for people to not speak when they cannot contribute meaningfully, when the wrong word would create misunderstandings, or comments would create resentment and doubt among others. Combined, the positive aspects of certain forms of voice and silence produce prosocial communications – a type of communication that leaders want to foster in their followers (Chamberlin et al., 2017; Van Dyne et al., 2003).

Relatedly, leaders want to reduce the types of silence and voice that create acquiescent and defensive communication – communication associated with negative workplace outcomes. Acquiescent communication occurs when followers either speak out or remain silent because they believe external pressure from others – especially the leader – diverts them from authentic messages (Chamberlin et al., 2017; Van Dyne et al., 2003). Defensive communication comes from a place of fear – either of retribution or loss. In such situations, followers will speak out or remain silent to protect themselves rather than offer constructive communication (Burris et al., 2013; Van Dyne et al., 2003). In both scenarios, followers send distorted messages. They either fail to identify important issues or only echo what they believe a leader wants to hear.

So, what can leaders do to increase prosocial communication while reducing acquiescent and defensive communication? This study examines how leaders use motivating language to accomplish these goals. Motivating language (ML) theory (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018; Sullivan, 1988) provides a communication framework categorizing all leader-to-follower communication into three dimensions: direction-giving language (specifics about task accomplishment), empathetic language (emotional support and bonding), and meaning-making language (cultural vision and guidelines while aligning organizational and follower goals). Extensive research has shown that high leader ML use has a positive effect on such outcomes as follower performance, job satisfaction, and decision making (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018). Research has also supported the causal nature of ML's influence (Fan et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2009), and corroborated key ML prerequisites; namely, leaders must have behavioral integrity (Holmes, 2016) and appropriately apply all three dimensions to optimize results (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2007).

However, ML has been viewed as a monologue – going from leader to follower. Yet we know that rich workplace communication comes from dialogues – when both parties join the conversation. By examining the effects of leader ML on follower positive communications, this study gives us insights into how leaders can promote such a dialogue.

Methodology

To explore this phenomenon, we collected data from a diverse set of 715 respondents from the USA through the Mechanical Turk recruitment site (Buhrmester et al., 2011; Difallah et al., 2018). We collected data using the motivating language scale (Luca & Gray, 2004; Mayfield et al., 1995) and a modified version of Van Dyne and colleagues' silence and voice measures (Van Dyne et al., 2003) to capture acquiescent, defensive, and prosocial follower voice and silence communications. We tested the construct relationships with a partial least squares (PLS) structural equation model (Chin, 1998; Mayfield & Mayfield, 2012).

Results indicated good overall model diagnostics and that motivating language influenced all three types of follower communication. For every one standard deviation increase in leader ML use, we saw a 0.36 standard deviation decrease in acquiescent communication (-.35 decrease in acquiescent silence and -.33 decrease in acquiescent voice), a 0.27 decrease in defensive communication (-26 silence and -.24 voice), and a 0.44 (.30 silence and .41 silence) increase in prosocial communication.

Conclusion

This study offers evidence that leader speech can encourage followers to communicate more prosocially while reducing their use of voice and silence that arises from acquiescence and defensiveness. These findings can help leaders foster better dialogues in the workplace and also aid researchers to better understand how and why certain communication occurs in organizations. These study discoveries will assist scholars to better grasp motivating language's effects as well as grow our knowledge of why employees choose to voice or withhold communications with others.

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You're Safe with Us: Data Security Breaches and Discourses of Crisis

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Research supported by a C. R Anderson Foundation grant

Organizational crises affect the management of organizations, employees and stakeholders, and the society in which organizations operate (Fearn-Banks, 2016; Gilpin & Murphy, 2008, Marsen, 2020). This presentation presents results of a project investigating texts produced by organizations after crises related to digital data breaches. The research follows an eclectic approach informed by discourse analysis, narrative theory, and crisis communication theory. The presentation analyzes the external communication strategies of companies in different industries, which have experienced significant breaches of privacy. Despite the recent pervasiveness, social significance, and large number of interactants in data breach cases, there is surprisingly little work done on data beaches from a discourse perspective.

In particular, the presentation will focus on and compare written documents produced by two companies, Equifax and Marriot Hotels, after their data breach crises in 2017 and 2018, respectively. Equifax is a major consumer credit reporting agency, which collects and aggregates information on over 800 million individual consumers and more than 88 million businesses worldwide. Marriot is the third largest hotel chain in the world, with 30 brands and about 7,003 properties in 131 countries. The presentation will describe results analysing discourse strategies employed in the companies' press releases, annual reports, company statements and social media items. It will focus on discourse features and linguistic patterns found in the companies' public relation documents and examines the narrative structure of the texts to identify the positioning of different agents. As research has shown, the conflicting narratives produced during a crisis reflect the interests and worldviews of different individuals and groups and provide a rich source of data for the study of persuasion and (mis)communication (Fenton & Langley, 2011; Heath, 2004; Marsen, 2014).

The research on which the presentation is based aims to answer these questions:

1. How do organizational narratives configure and represent the crisis? In other words, how are agents, their intentions and actions constructed in texts produced by the organization after a crisis?
2. What are some prominent discourse strategies employed by the companies and how can these be seen as responses to social concern and criticism?
3. How does the story of the crisis map onto the story of the organization? In other words, in what ways does the representation of the crisis in organizational texts match (or not) the 'brand image' of the company in the wider society as this image has developed through company reputation and mission statements?

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Organizational Communication, Teaching Focus

Strategies for Teaching Crisis Communication

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Social media has changed the landscape for all manner of corporate communication, including altering forever one of the most critical areas of corporate communication: Crisis Communication. This is a sub-specialty of public relations designed to ameliorate and protect a company or organization that is facing a sudden and significant challenge to its reputation. In Crisis Communication, it is critically important how companies/organizations respond to such unplanned emergencies; with the advent of social media, a new facet of response is required: speed. As recently seen in the most substantial public crisis ever experienced – the world's current COVID-19 crisis – companies (or, governments, in this case) have responded differently and to massively different results. Good communication suddenly became a matter of life and death.

On a corporate level, look at the recent crisis experienced by United Airlines when they innocently (but disastrously) overbooked a flight from Chicago to Louisville. It took mere seconds for visuals (both photographs and videos) to go viral of police officers dragging an overbooked passenger off the plane. Add to that a tone-deaf response by the airline's CEO. In the aftermath, communication analyst Francis Ingram proclaimed, "This is a prime example of an organization's response making the situation worse. United's belligerent defense, and frankly crazy use of language, has done the unthinkable – made a terrible situation even worse." As a result of poor crisis communication, United Airlines immediately lost $500 million in value and 38% of travelers said they would pay more for a ticket to fly on a different airline. Eventually, the airline was forced to make significant cultural shifts and policy changes in order to be competitive again.

Strong communication is crucial and it's even more important in our times of social media usage. Capable and efficient crisis communication can be the dividing line between a company's reputation succeeding through the crisis or failing miserably. As a result, an organized and prepared Communications Team and an equally thoughtful Crisis Communication Plan are keys to successful corporate crisis communication.

For one of the courses I teach, "Managing Communication and New Media," I created a unit that combines two often-conjoined areas of corporate communication: Crisis Communication and Change Communication. During this unit, I focus first on the elements comprising crisis communication and offer the key ingredients necessary for creating a successful crisis communication plan, including preparedness, organization, and speed. I also emphasize the elements needed for crisis communication that will help (not hinder) a corporation during such times of emergency. (The second half of this unit focuses on the elements required for a successful Change Communication plan.)

In my presentation for ABC, I will explain and show the methods I use to teach Crisis Communication to my students while staying true to the course's emphasis on utilizing New and Social Media. I will show

attendees the PowerPoint I created for this class that includes the key elements to successful crisis management. And I will show and explain the assignment I created. In the team project, each group selects a fictional "crisis" out of a hat. Then, the team must create a written Crisis Communication plan that includes the use of several social media platforms. The project culminates with an oral presentation to the CEO and members of the C-suite that explains the team's organized and efficient response to the crisis.

My students responded extremely well to this assignment, first studying the culture of their company (a requirement) along with that of the stakeholders. Then, the team created a Crisis Communication plan that not only responded to the crisis but incorporated the company's culture and considered the stakeholders as well. The students worked well together, and each team created excellent and appropriate responses that also included the use of several social media platforms, including YouTube videos, posts on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. This assignment offered them the opportunity to create an efficient and appropriate Crisis Communication plan while also giving them experience in the positive uses of social and new media.

What Are We Going to Do Now? Workplace Writing Instruction for Changing Plans

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Goals

By looking and sharing the ways these students adapted, we can better understand some of the types of writing involved in remote workplaces and securing remote work positions. Examining how instructors continued to modify the course for remote learning offers another starting point for discussing how to prepare students for writing in these distributed environments.

Methods

Surveys and follow-up interviews, assignment examples

Outcomes

For attendees, this presentation will discuss:

- The job opportunities available to engineering students during the Covid-19 pandemic
- How students applied for or maintained internships, co-ops, and jobs given the changing circumstances
- How we can help prepare students in business communication classes for finding and writing in workplaces during a pandemic
- Tools, strategies, and assignments for teaching professional writing remotely

This presentation discusses how a professional writing course for engineers adapted due to COVID-19 and its students' next career steps following the spring 2020 semester. It shares how instructors modified the course to transition to remote learning and continued to modify the course for the fall 2020 semesters. This presentation also shares how students modified their job and internship searches after having offers rescinded so that we can discuss ways to better help teach them to communicate and secure remote work. Through surveys and follow-up interviews, students shared their experiences and how they adapted given the situation. They also share what writing skills they use, or wish could be included in their professional writing course.

Business communication research has dedicated itself to understanding how writing functions in the workplace, especially in times of disruption or in distributed environments (Spinuzzi, 2007; 2015; Swarts and Kim, 2009). Professional writing research also examines how projects are managed in these new work environments (Lauren & Scheiber, 2018) and the way workers communicate to get work done. The COVID-19 pandemic meant lots of work moving to distributed or remote environments, just as business

writing classrooms relocated to remote and online spaces. At the same time, business communication students were adapting their post-semester plans, which originally had included graduating and securing work or pursuing an internship and continuing coursework. A study from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) found about 70% of offers for internships were being rescinded for summer 2020, while nearly 25% of employers were considering revoking job offers made to 2020 graduates (Dickler, 2020). Another NACE study found nearly 40% of employers decided to transition to entirely virtual internships or shortened workplace experiences (Anderson, 2020).

These changes meant changes to workplaces and the ways in which people communicate at work. Professional Writing for Engineers is a course that, according to its description, shows students how "documents are always situated within professional, social, and rhetorical contexts." This way, students can "develop strategies for navigating the work environments of professional engineers." As the work environments for engineers and other professions changed drastically due to COVID-19, in many cases students found their jobs and internships becoming remote work, if they weren't rescinded all together. For example, some reached out to companies asking for remote internships, and others were able to continue working at places of previous internships because they were already set up to work remotely for them. Others decided to pause their job search and pursue graduate studies.

This presentation shares their stories so that we can better understand the types of virtual internships and jobs these students found and how they adapted in response. They share what workplace communication strategies and documents they're using and how we might consider incorporating those into our own workplace writing classrooms.

Rhetoric, Research Focus

Chinese Retailers' Rhetorical Response to Online Negative Reviews

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With the emergence of e-commerce, online customer reviews are increasingly available for a wide range of products and services. They supplement product descriptions and experts' product reviews provided by retailers, manufacturers, and companies. Research on customer reviews mainly focuses on marketing, public communication, and management by investigating the influence of online customer reviews on product sales and customers' satisfaction (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Forman, Ghose & Wiesenfeld, 2008; Godes & Mayzlin, 2009; Zhu &Zhang, 2010). It concludes that positive reviews positively influence the growth of product sales while negative reviews hurt businesses more than positive ones promote them (Basuroy, Chatterjee, & Ravid, 2003; Clemons et al. 2006; Chevalier & Myzlin, 2006; Gui, Lui & Guo, 2012; Reinsterin & Snyder, 2005). Some researchers focus on how online retailers, manufacturers, and companies handle negative reviews or comments by responding in the most positive manner as possible (Angermeier, 2010; Schwab, 2010; Wieting, 2010; Williams, 2008). They claim that an accommodative response to the product failure review and a defensive response to the ordinary negative review are effective in increasing product sales and enhancing consumer purchase intentions (Li, Cui, & Peng, 2018). However, little research turns attention to studying how retailers, manufactures, and companies respond to negative reviews to increase customers' purchase intentions instead of ignoring or deleting negative reviews. This research will focus on China's online retail site Taobao.com to examine how Chinese retailers engage with negative reviews rhetorically, positively, and effectively.

Through the lens of rhetorical analysis, this research analyzes the ways in which Taobao retailers respond to 150 negative reviews and identifies rhetorical strategies used to defend their stance. Some retailers use a comical tone and casual diction, such as quoting popular lines of trendy movies, TV, and pop culture throughout the post to appeal to the reviewers' good nature. Some refer to the reviewers by cute nicknames to foster a good relationship by assuring that the reviewers' complaints are taken seriously, and problems are being addressed. Some retailers share their stories (interaction with the reviewers) publicly to let consumers judge or evaluate who (the retailer or the reviewer) is right in product quality or online purchasing services. There are two significant findings. First, the retailers' informal response to negative reviews changes the professional business language; second, the retailers' inviting the prospective consumers to get involved in gauging negative reviews reliability may enhance consumers' trust.

This research is situated in the context where e-commerce is changing China's traditional business model and people prefer online purchasing and selling. As the largest online shopping site in China, Taobao.com, provides a platform for small business and individual entrepreneurs to run online stores. Retailers often put forth the effort to maximize positive comments and eliminate the negative ones, as consumers' feedback is a substantial determination that affects prospective consumers' purchasing intentions. In addition, most young people buy online in China. More than 50% of online buyers are aged

between 19-30 (wenku.baidu.com). They are also the primary consumers of trendy movies, TV series, and Variety shows. Their speaking is influenced by some famous and hilarious lines of those entertainment programs.

This research focuses on 150 negative reviews from five categories of online stores, which may be not typical and representative. However, the research provides meaningful rhetorical strategies for marketing practitioners to manage various consumers' reviews in different situations instead of just deleting or ignoring negative reviews or critical voices. Meanwhile, this research makes contributions to the research of languages in business and professional communication and pedagogy of business and professional communication. Online business communication is changing from formal and professional language to informal and colloquium language; and in teaching business and professional communication, instructors should teach students to put "audience analysis" in the first place and then use appropriate language to communicate with the targeted audience.

Integrating Rhetorical Criticism into Business Communication as an Interdisciplinary Approach

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Objectives

The purpose of this paper is to suggest integrating rhetorical analysis and criticism into business communication research and pedagogy. Rhetorical analysis and criticism on public addresses of business leaders can provide important insights into the political and social issues of the community and the economic impact of the participants. It contributes to the development of coherent scholarship dealing with communication at the intersection of business communication, rhetoric, and society.

Methods

This paper reviews articles about business leaders' rhetoric published in business communication journals: The Journal of Business Communication, Business, and Professional Communication Quarterly, Management Communication Quarterly, Journal of Business and Technical Communication, Technical Communication Quarterly, etc. It examines the purpose of rhetorical criticism in business communication and discusses popular methods for rhetorical criticism. Among the various perspectives on rhetorical criticism in the field of speech communication, it discusses three commonly adopted methods: Neo-Aristotelian criticism, Genre Criticism, Narrative criticism.

Results

Studies on rhetorical criticism of business leaders' speeches are not systematically integrated into business communication education and research. Rhetorical critics of speech communication are more interested in public speeches by prominent politicians or social leaders, while business communication scholars are more concerned with rhetorical theory and pedagogy.

Conclusions

Integrating rhetorical criticism into business communication as an interdisciplinary approach infuses a new approach that goes beyond the contemporary research and pedagogy domain. Integrating rhetorical criticism into business communication not only improves the quality of discourse in business society but also tests and modifies both theories and practices of corporate rhetoric.

Pronouns, Positioning, and Persuasion in Top Nonprofits' Donor Appeals

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James Michael Dubinsky
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Theme

This proposal reflects the conference theme "Strategy: putting purpose first to improve effectiveness and overcome 'noise' or 'over-communication.'"

Background

People donate to nonprofit organizations for many reasons: to help their communities or make the world a better place, foster emotional connections to a cause, create a personal legacy, maintain a connection between a cause and a loved one, or even gain social status.

In 2018, Americans gave $427.71 billion to charity. Of that amount, 68% was given by individuals, 18 percent by foundations, and the remainder by bequest and by corporations (Giving USA, 2018). And as of 2015, there were 1.56 million nonprofit organizations registered with the US Internal Revenue Service (McKeever, 2019). Of these, nearly 1.3 million (78 percent) are charitable organizations, with about half of them being small, local or regional organizations that receive $50,000 or less each year in donations (Better Business Bureau, 2018).

Competition for donors is tough, particularly when a charitable organization's niche overlaps with that of others; that is, the greater the overlap, the greater the competition for resources and donors (Paarlberg & Hwang, 2017). Consequently, nonprofit charitable organizations must be persuasive in telling stories that compel donors to buy into their particular mission, see themselves as supporting the worthiest of causes, and contribute. Some organizations tell their stories well—so well that they are wildly successful in cultivating both a large donor base and subsequently receiving a large number of contributions. Forbes, a global media brand known for their business rankings, annually compiles a list of the top 100 most successful organizations who receive a combined $51.1 billion annually, or 12 percent of all charitable gifts (Barrett, n.d.) and represent a range of categories, including education, culture, the environment, medicine, and veterans' affairs.

Purpose

One way that nonprofits solicit donations is via their websites. While some research has examined the impact nonprofits' rhetorical strategies on social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook (e.g., Auger, 2014; Smitka, 2012; Cruz and Pezzuti, 2017; & Pang and Law, 2017), very little research on rhetorical strategies nonprofits use on their websites has been done. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify rhetorical strategies commonly used by top charitable organizations in the United States to understand their donor communications. Specifically, this study analyzes the websites of the charitable organizations that appeared in Forbes Magazine's 2019 top 100 charities.

Goal

While this project does not establish a causal relationship between nonprofits' rhetorical strategies and their success in attracting donors, this project does provide insight to the strategies they use in their websites to connect with their donors. The results may provide other nonprofits with useful suggestions or models for honing their donor appeals.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, inductive approach (Creswell, 2014). A first pass was taken through the websites of the top 25 nonprofits on the Forbes list to code for traditional rhetorical strategies of ethos, logos, and pathos. After this review, the researchers noticed a rather unremarkable distribution of logos, ethos, and pathos across these sites.

What was more interesting was the prominent and varied use of pronouns in the nonprofits' messaging, particularly the use of the inclusive or "royal we." Research has established that writers use pronouns as a means of positioning themselves relative to their audiences and thus establishing relationships with them (e.g., van Langenhove & Harré, 1999, Íñigo-Mora, 2004 Pennebaker, 2011; & Fahnestock, 2011). Writers may use pronouns to create or reduce distance, include or exclude their reader, demonstrate honesty and sincerity, or signal their intent. Crismore (2004), for example, found that organizations have recognized the rhetorical power of pronouns for establishing credibility and style (first-person singular pronouns), reader engagement (first-person plural and second-person pronouns), and nonprofit-donor solidarity (first-person singular first-person plural, and second-person pronouns)

Because of the rhetorical significance inherent in pronouns, the researchers each took a segment of three distinct organization types in the Forbes top 100 list (health/medicine, environment/animals, and veterans affairs) and analyzed the pronoun use in the nonprofits' donor appeals. The researchers examined how the nonprofits use pronouns to position (assign roles to) themselves relative to their audience and to themselves in the stories they tell on their websites (van Langenhove & Harré, 1999). These positions were categorized based on the way pronouns serve as rhetorical strategies to establish the nonprofit's prestige or credibility, to frame the reader's involvement as a good business decision or business partnership, or to appeal to the reader as "the one" who can help the organization save the sick, the dying, the hungry, or the struggling.

Outcomes

This study is currently in progress. The researchers will be prepared to present the following outcomes:

- The ways in which nonprofits use pronouns to position themselves to their audiences and to themselves in their donor solicitation messages.
- The rhetorical effects these positions have in establishing relationships with potential donors.
- Implications and takeaways for nonprofits who want to tell impactful stories that compel readers to donate.

This project has implications for researchers, teachers, and practitioners of business communication.

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Teaching Students Rhetorical Practices for Innovation

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Research supported by a C. R Anderson Foundation grant

This CRARF supported presentation centers around the themes of #teams, #innovation, and #rhetoric. As industry increasingly expects college graduates to have teamwork skills, and as universities adapt to meet this need, an open question remains: what rhetorical practices are available for teaching students innovative rhetoric?

In this presentation, I will spend ten minutes highlighting a model of innovative rhetoric as found during a dissertation study of a Fortune 100 Biotech and how its teams manage to innovate by way of a rhetorical practice identified as Difference-Driven Inquiry (DDI). This study and the corresponding model have recently been accepted for publication in Business and Professional Communication Quarterly but has yet to be presented at ABC. Although a detailed description of the elements that make up innovation rhetoric is provided in the previously mentioned article (forthcoming, 2020), they are briefly described in the following two paragraphs below.

The model for innovative rhetoric is comprised of four practices. These four practices are: (1) Seeking Out New Discourse; (2) Focusing on Discourses of Difference (the most important factor); (3) Returning to Previous Discourse; and (4) Using Discourse to Build Trust. These practices are presented as ordered, however in practice teams may move from one move to the other.

Seeking out discourse is enacted by asking questions (internally to your teammates) before a decision is made and soliciting expertise (external to the team). Focusing on difference can be done by escalating differences when voiced, or by taking a hypothetical position when difference is unvoiced. Returning to previous discourse can happen by taking temporal breaks from discussions to delay decision making and overtly returning to discourse from previous meetings. Finally, building trust through discourse can be done by establishing an open ideational atmosphere and creating a shared experience and/or language.

Data collection methods used to observe the model of innovation rhetoric include a cognitive interview technique known as critical incident interview. For data analysis I used grounded theory facilitated through the use of MAX-QDA (a data analysis software). The outcome of this study, and the focus of the presentation, is a descriptive model of how workers at the Fortune 100 Biotech use rhetoric to innovate.

In the second half of my presentation, I will move from the descriptive elements to provide preliminary data regarding the prescriptive efficacy of a teaching model. This teaching model will draw from data collected via a quasi-experimental study currently in progress that explores how DDI might be taught to students as an effective rhetorical practice for team innovation.

In short, the research questions offered in this presentation will consider: (1) What teachable (normative) principles of Difference-Driven Inquiry can be ascertained from workplace professionals for

use in classroom instruction? and (2) To what degree of effectiveness does DDI transfer into the classroom from the workplace when taught as rhetorical practice for innovation?

To help answer these questions, I use quasi-experimental design to compare team experiences in students enrolled in a course titled "Writing in the Professions." Student experience is currently being measured via survey. The survey tool measures four main aspects of teaming: productive conflict aptitude, ideational aptitude, social cohesion, and psychological safety. The measure of student experience will be compared from experimental groups, who received instruction on innovation rhetoric, and control groups (who did not). Supplementing the survey data, follow up data will draw from targeted interviews of experimental participants. Together, survey and interview data will be used to help answer the research questions.

Additionally, over the course of the summer, workshops will be adapted for a virtual setting and continue to measure the efficacy of the intervention in workshop (versus classroom) settings. A similar survey tool as the one described above will be deployed for use in data collection.

If able, I also intend to lead focus groups with workplace teams to refine the model of rhetorical invention further. Measures included in the focus group will highlight data responding to gaps in the model, clarity of concept, clarity of instruction, strengths and weakness of concept, usage factors, expectations, and recommendations.

I have situated this research project within business communication for two reasons. First, the course in which the pedagogical was deployed is specifically concerned with writing "in the professions." As such, there are obvious contextual connections between the work students do in their professions as a type of business communication. Second, business communication, thought of as the discursive practices people use in the workplace, offers a unique study site for rhetorical scholarship. Both business communication and rhetoric benefit by exploring their shared intellectual agendas concerning the ways in which people use language to get things done, including the ever valued yet hard to reach concept of innovation.

Take-aways for conference participants include knowledge of a teachable model for promoting innovation on teams. The model can contribute to the work of practitioners, scholars, teachers, and consultants alike.

The Persuasiveness of Financial Planning Recommendations: A Study of Gen Z Individuals

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The purpose of our research was to explore the connections between family communication, financial literacy, and the persuasiveness of various investment recommendations. We explored these connections among roughly 500 Gen Z individuals.

Our survey addressed the persuasiveness of various rhetorical patterns in retirement planning situations. Specifically, we evaluated the persuasiveness of various statements in terms of gain-loss language, superlatives versus measured descriptions, providing choice, and risk language. Further, we placed respondents in two situations: as persuaders (in the role of benefits advisors) and as those being persuaded (in the role of employees selecting retirement benefits). For each type of statement, respondents stated their preference among one of two statements. For example, respondents chose between the following statements for gain-loss language: (a) You will have an extra $350,000 in your retirement account at age 67 if you regularly take advantage of the employer matching program; or (b) You will have $350,000 less in your retirement account at age 67 if you don't take advantage of the employer matching program. Similar choices were made for the other types of investment recommendations.

Among gain-loss statements, respondents generally prefer gain statements to loss statements. Interestingly, respondents in the role of persuader favor gain statements more than do respondents in the role of the employee (person being persuaded). Among superlative versus measured statements, respondents generally prefer more measured statements. However, those in the persuader role are much more likely to prefer measured statements, often in cases where those being persuaded are more open to superlative language. Among choice statements, respondents generally prefer more choice. Yet, those in persuader roles are more likely to emphasize more choice than is desired by those in the role of being persuaded. Those in the persuader and the prospect roles similarly react to negative statements that focus only on risk.

For financial literacy, we adopted the 4-item (Financial Industry Regulatory Authority) FINRA test of financial literacy. This simple test of financial literacy determines whether people understand basic

concepts of interest accrual, the impact of inflation on purchasing power, and the value of diversified investments. Overall, just 42 percent of Gen Z participants were high in financial literacy, with about 27 percent moderate in financial literacy, and about 31 percent low in financial literacy.

Family communication items were assessed with based on the frequency with which the following topics were discussed in their homes as they were growing up: credit card use, family budgets, saving for long-term needs, personal debt, retirement planning, and insurance needs. Overall, Gen Z participants said the following topics were sometimes discussed in their families: credit cards, family budgets, saving for long-term needs, personal debt, and car insurance. On the other hands, the following topics were seldom discussed: retirement planning, health insurance, and life insurance. There were correlations among frequency of family communication, financial literacy, and preferences for various types of recommendations. For example, those higher in financial literacy were more persuaded by loss statements, and those lower in financial literacy were more persuaded by gain statements.

Based on our research, we provide recommendations about how to adapt persuasion to the needs of others in the following ways: (a) use of gain-loss language, superlative-measured language, choice language; and risk language; and (b) language that aligns with financial literacy levels.

Presentation as Reality: The Power of Rhetorical Norms

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Valerie Creelman
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Ruby K. Nancy
University of Minnesota Duluth

Danica L. Schieber
Sam Houston State University

Business communication faculty who address job search skills have always worked within an environment where "perception is reality." We explain to our students that conforming to a narrow range of choices in clothing, accessories, grooming, and behavior (Masi de Casenova, 2016) communicates "professionalism" in the corporate workplace. Despite diverse backgrounds and personalities, our students learn to present themselves within the professional constraints of attire, resumes, cover letters, and the rules of interview conversation.

Meanwhile, as scholars, we recognize the recursive loop of perception that becomes reality within a discourse community. The dominate discourse, signals, symbols, and mode of communication shapes the cultural perception of reality, coding variations from the norm as immoral, irrational, or uncivil (Cyphert, 2001). Within the corporate environment, a normative reality of the white, male professional (Masi de Casenova, 2016) frames any style differences across class, gender, race, or ethnicity as not professional.

As teacher-scholars, we thus face the paradoxical situation of simultaneously teaching students to conform to the business community's professionalism norms while we intellectually grasp and often challenge the language practices that instantiate and perpetuate organizational power structures (Cohen et al., 2005). Within this conflicted context, four rhetorical scholars unpack the dimensions of "professionalism" in the contemporary business context and discuss the implications and challenges for business communication faculty.

This panel's variety in rhetorical methods demonstrates several ways that rhetorical theories can inform our scholarship and pedagogy (Cyphert, 2009). First, business communication scholars must understand the processes by which rhetorical norms both define and enforce the social, epistemological, and discursive norms of any community's decision-making behavior (Cyphert, 2001). In the realm of business communication, this includes both the functional purpose of professionalism norms within the business

community and the ways in which prospective members (i.e., students) and competent members (i.e., professionals) negotiate the conundrum of becoming or resisting a "reality" drawn from the community's collective perception of professionalism. Secondly, business communication instructors must confront the ethical and practical considerations that have faced rhetorical pedagogy since the time of Isocrates and Gorgias (Chase, 2009). Finally, business communication as a discipline must consider the conflicted roles we play. As scholars we aim to uncover the disciplining processes of any business organization, while we simultaneously train our students to conform to those disciplines (Cohen et al., 2005).

The immediate question concerns professional self-presentation. The normative rhetoric of business, built on and still nearly synonymous with the preferred practices of western white males with high social and economic status (Masi de Casenova, 2016), presents a challenge for prospective members coming from other cultures, ethnicities, or genders. We therefore face important questions: As we prepare our students to meet the expectations of the contemporary business community, should we also prepare them to negotiate, resist, or reform those same expectations? As we teach our students the norms of professionalism, should we point out the ways in which those cultural norms exclude certain members of society? Should we address the topic of professionalism differently for males and females? for international students or ethnic minorities? for gender non-conforming or disabled students?

The panel members address these issues in the context of professional presentation, including professional attire, LinkedIn profiles, and professional behavior and provide insights from multiple directions. Creelman examines the challenges for organizations that have identified the unintended consequences of strong normative rules. Nancy explores the rhetorical choices made necessary for those attempting to establish memberships through a rhetoric of professional dress. Cyphert questions the gender and ethnic presumptions implicit in our construction of business professionalism, and Schieber tackles all these issues as they play out in the mediated environment of online professionalism.

Attendees of this panel should leave with a better understanding of both rhetorical theories and implications of this scholarship for their own classroom instruction. Rhetorical scholarship necessarily challenges a discourse community's accepted wisdom regarding social relationships, knowledge, and decision-making processes. Even in the seemingly mundane realm of professional business attire, a rhetorical perspective illustrates the mutually constitutive and inherently contradictory forces of discipline and resistance that create and sustain a viable rhetorical community (Cyphert, 2001).

Valerie Creelman, "Managing Organizational Ethos: Business Dress as Visual Rhetoric"

Employees participate daily in a rhetorical process of impression management and personal branding. The accounting industry demonstrates the use of business attire as visual rhetorical deployed to establish an employee's credibility. The relaxation of dress codes to recruit and retain younger employees presents challenges for employers and for employees who must navigate the appearance labour of impression management.

Ruby K. Nancy, "Professional Dress™ as a Rhetorical Act: Shaping Perceptions and Reality, One Suit at a Time"

From job fair events for students to advice on executive grooming, professional dress is a near-ubiquitous focus for anyone seeking employment. Workplace dress codes frame expectations of belonging, and sartorial choices are rhetorical choices, with significant consequences. Drawing on the

scholarship of Manthey, Gee, and Bourdieu, this presentation highlights the rhetorics of professional dress.

Dale Cyphert, "Assertively Well-Groomed: Perception and Reality of Professional Women"

Rhetorical scholars have come to understand the processes by which communities direct and discipline their members, instantiating power relationships and perpetuating normative practices with discourse structures perceived by participants as a beneficial reality (Marx, Gramsci, Althusser). This paper questions the business communication professor's complicity as we train and encourage our charges in the behaviors, appearances, and discourses of professionalism.

Danica L. Schieber, "Presenting the Professional Self: The Reality of LinkedIn"

This presentation discusses the perception of professionalism on LinkedIn profiles, which serve to present a professional self within the normative disciplines of that commercial platform. Rhetorical principles can be used to explain and guide students' portrayal of professionalism on an online professional platform. This presentation will discuss the various implications for our pedagogical goals, methods, and outcomes.

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Welcoming Perceptions in the Classroom: Navigating Power Dynamics, Boundaries, and Limitations with Students

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The Reality of Business Writing: The Influence of Traditional Progymnasmata Manuals in the Classroom

A model for an imitation exercise to practice organization of details dates back to the rhetorical tradition of Progymnasmata manuals (Fahnestock, 2011). In this scenario, the visitor, or student, is welcomed into a space where the possibilities of language use are perceived to be limitless.

However, all the Progymnasmata manuals came with templates for language use and eventually became genres in their own right. These genres are still in our classrooms today and have been adapted to other areas of writing pedagogy. For instance, in the business writing classroom a case, or model, welcomes students to a specific scenario and then asks them to imitate a template for the exercise.

A quick glance through any such models in a textbook, though, demonstrates a marked difference from the traditional exercises in the Progymnasmata—that is, the student is not welcomed to be themselves visiting an ancient space but rather asked to become someone else entirely: an imagined version of themselves as a business professional in a future day and time. This presentation, therefore, will explore the inherent pedagogical implications and challenges of teaching with such cases and will provide alternative ideas for the business writing classroom.

Student, Customer, Colleague, Collaborator: The Syllabus as Boundary Genre

When we welcome students into our classrooms, who do we want them to be? And how do we want to work together to meet course outcomes, as well as larger institutional and societal goals? A course syllabus is an instance of a boundary genre (Popham, 2005); a form of documentation that describes a boundary between people who collaborate on a task, connecting their differing expectations and practical needs, but also ascribing limits to their roles, relationships, and capacity for action.

A syllabus is the boundary between identities of the people who use it: the identity of the faculty whose class the syllabus introduces; the identity of the organization that the course and faculty represent; the multiple identities of each student. It establishes a power structure, reifies modes of conduct and address; it is wall, gate, and gatekeeper, welcome sign and warning sign.

This presenter, as a result, explores the course syllabus as boundary genre. After briefly defining the nature of this ubiquitous academic document, the discussion turns to content, structure, and process, and the ways in which all three combine to define, construct, and change the identities of the people who participate in the course it introduces.

Teaching Communication in the Age of Trump: Invitational Rhetoric in a Politically Diverse Classroom

Foss and Griffin's (1995) invitational rhetoric is an alternative to persuasion. Grounded in equality, immanent value, and self-determination, invitational rhetors share their perspective and invite others to see why they feel as they do.

In thinking about invitational rhetoric, the presenter will share how it can be applied in classroom discussions to encourage dialogue. In sharing such dialogue, though, the presenter will also address the inherent questions of power and responsibility from facilitating this exercise in a classroom environment. For example, the risks in using invitational rhetoric in the classroom have become particularly apparent in the age of Trump.

While Trump has some very dedicated followers in the classroom, some of his views, which are openly shared by his supporters in class, are offensive to other students. As the instructor, then, how encouraged or limited should these views be treated?

Perception and the Hidden Curriculum of Professionalism: Does Instructor Use of Professional Titles Marginalize or Empower Students?

In this presentation, the presenter will discuss the use of professional titles as a case study for exploring how we rhetorically construct welcome and belonging in classrooms. While discussion over the use of professional titles comes up in informal discussions amongst us as academics (both in person and online), little formal rhetorical scholarship has been devoted to the role of professional titles in the classroom.

What we ask students to call us as faculty is, for many, very personal, but it is also a rhetorical choice heavily constrained by privilege and with significant social implications both within and beyond our home departments. Skill at navigating professional and social conventions significantly affects how students perceive and are perceived in professional and educational contexts; because of these social implications, this choice cannot be purely personal.

Departmental cultures defined by non-marginalized groups—and, in particular, cultures in which the departmental norm is to drop professional titles—can make it harder for faculty from marginalized groups to use professional titles without social stigma. Similarly, students with less personal or familial experience of higher education—in addition to neurodivergent and other minority students—may be disadvantaged if they do not learn professional social conventions that their more privileged or neurotypical counterparts are more likely to have learned before college. How, then, should we navigate how students perceive and are perceived while still creating a welcoming classroom for all?

Analyzing Student and Educator Personality Traits in Identifying Correlations with Overall Successfulness in Classroom Experiences

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Introduction

This study will evaluate if personality traits are shared between the educator and the learner could this actually help lead to a higher probability of classroom success? This presentation defines a personality trait as a distinguishing characteristic or a relatively consistent way of thinking. If such a correlation exists, or even if a mismatch is found to exist between the learner and the educator, then this study could assist students in selecting classes with professors who have closely related personality traits that better relate with their own. Matching personality traits could be more beneficial than students relying on websites such as RateMyPofessor.com for students attempting to predict which professor would be the best fit for them. This study will consist of two parts. First, the learners will participate in three quick personality test, and the educator will do the same. These results of this study have the potential to contribute to not only predicting classroom success, but could help to boost graduation rates, as well as. Not only could this benefit the world of academia, but Business Communication could also have a lot to gain from these findings as well. Matching business consultants with decision makers' personalities traits during presentations could enhance the communication process while creating a more successful classroom experience. Making hiring and promotion decisions within Human Resources and management could likewise be enhanced with this information.

Methods

A sample size of approximately 1,000 students will be observed with 10 educators. This study requires a two-part participation on behalf of the learners. To identify personality traits in the learner, college-level students in Business Communication classes will take three quick personality tests. The educator will participate in the same three tests. Then begins the identification and recording of which personality traits match between the learner and the educator. Towards the end of the semester, the learners will answer a four-question, open-ended questionnaire regarding their feelings and thoughts if the class experience was a success or if it was deemed a failure. A quantitative approach with correlational research will be used to determine a relationship between the data.

Information Presented

To date, only 68 learners and one educator have participated in the first part of this two-part study. The first half of the study's results indicate that 14 learners shared no personality traits with the educator. 28 learners had only one matching personality trait, while 22 had two matching personality traits. Only

four learners matched all three personality traits. The three personality test that will be used for this study and presented are Dingman's Big-Five Personality Traits, DOPE Bird Test, and identifying between three learning styles of Auditory, Visual, and Tactile. How the students define if the classroom experience was successful or not will depend on how they answer the following four questions with a yes or no. First, were student's pleased with their grade? Second, was the workload appropriate? Third, did the student learn new principles? Fourth and final question, would they recommend this professor to others?

Examining Self-Efficacy and Goal Orientation as Mediators of the Relationship between Social Presence and Career Planning of MBA Students

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Pradnya Joshi
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Social Presence Theory has been employed to understand the computer-mediated communication of students in virtual learning environments (Herring, 2007). Social presence is defined as projecting one's physical and emotional presence when interacting with others in digital mediums (Abdullah, 2004). Learners in online MBA programs often project their social presence when interacting with their peers in virtual webinars, discussion boards, and more. With the knowledge and practice gained via projecting social presence in online courses, students may become more self-efficacious and motivated to learn the course material, which may result in better preparation for the job market (Dixson, 2015). A prior study suggested college students with high Internet self-efficacy in online courses are more likely to exhibit high levels of learning motivation (Chang et al., 2014). Students with high goal orientations perform better in online environments, and because they develop transferable skills, they are also more likely to exhibit early career success compared to those with low goal orientations (Prince et al., 2015; van Dierendonck & van der Gaast, 2013). As such, students with high Internet self-efficacy and MBA program self-efficacy should also exhibit high intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientations, which may relate to their career planning confidence such as their readiness and confidence to make a career decision (Creed & Blume, 2013; McAuliffe et al., 2006).

A limitation of prior studies has been that social presence has mainly been examined with course learning outcomes; however, there is a need to investigate the role of social presence in career planning confidence, in particular, to understand the mediators that impact this relationship, such as self-efficacy and goal orientation. As such, the purpose of this study was trifold. First, to investigate the correlations among social presence, Internet self-efficacy, perceived self-efficacy, intrinsic goal orientation, extrinsic goal orientation, and career planning. Second, to examine Internet self-efficacy and perceived self-efficacy as mediators of the positive relationship between social presence and career planning confidence. Third, to investigate whether intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientation mediate the positive relationship between social presence and career planning confidence. A total of 292 MBA students in an AACSB-accredited College of Business participated in a survey including measures of social presence, Internet self-efficacy, perceived self-efficacy, intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientation, and career planning confidence. The study included 143 males, 145 females, and 3 other; the average age was 34.1 (SD = 8.68). 277 participants were taking their MBA courses online and 15 were taking hybrid courses.

A preliminary correlation analysis was conducted. Social presence was positively correlated with Internet self-efficacy (r = .53, p < .01), perceived self-efficacy (r = .22, p < .01), intrinsic goal orientation (r = .34, p < .01), extrinsic goal orientation (r = .19, p < .01), and career planning (r = .19, p < .01). Also, career planning was positively correlated with Internet self-efficacy (r = .50, p < .01), perceived self-efficacy (r = .50, p < .01), intrinsic goal orientation (r = .40, p < .01), and extrinsic goal orientation (r = .37, p < .01). Afterward, two multiple mediation analyses were performed using a bootstrapping analysis at 1,000 using Hayes' PROCESS (model 6) (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The first step showed the regression of social presence on Internet self-efficacy was significant, (b = .47, R^2 = .28, t = 10.51, p < .001). The second step showed the mediator (Internet self-efficacy) on perceived self-efficacy, controlling for social presence, was significant, (b = .51, R^2 = .23, t = 8.14, p < .001). In the third step, social presence on career planning, controlling for the mediators (Internet self-efficacy and perceived self-efficacy) was insignificant (b = .67, p = .11), suggesting a full mediation. The total effect of social presence on career planning was significant (b = .24, R^2 = .03, 95% CI = .09 − .39, t = 3.22, p < .01). Thus, the first hypothesis was supported.

The first step of the multiple mediation analysis showed social presence on intrinsic goal orientation was significant (b = .42, R^2 = .12, t = 6.19, p < .001). In the second step, the mediator (intrinsic goal orientation) on extrinsic goal orientation, controlling for social presence, was significant (b = .39, R^2 = .16, t = 6.70 p < .001). In the third step, social presence on career planning, controlling for the goal orientation mediators, was not significant (b = .05, p = .46), suggesting a full mediation effect. The total effect of social presence on career planning was significant (b = .24, R^2 = .03, 95% CI = .09 − .39, t = 3.22, p < .01), supporting the second hypothesis.

This study offers several implications to MBA instructors and researchers. First, social presence was positively related to both Internet self-efficacy and perceived self-efficacy in the MBA program, which suggest that MBA students with high social presence experiences may be more likely to feel confident in using the Internet in their MBA courses, as well as greater confidence in participating in the MBA program, particularly in online modalities. Also, both Internet self-efficacy and perceived self-efficacy in the MBA program mediated the positive relationship between social presence and career planning confidence, which suggests that MBA students with high degrees of self-efficacy may be more likely to be confident in the career planning process. This aligns with previous research that demonstrates that ease with technology is predictive of career planning confidence (Fetherston et al., 2018). Second, social presence was also positively related to intrinsic goal motivation and extrinsic goal orientation, which suggests that students exposed to social presence in virtual learning environments may be more motivated to engage in online learning experiences. Additionally, intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientation mediated the relationship between social presence and career planning confidence. Thus, instructors in MBA programs should continue to offer assignments that enable students to display social presence in online learning communities. By implementing pedagogy that fosters social presence, instructors in online MBA programs can potentially bolster students' career planning confidence and practical success upon completion of the program.

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Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Research Focus

What are the Differences Between 6th and 7th Editions of the APA Style Manual?

Marcel M. Robles
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This presentation will identify the most relevant changes between the 6th and 7th editions of the APA Style Manual. The presentation will also recognize APA's updated guidelines for citing books, in-text, web pages, and e-books; using inclusive and bias-free language; formatting student-specific papers; listing references; and recommending resources available for professors and students.

Some of the prominent changes are shown below.

1. Paper format: Student-specific guidelines are different. Page 44, Section 2.19
   Times New Roman (12pt), Arial (11pt), Georgia (11pt), Calibri (11pt), Lucida sans (10pt)
2. Report headings have different format. Pages 47-48, Section 2, Table 2.3
3. Inclusive and bias-free language has updated guidelines. Pages 132-140, Sections 5.1-5.5
   6th ed. - Asian members
   7th ed. - Philippine, Chinese, and Japanese members
   6th ed. – Transsexuals
   7th ed. - Transgender people
   6th ed. - The elderly
   7th ed. - People over age 68
   6th ed. - A professor's scholarly activity is related to his teaching.
   7th ed. - A professor's scholarly activity is related to their teaching.
   6th ed. - The researcher submitted his or her proposal.
   7th ed. - The researcher submitted their proposal.
4. Use only one space after a period and no running head. Page 154, Section 6.1
5. In-text citations are shortened. Page 266, Section 8.17
   6th ed. - (Smith, Green, Thompson, & Jones, 2020)
   7th ed. - (Smith et al., 2020)
6. Up to 20 authors are noted in the reference list. Page 286, Section 9.8
   6th ed. - Jericho, F. D., Blackmore, M. B. Cafferty, L. R., Williams, L. B., Edmondson, Y. E., Miller, B. A., … Green, P. S. (2020).
   7th ed. - Jericho, F. D., Blackmore, M. B. Cafferty, L. R., Williams, L. B., Edmondson, Y. E., Miller, B. A., Morris, H. M., Baker, R. A., Bledsoe, E. F., Isaacs, T. M., Edwards, F. E., Larson, J. C., Hagen, C., Jefferson, D. D., Fiefer, W. D., Samuels, P. T., Hendrickson, G. M., Eggelten, R. C., Sicoro, T. M., … Green, P. S. (2020).
7. Web page citation has changed. Page 290, Section 9.16
   6th ed. - Saloman, C. D. (2020, February 7). The number of Corona Virus cases is staggering. Retrieved from https://www.nbc.com/news/COVID-19-38679
   7th ed. - Saloman, C. D. (2020, February 7). The number of Corona Virus cases is staggering. NBC

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8. Publisher location is not included. Page 295, Section 9.29
   6th ed. - Covey, S. R. (2013). The 7 habits of highly effective people: Powerful lessons in personal change. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
   7th ed. - Covey, S. R. (2013). The 7 habits of highly effective people: Powerful lessons in personal change. Simon & Schuster.
9. DOIs are formatted as URLs. Page 306, Section 9.35
   6th ed. - doi:10.1181/0689512.2020.12347
   7th ed. - https://doi.org/10.1181/0689512.2020.12347
10. E-books citations have changed. Page 321, Section 10.2
    6th ed. - Picton, L. J. (2019). Sapiens: A brief history of humankind [Kindle version]. doi:10.10497/978-0-06-232609-7
    7th ed. - Picton, L. J. (2019). Sapiens: A brief history of humankind. HarperCollins. https:/doi.org/10.10497/978-0-06-232609-7
11. Contributors other than authors are listed. Pages 342-352, Section 10.12
12. Recommended resources

A Comparative Analysis of Peer Evaluation Quality Within Class Sections and Cross-Sections

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This proposal is concerned with peer evaluation skill development in the business communication classroom. The purpose is to discover if differences exist in the quality of feedback between peer evaluation performed within a class section and peer evaluations performed within a cross-section.

In business communication courses at the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire, peer evaluations are integrated into the iterative communication creation process. Peer evaluation assignments enable students to practice their skill and they help to improve project outcomes.

Peer evaluation is both good business communication pedagogy and a valued workplace skill (Liu & Carless, 2006). When students are exposed to a variety of peer review opportunities, they develop critical evaluation skills that enable them to provide honest and constructive feedback.

In this research project, students will be assigned peer evaluation within a formative stage of a business presentation. The peer evaluations will be conducted virtually through the Canvas LMS system. The assignments will be randomized so some students evaluate classmates while other students evaluate student work from other sections of the course. The peer evaluations will not be anonymous. The artifacts will be evaluated for quality and compared.

This study will provide practical classroom strategies for peer evaluations and peer matching. It will also contribute to existing literature regarding peer evaluation, peer feedback, and peer review. In business and academic literature, peer evaluation is also described as peer assessment, peer grading, peer review, and peer feedback (Panadero & Alqassab, 2019).

Peer evaluation has long been heralded as an effective pedagogical approach in the iterative communication process. In the business communication classroom, it teaches and reinforces valuable workplace skills such as critical thinking and analysis. It is also correlated with positive learning outcomes for both the evaluator and evaluatee.

Feedback has been widely studied and researched to develop best practices. Because peer evaluation is a social activity, recent research has focused on anonymity. Anonymity has been shown to have both positive and negative results as some students take license to behave badly. Huisman et al (2017) have indicated there is a need for more information "on how to optimally match students" for best outcomes in peer evaluation.

The qualitative study will be conducted in an introductory business presentation course for one semester. During the semester, students will be assigned peer evaluation based on open-ended

questions. Peer evaluations will be narrative in form. These artifacts will be downloaded from Canvas for evaluation.

Data will be evaluated through content analysis. Text will be coded using a rubric assessment tool based on four criteria. The criteria will include tone, completeness, honesty, and quality. The coding and analytical process will be tested for reliability using the inter-rater process. Once all the data are coded, emergent themes will be identified and analyzed.

The data collection for this research was to take place in spring semester 2020. It was abruptly halted due to Covid as classes shifted from face-to-face to online delivery. The unique conditions of the research require that students be in a face-to-face classroom format.

As much of the workforce has had to flex to online, the need for training students in both virtual and in-personal peer evaluation skills has grown. Understanding how students interact and deliver peer evaluations in these different formats will inform teaching strategies that better prepare students to meet the challenges of shifting workplace demands.

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A New Lens on a Pedagogical Standard: Aligning Case Studies with Your Curriculum

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University of Kansas

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Rose Helens-Hart
Fort Hays State University

Theresa Wernimont
Colorado State University

This panel presentation will explore the reliable and versatile case study as the pedagogical backbone of business communication curriculums.

The purpose of this panel is to demonstrate the relevance and evolving methods of utilizing case studies in business communication courses. We will examine ways to use case studies in business communication classes that help students develop strategic messages as well as adapt to constantly changing workplace trends.

Panelists' goals include addressing four topics related to using case studies in the business communication curriculum. Each panelist will share example case studies used in their own courses to demonstrate how to effectively use this pedagogical technique to develop strategic communication skills.

Incorporating case studies are a beneficial pedagogical technique frequently utilized in many business communication courses due to their ability to use real-world scenarios as students apply the business communication. Guiding students through an effective case study assignment develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills, the most important skills employers look for when hiring new college graduates (Baird & Parayitam, 2019; NACE, 2019). Pilz and Zenner (2018) found that after completing a case-study assignment students increased their ability to identify the complex interactions and interconnected nature of business decisions.

Panelists will share criteria to develop an effective case and strategies to incorporate the case study in your business communication course. Topic areas especially suited to learning through cases (such as damage control, crisis communications, ethics, bad news delivery, performance reviews, layoffs) will help participants brainstorm potential cases for a variety of business communication classes. The panel will address the benefits and drawbacks of using quality established cases versus creating your own unique case.

While case studies are a beneficial learning technique for considering business communication theory, students often struggle to create an applied strategic response adapted to the audience and situation. Panelists will address ways to help students work through the complex process of writing their case study deliverable. Finding credible and relevant research, analyzing your audience, and organizing to ultimately create an effective business message will be addressed through example case studies.

Once the case study assignment is submitted, instructors face the challenge of evaluating student work. Panelists will share example case study rubrics and strategies to streamline the grading process. Case study deliverables offer an opportunity to evaluate student learning outcomes for assessment purposes. Using case studies to assess program as well course learning outcomes will be addressed.

At the conclusion of this panel, attendees will be able to identify strategic ways to use case studies in their curriculum design that help students adapt to changing business communication trends. Panelists will share ideas and examples to help attendees implement or write their own case studies, utilize case studies for both theoretical and applied coursework, and understand how to assess student learning through case study assignments.

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Can You Hear Me Now? Students' Perceptions of Care in the Online Learning Environment

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The purpose of this research is to examine the perceptions online business students have toward the ethic of care situated within the online learning framework. The objective is to help educators teach the online student; to contribute to the broader body of literature regarding online business education best practices, and to identify and provide ideas for online business educators pertaining specifically to care. This researcher acknowledges additional studies should be conducted on online learning and care, e.g., to explore what constitutes a culture of care from the business student perspective, for this research Care will be the same as generally defined: rapport, understanding, and trust between persons; to feel interest or concern (Meyers, 2009; Webster, 2020; Noddings, 2006).

While it can be generalized that the ethic of care is logically situated within the best practices of online learning environments, studies on the specific assessment and outcomes are limited. The research is more prevalent in areas such as the medical field, where nursing has been extremely aggressive in researching ethics of care. It is the purpose of this research to then shed more light on the ethic of care within the field of education, and the online learning environment, paying significant attention to the COVID-19 Spring 2020 semester, respectfully.

Goals

To better understand the online business students' perception of receiving care in an online learning environment so as to 1. To contribute to the body of knowledge regarding: online learning culture and it's relation to care; online students' perceptions while in online learning environment; online learning environments; culture of online learning environments. 2. To contribute to the pedagogy and best practices of teaching online business courses.

Methodology

The study will be conducted using mixed method research, utilizing a Likert-scale Qualtrics survey with open-ended questions. The Likert scale survey design is chosen due to its wide use in the social sciences for responses dealing with attitudes or feelings, and for having a high reliability and validity rating (Vogt, 2005).

The sample pool will be approximately 128 undergraduate college students at a rural Texas college who have taken a specific Business Communications course during the 2019-2020/2020-2021 school years.

The respondents will choose to agree or disagree on a Likert-scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "Very Unsatisfied" and 5 being "Very Satisfied". The survey will consist of three parts, (1) three questions

relating to demographic elements to provide background information on the participants; (2) seven statements which gather participants' perceptions of care in the online learning environment as they relate to the instructor. Follow-up optional focus groups with participants will be scheduled to collect additional meaning. Descriptive statistics as well as quantitative analysis will be employed to evaluate the results.

Implications for Teaching

Teaching online business college classes requires constantly acquiring new knowledge and skills. The outcomes of the study will shed additional light on the online college students' perception of care in the online learning environment. Specifically, it will provide insight to the following questions:

1. Do online students feel care from their online instructors?
2. Do online students want to feel care from their online instructors?
3. If so, to what degree?
4. What are some ways an online instructor can express care, from the online students' perspective?

Creating an Interactive Community Through Instructor Presence and GROUPME

Kimberley Williams
University of Alabama

In light of the 2020 conference theme, "Strengthening B-comm in an era where perception is reality," I propose a 20-minute regular presentation that aims to demonstrate ways to create student engagement and community within an online course through instructor presence and the use of the GROUPME communication platform. Online education has solidified its place within higher education as a versatile medium of instruction and one that will continue to evolve. In the current COVID-19 pandemic, online teaching and learning has become a safe haven for the continuation of learning. However, as students and educators adjust, create, and develop permanent online teaching patterns, the shift has been daunting for many. This may be due to the often, misguided perception, that online teaching and learning is void of interactivity and active connection. My purpose in giving this presentation is to challenge that perception by showcasing the reality that online teaching and learning is connective, robust, and one that opens up a variety of pedogeological possibilities for educators as they continue to interact and instruct their students.

The Garrison, Anderson, and Archer's (2000) Community of Inquiry (COI) framework has guided my investigation into student engagement methods and online community building. The COI framework asserts that learning occurs through interaction of three core elements: cognitive presence, social presence, and teaching (instructor) presence. Ladyshewsky (2013) explained that "teaching (instructor) presence includes how the design and organization of the course has been laid out, how it has been facilitated, and how much direct instruction had taken place" (p. 3). Focusing on instructor presence as a priority within an online course is key to fostering student satisfaction, interaction, and success. Additionally, Robinson and Hulliner (2008) stated that online learning depends on faculty contribution to student success by adopting "purposeful course design that promotes interaction, participation, and communication" (p. 107). Thus, the feelings of student isolation, lack of engagement, and limited participation, which can plague an online course, can be reduced and removed by the instructor with a greater emphasis on instructor presence and through the use of communication platforms like GROUPME. Understanding how a student's interaction with their instructor facilitates their engagement and success within the online environment is one area that can benefit from further inquiry. It is also one that I explored within my online business communication course.

Over the past of three semesters, I have made student engagement and online connection my priority when teaching my online course. I have found that students are much more responsive to their classmates and myself in an environment of open communication and connection. I have utilized the principle of instructor presence as defined above as a guide for increasing connectivity within my online course. This has led me to create a variety of connective points within my course to increase student interaction. Over the years, I have observed and read in course evaluations that students wanted more of a course community and instant interaction with their classmates and instructor. I decided to test out

the use of the GROUPME platform in order to fulfill this need. GROUPME is a group messaging application in which all students can connect together in one social forum. By having all my online students and myself connect within the closed and monitored GROUPME section, I was able to create an extension of presence and connection with my students outside of the learning management system (LMS). The effectiveness of both the use of the GROUPME app and my instructor presence mechanisms were accessed through the use of course evaluations and surveys documenting students' responses.

The goal of this presentation is to share what I have learned about instructor presence and the use of the GROUPME platform within my online course over the progression of three semesters. It is my hope that other instructors will utilize and add to my methods within their own course and share their results. Having 10 years of online teaching experience, I am excited to see online and remote learning in the spotlight. Also, I have a great desire to aid in the development of other educators who may find this mode of teaching challenging in order to enhance online and remote teaching for all who aim to perfect this artform.

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Developing a Literary Journal in a Professional Writing Class: A Collaborative Multi-Modal Report

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This presentation discusses our professional writing capstone project where students developed a proposal and a feasibility report to begin a literary journal on a small campus which is currently without a literary journal. The campus hosts creative writing and creative nonfiction writing classes, but this writing is generally not shared with the larger campus. Also, students generally do not attempt to publish in undergraduate journals in the area. Because undergraduate engagement such as community-based projects, capstone projects and undergraduate research is noted as High Impact Practices (HIPs) that link to retention and continued student success (Kuh), the Professional Writing class allowed for students to engage leadership positions in creating a plan for the literary journal. By referring to Persichetti's (2016) problem-based approach to creating a literary journal, the class was able to assess needs and available resources to create a plan for a literary journal. Since we do not have independent funding, this journal will be a collaboration with future English classes, such as a Publishing and Editing class, and tutors in our writing center space, then published online. Throughout, students learned to use several technological tools such as creating and executing interviews, creating and executing a Qualtrics survey, the use of several multi-modal tools, including creating visuals for various purposes, and a website, and the basics of writing professional proposals and reports for a specific audience -- in our case, the Dean. Students were able to create mock-ups of sample advertisements for the journal, sample website pages for the style and layout of the journal, a mock-up submissions page (the latter two are based on assessments of other literary journals in the region), and a workflow for completion of the journal. This presentation will share the assignment documents and the final proposals and reports with the audience.

Giving and Receiving Feedback: Impact of a Process on Team Efforts

Kimberly R. Jordan
Ohio University

Strengthening Business Communication in an era where perception is reality requires insight into those perceptions. Teams in the midst of a complex uncertain ambiguous project, are not rational actors making rational decisions (Tversky & Kahneman, 1986). Teams navigating uncertainty often avoid confrontation to focus on results and performance. Teams faced with complexity can overcome avoidance patterns with an explicit, regular process to build awareness, especially when combined with sensemaking time. In this session, the presenter will overview the rationale for verbal structured team feedback rounds, the intervention, and the results noted in the existing peer feedback system, CATME.org, on teams with and without the intervention.

Too often people do not know their blind spots or even what they are doing well. Waiting ten years for expertise to develop does not ensure or serve growth (Ericsson et al, 1993). Waiting for the end of the project for feedback, end of the semester for grades, or for the annual performance can result in confusion, reinforce bad outcomes, and tamp down achievement efforts. Blind spots are hard to see around. Kruger and Dunning's (1999) research shows that people often overestimate or underestimate their abilities. Finding a way to negotiate the path from not knowing to learning or knowing requires awareness and insight.

Revealing others' experiences of a person, not blame, is essential so that the individual can come into awareness of the impact of their behavior on others. Clarity into how others are affected by behaviors can direct motivation to change when impact and progress toward goals are clear. A regular practice of asking for and giving feedback develops a skill that can positively direct development. McArthur-Blair and Cockell (2018) suggest tracking and fanning leadership practices that praise, thank, and acknowledge the contributions of others to ensure that people are encouraged to do more of it. Knowledge of what is working sustains and can strengthen practices to continue. Insight, not judgment and defensiveness, allows confusion to be transformed into curiosity and understanding.

A regular time interval for feedback ensures a frequency that helps people track trends over time and creates awareness of what behaviors work, what strengths are spotted, and what gaps exist between what is presented versus what is experienced by others. Normalizing weekly feedback increases psychological safety, inspires learning from the deepening awareness of people's impact on others, and encourages communication patterns that serve present and future development.

Inspired by Kruger and Dunning (1999), the questions of "What's working well?" and "What else can I do?" as well as Eurich's (2017) questions of "How does this person contribute to your success?" and "How could this person better contribute to your success?" two questions are used to guide feedback rounds with teams. Each round focuses on one team member at a time. Listening to responses for one prompt at a time allows the team to provide focused feedback, and the person receiving the feedback to

identify trends and patterns from the feedback, thus positively reinforcing practices that are working and providing awareness of practices that could be improved.

Purpose

A regular practice of structured team feedback rounds is proposed. Feedback rounds allow for the sharing of others' experiences and perceptions with members who can then form insights, goals, and measures as a result of the feedback about what is working and what is not. With an understanding of perceptions, the development of goals and measures, and the background of why they are important, the drive to turn confusion into achievement can flourish. Regular feedback normalizes the experience, builds awareness of blind spots, and helps people negotiate the path of perception matching reality.

Methodology

Three business communication classes working in teams of five to six students were led through a process for structured feedback rounds as compared to seven other business communication classes that were not. All business communication classes completed written peer evaluations, using CATME, of teammates after each project deliverable for two projects.

The intervention: At the completion of Project 1, a 20-minute workshop session guided the intervention teams through the structured team feedback rounds process. The intervention teams were asked to go through the feedback round process and then to carry the practice forward into the new Project 2 teams. The non-intervention teams did not go through the workshop and were placed in Project 2 teams where no one else had received the intervention. At the completion of Project 2, peer evaluations (CATME) scores were completed by all teams, including intervention and non-intervention teams, and compared.

Peer evaluation scores were reviewed for differences in classes with and without the intervention. Generally, the findings showed that the results for Project 2 teams, without the intervention, reflected a lower performance level than Project 1 as measured by the class mean for each project. Teams that received the intervention, however, demonstrated the same or a slightly higher performance level in Project 2 as compared to Project 1 as measured by the class mean for each project.

Takeaways/Outcomes

Ambiguous performance results can entrench behaviors that do not serve organizations or teams. A process for team feedback rounds normalizes regular feedback and provides individuals with an awareness of trends, patterns, and benchmarks to guide development. Intervening with structured team feedback rounds offers a regular process to verbally share feedback, gain insights into one's impact on others, and offers a practice to normalize giving and receiving feedback. Comparing results of the peer evaluation tool already in place for teams with and without the intervention indicated that the feedback rounds could positively impact evaluations and improve team effectiveness, however, a research study needs to be conducted to determine if the intervention statistically impacts evaluations. Further research could demonstrate the value of structured feedback rounds for gaining insights into perceptions, blind spots, and ways to develop team effectiveness.

How Do Writers Communication Across Borders? Teaching Email Communication Through a Transnational Email Assignment

Krista Speicher Sarraf
West Virginia University

Email is a prominent written genre in the workplace and is used to communicate across borders. Moreover, scholars have found that email's sociocultural (Waldvogel, 2007) and intertextual (Warren, 2016) nature makes it a particularly challenging tool. For example, Jensen's (2009) discourse analysis of emails suggests that the use of metadiscourse in email is one way that email communication is used to navigate complex relationships. Thus, Jensen's (2009) study suggests that email is a complex genre used for relationship-building in the workplace. Considering the situatedness of email, how can instructors equip students to use email as a relationship-building tool for business communication? Moreover, how can the fact that email requires readers and writers to negotiate meaning be used to prepare students to enter transnational business settings, which are laden with communicators' complex language backgrounds?

This presentation draws on translingual frameworks that have been used to understand communication practices, especially in global contexts (Räisänen, 2018; Wolfe, Shanmugaraj, & Sipe, 2016), and interrogates whether a translingual pedagogical approach to email instruction can effectively prepare undergraduate students with the skills they need to successfully email across borders in international business settings. Based on the review of literature, this presentation argues that translingual approaches to language can offer teachers of business writing the perspective that all language users must negotiate meaning when emailing, despite their language background. By moving away from the native/non-native speaker dichotomy often present in research and teaching on email communication, teacher-scholars can teach students of all linguistic backgrounds how to be effective communicators, using strategies to negotiate meaning, in transnational email situations.

After establishing the theoretical framework for the writing assignment, the presenter details an email assignment taught in first-year writing that paired their U.S. students with business writing students in Lebanon titled "How Do Writers Communicate Across Borders?" Over a 4-week period, U.S. students and Lebanese students emailed to discuss a shared text about international global communication. Attendees of this presentation will have access to the presenter's teaching tools and assignment sequence.

"Imagination" in Business Communication: Course Themes to Support Student Learning

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Theme

Thematic content in business communication courses can serve as an organizing principle in the course and work as a method for reinforcing students' learning. The organizational benefits of theme content include bringing continuity to course elements from the perspective of both instructor and student; that is, a theme spans an entire semester to connect and create unity across various course elements (Coles 1970; Zebroski 1994). The pedagogical benefits include a grounding in the specific approach to communication in the course, with the theme therefore working as a support to student learning. The organizational and the pedagogical dimensions of a theme are interrelated: as a theme structures learning by connecting assignments, it engages students in a focused approach to learning about communication, one that reinforces a selected quality of communication as it pertains to work in the course. This presentation offers a rationale for using a theme, along with a method for selecting one.

Purpose and Goal

This presentation draws from principles of theme course teaching in composition studies with the aim of offering a method for teaching students principles of business communication—that is, encouraging a kind of learning about communication that includes but also extends beyond working in specific professional genres. In composition studies, theme content includes any content that is not the explicit domain of writing instruction (i.e., topics that are not explicitly about writing). Theme content can support student learning by demonstrating or engaging students in a feature of writing specific to the course. For example, in composition studies, a course theme like "detective literature" might provide a parallel process for student research, if students need to conduct research that is similarly inquiry driven (Sponenberg 2012). The benefit of the theme as a structuring mechanism in the course (in addition to bringing continuity) is that it makes the seemingly intangible qualities of communication and rhetoric more apparent, more tangible.

Business communication courses might likewise implement a thematic element to support students' learning about communication with similar aims and outcomes: to demonstrate or engage students in a feature of writing necessary for communication in the course—and beyond—by making a quality of communication more visible through thematic emphasis. Specifically, I argue that business communication courses might synthesize research on theme courses in composition with research on habits of mind, implementing conceptual themes as a framing element to course assignments. Whereas composition uses topic-based themes like food studies, superheroes, and politics, business communication might use themes that call attention to the conceptual content of the course—themes like imagination, storytelling, and empathy.

Methodology

I suggest using habits of mind as a starting point for theme selection because these principles are already connected to success in learning and life. In their work on habits of mind, Costa and Kallick (2008) write: "We are interested in enhancing the ways students produce knowledge rather than how they merely reproduce it" (p. 16). Sullivan (2014) points to the relevance of building habits of mind in writing studies when he writes that "Research related to critical thinking and the development of writing expertise suggest that intellectual and dispositional 'habits of mind' may be of more value to students, especially in the long run, than knowledge about traditional subjects at the center of most writing instruction" (p. 151). In applying these two conversations to business communication, instructors might support students' communication literacy through conceptual themes that are conducive to developing awareness of and skills in communication.

Costa and Kallick (2008) identify sixteen habits of mind that intelligent people employ, including those of "Creating, Imagining, Innovating" (p. 32). In my course, I focus on the theme of "imagination" to set up assignments and encourage students to recognize imagination as a habit of mind relevant to understanding and implementing effective communication practices. For example, before beginning work on audience-driven assignments, the class reads Sadoski's (1992) article, "Imagination, Cognition, and Persona," which explains the role of imagination in creating a sense of self for an audience:

> Assuming the intention of verbal communication with others (or even of articulation to themselves), authors must perforce assume an identity, a persona, with both appropriate tone toward the audience and attitude toward the subject. This identity maybe be an everyday facet of their own personalities, or an assumed persona, an identity synthesized in imagination. This persona then mediates the conversion of both nonverbal and verbal mental representations into rhetoric. (p.273)

As we apply our conversations on the theme to work in the assignments, that is, as we employ imagination to communicate, we continually examine and reflect on the various applications of imagination to our knowledge about communication. The course thus uses imagination as a resource for completing work and as a support for broader knowledge building.

Outcomes

Engaging students in themes that help them build habits of mind might position them to develop awareness of communication as a process that is knowable and navigable through the theme. The course theme can serve as an organizational principle by connecting course elements and as a pedagogical resource by orienting students to learning about communication as it takes place in the course. I offer my course as a model for theming, sharing why I select and incorporate the conceptual theme and habit of mind, "imagination," and to what observable effect. Importantly, instructors using theme content must reflect on the connection between theme and learning about communication, which is why the presentation emphasizes theme selection that is immediately relevant and connected to successful communication.

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Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Research Focus

Is Our Course Content Relevant to Today's Workplace? Results of BizComm Skills Survey of Business School Graduates

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Indiana University

This presentation seeks to inspire business communication instructors to adapt bizcomm course curricula to achieve synergy with the needs of the modern U.S. professional workplace. Faculty and students alike wonder about and comment on "the real world" validity and applicability of course policies and assignments. Do our business communication courses track well with the need for business writing, presentations, slide-design, teamwork, strategy, and use of technology in the modern workplace?

The presentation reviews the development, administration, and analysis of a survey conducted this summer, five years after a similar survey, in which business school graduates compared the skills they learned in their bizcomm courses to the skills they now actually use in their workplaces. The results are intended to help educators in this field make data-driven curriculum content and priority decisions as business communication education moves into the next decade.

In 2015, the authors shared an online survey with business school alumni (eventually completed by 447 professionals) addressing a critical question business communication instructors consider: Are the skills bizcomm faculty teach in our courses preparing business students well for their future workplaces? In summer 2020, the authors shared an updated version of the original survey to reach a wider pool of business school graduates asking the same overarching question with these narrow categories of inquiry:

- Which types of writing, presentation, visual argument, team skills, and communication-based technologies do you use most often in your workplace?
- Which of these business communication skills do you believe are now most critical for your own workplace success?
- Which of the skills from your Business Communication courses do you wish you had learned more of vs. are not very important to you now?
- Which of these skills do you wish your co-workers, supervisors, and employees had emphasized in their education?
- Seeking an open-ended response: What recommendations do you have for future business communication courses to best meet the needs of the modern professional workplace?

The survey followed the rules of systematic investigation, designed to contribute to generalizable knowledge, as outlined in the guidelines set forth by Indiana University's Human Subjects Office. Subjects were selected through personal contacts maintained by the authors with alumni from the school where they instruct plus other business school contacts suggested by these alumni.

The results of the 2020 survey allowed the authors to compare responses across industries, company size, career type, college major, and graduation year plus gender and geographic location to determine the synergy of the modern business communication curriculum in the U.S. with the needs of varied workers and professional workplaces in the U.S. (and occasionally outside the U.S.).

During the session, the presenters will summarize results of the online survey and lead a discussion surrounding implications for future adaptations to business communication curricula, founded in time-tested theory while adapting to the ever-evolving workplace. The discussion will address how the authors and session attendees can use the data to inform course content and instruction. We will consider improved strategies to select meaningful readings and other media; develop lectures, examples, assignments, and assessments; and inform teaching philosophies to bring added value to our students as they enter the "real world" of work.

Knowledge Transfer and Valuable Strategies: Adult Students' Perspectives on Learning Business Communication Skills in a Hybrid/Online Environment

Zsuzsanna Palmer
Grand Valley State University

This presentation focuses on topics and communication strategies adult students value the most in a hybrid accelerated business communication course at the undergraduate level. The goals of this presentation are: 1) to provide an overview of the literature about the connections between adult learning and business communication pedagogy and 2) to describe the findings from a qualitative study based on the analysis of adult students' reflections at the end of three different courses that followed the same hybrid accelerated curriculum. These findings then will be connected to effective strategies for teaching business communication to returning adult learners in hybrid and online environments.

At Grand Valley State University, the Adult Leadership program has been created as a unique way towards degree completion for non-traditional students, also described as returning adult learners. This program is based on a structured approach to degree completion where returning adult students take a series of five-week accelerated hybrid courses over 19 months, meeting once a week on the same night for class with the members of their cohort (Lake, Ricco, & Whipps, 2018). The learning outcomes of this program include improved communication skills that are achieved through a cross-curricular approach and through the incorporation of a junior level business communication course into the curriculum. In addition, this course enables students to fulfill their university-level writing requirements.

Research in business communication pedagogy has explored the unique challenges and rewards of teaching adult students. Most of this research has described teaching business communication at a graduate level within MBA programs as these programs, by their nature, mostly cater to adult students (Knight, 1999; Meredith, 2012; Marcel & Ross Mahon, 2019). Some of these studies, even though conducted with graduate students, have applicable findings for adult learners at any level of higher education, as they are based more on applied research and provide observations, tips, and strategies on how to approach teaching this unique demographic (May, Thompson, & Hebblethwaite, 2012; Stowers & Barker 2002).

Discussing mostly undergraduate adult learners, an article by David (1979), focuses specifically on the educational expectations of adult learners within the undergraduate business communication curriculum and provides suggestions on how to teach this group of students based on classroom observations of one traditional face-to-face class. While some of the strategies identified by David are still applicable, not much has been published about adult learners in undergraduate business communication classes in recent years. At the same time, educational technology has improved in recent decades and hybrid and online courses have become a commonly selected option for returning adult learners (Watts, 2017; McKenna, Gupta, Kaiser, Lopes, & Zarestky, 2019). For this reason, the need

to explore effective ways of teaching business communication in digital environments to this specific population becomes even more significant.

To assess adult learners' perspectives about the transferrable knowledge they gained from a hybrid accelerated business communication course within Grand Valley State University's Adult Leadership program, I have compiled the end-of-semester reflections of three different classes that were taught in three consecutive years. The qualitative analysis of these reflections not only brought into light the specific topics and assignments that students identified at the end of semester as valuable but also revealed the extent of the immediate transfer of knowledge from this course into these students' daily workplace communication practices. Explaining these findings will be one of the major focal points of this presentation.

In addition to sharing these findings, the presentation will also provide an overview of the five-week curriculum and will highlight major assignments with the rationale of their selection for this group. Then, the conference talk will compare this rationale with the patterns observed in students' reflections to assess whether students also valued specific aspects of the course deemed essential by the instructor. The presentation will conclude by describing strategies that instructors of business communication can use to address the needs of returning adult students in their curricula and teaching methods in hybrid and online learning environments.

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Leadership Styles and Partner Collaboration in Service-Learning Business Communication Courses

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Pedagogies like service-learning, client-based teaching, and community-engaged writing situate students with communities, clients, and/or partners for the purpose of facilitating "real-world" rhetorical contexts. Although collaborating across rhetorical situations that expand beyond the classroom can create educational opportunities and meaningful projects, successfully understanding, managing, and delegating this labor within client and partner-based composition pedagogy can be a challenge to coordinate effectively.

Ill-understood complexity in client and partner-based composition courses can result in unsatisfactory or unfulfilling outputs, unethical authority imbalances, and marginalized course participants and partners. Institutions, authority, and hierarchy all structure writing and rhetorical labor practices. Service-learning operates in accordance with who exercises authority or how that authority is shared. Much of service-learning literature points out that universities often exercise authority over community partners. In the field's history of service-learning, the asymmetry of authority has been a detriment to client and partner-based composition projects.

Scholars in business communication have repeatedly stated that service-learning's collaborative partnerships rely on effective and conscientious "listening" and involvement of community partners or clients. These researchers have encouraged various methods, including "researching community contexts," "building relationships," "establishing expectations," "maintaining open communications," "seeking input," and "inviting feedback," all of which involve a measure of democracy when it comes to planning, executing, and reflecting on collaboration with other stakeholders.

Yet how do service-learning instructors and administrators navigate their authority with the needs of community partners? What does "listening" to community partners entail, and what does it mean to "have open communication and equitable collaboration"? What is covered in "establishing expectations"? My presentation offers a localized matrix for leadership and collaboration among writing partnership stakeholders. This matrix operates as a tool to capture the parameters of collaboration to allow stakeholders to negotiate authority within a partnership. In essence, this authority|collaboration matrix specifies some of what service-learning scholarship means by "listening," "establishing expectations," and "having open and equitable collaboration." In this presentation, I will explain the matrix and how it allows stakeholders to explore the intersection of collaboration and authority, outlining the implications of different leadership methods.

This matrix comes from my institutional ethnographic research of a promotional media course. After gathering data through observations, interviews, and focus groups, I conducted a grounded theory analysis to develop localized theories about the distribution of rhetorical labor within the course. From

these analysis I developed the authority|collaboration matrix. I found that authority involves the decision-making process that stakeholders have over the labor of other stakeholders. More specifically, authority involves being able to direct how much stakeholders are involved and collaborate with each other in their work, versus siloing work off individually to stakeholders. Authority also involves determining how much direction to give other stakeholders about the project's scope, outcomes, and details vs. turning the creation and development of those components over to them to operate independently or to provide democratic input for their invention. Essentially, the authority/collaboration matrix allows project leaders to explicitly determine these two significant factors for their work with other stakeholders. Locating themselves at different points in the matrix will have different implications for the collaborations that happen. Leadership occurs as the parameters for directing involvement and directing invention are set. Different approaches to directing invention and involvement have various pedagogical and leadership implications. Project leaders (instructors, university program administrators, and partners/clients) can establish specific expectations for how to shape and execute the project through negotiating expectations with other key stakeholders for directing involvement and invention with the authority|collaboration matrix.

Investigating stakeholder authority negotiation provides the field with tools to support instructors and community partners to equitably and ethically enter into and facilitate writing partnerships. In particular, my presentation can provide instructors with tools to balance power asymmetries through proactive dialoguing about and negotiating authority with stakeholders, specifically through discussing implications for stakeholder authority in directing invention and collaboration.

Learning, Research, and Practice in Business Communication: A Careful Balancing Act on the Road to Success - Part I

Astrid Vandendaele; Geert Jacobs; Julia Valeiras-Jurado
Ghent University

Annelise Ly
Norwegian School of Economics

Mercedes Díez-Prados
University of Alcalá

Geert Jacobs and Astrid Vandendaele, "Introduction by Convenors"

Students of business communication are challenged with transitioning from a learner role into that of an independent communication practitioner over the course of one or several years. Along the way, they need to understand and engage in business communication practices, find and complete an appropriate internship; conduct research; meet deadlines; manage expectations and deal with feedback; oversee various projects; master foreign languages for professional purposes; work in a team as well as individually, and establish rapport with peers and a wide range of other stakeholders.

This panel invites case-based explorations of the complex interactions between learning, research, and practice in the fields of business and professional communication (see Bruyer, Jacobs, Vandendaele 2016 a and b). We welcome proposals that raise and answer questions concerning the – at times difficult – balancing act faced by the parties (both academic and professional) involved in the training of emerging business communication specialists. In particular, we encourage empirical, data-driven research contributions to the panel, relying on ethnography, video and/or audio data, interview and/or meeting transcripts. Our aim is two-fold: on the one hand, we wish to identify when and why the difficult balancing act between learning, research and practice succeeds or fails, and how the different stakeholders negotiate their and each other's identities in the process. On the other hand, we wish to deconstruct our own practices as business communication teachers and researchers.

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Annelise Ly, "Developing Future Global Leaders' Competencies in a Business School Course: A Case Study of a Course Design Inspired by Team-based Learning"

This presentation aims to describe and reflect on a case of a course design that aims to develop global leadership competencies in the classroom. The course was designed for students to practise three main competencies deemed essential for global leaders: (1) their ability to understand and describe their own views of the world, how they relate to others and to question the way they act; (2) their ability to communicate effectively and work in multicultural teams and (3) their ability to think critically (Bird 2018).

The teaching method is inspired by Team Based Learning (TBL) (Michaelsen & Sweet, 2008), an active learning method that is composed of fixed, clearly defined set of practice, which taken together, fosters collaboration, critical thinking, and student accountability (Frame 2015). Students are set up in teams in which they collaborate during the whole course. Instead of being lectured about a topic, students must work independently to acquire the basic knowledge prior to coming to class. In class, they are tested individually and in groups on this pre-class work and then apply the knowledge learned in their respective groups. At the end of each session, students engage in a student-to-student peer feedback on their work and attitude in the team. In addition, they write a weekly, as well as a final reflection paper based on their experience and learning. Such active learning methods have been promoted in pedagogy (Bigg and Tang, 2011) and numerous studies indicate that TBL increases student motivation and engagement (for instance, Jeno et al., 2017).

Yet, TBL requires a shift in the paradigm for learning (Frame et al. 2015), and in practice, students often resist implementation. This is because students need to transition from a passive learner role to an active student that is responsible for his/her own learning and that is accountable to the team.

In this presentation, I first describe how I have adapted TBL to develop global leader competencies. Then, based on the students 'weekly and final reflection papers on their experience of working in teams, as well as their peer to peer feedback, I deconstruct the teaching and learning practice: I discuss examples of student resistance during the learning process, and examples of success, and I examine how students and the instructor negotiate their and each other's identities along the way.

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Mercedes Diez-Prado, "Mutual Interdisciplinary Feedback: An Application of Business Communication Research to the Humanities"

Both business scholars (e.g., Ahl, 2006; Bill, Bjerke & Johansson, 2010; Stiff & Mongeau, 2003; Parhankangas & Renko, 2017) and communication scholars (e.g., Spalton 2010; Ahl and Marlow, 2012; Daly and Davy 2016; García-Gómez 2018a) see the need to communicate effectively in entrepreneurial discourse, since part of the success to attract funding or investment relies heavily on the entrepreneur's linguistic and rhetorical repertoire (Perloff, 2010). According to Parhankangas & Renko (2017), this seems to be particularly vital in the case of new ventures. That is the case of social entrepreneurs, whose fundraising depends more heavily on their success in establishing a connection with the investors than on the idea or product they need funding for, but it is equally relevant in the case of more traditional commercial entrepreneurs, whose success may depend more on the product they sell than on the way they promote it.

Whereas the entrepreneurial pitch is a well-known and widely used genre for business students and professionals alike, it is certainly "a complete stranger" among the Humanities. This paper presents the results of a project carried out with Translation and Modern Languages university students from the University of Alcalá (Spain), in which students were trained to prepare a social entrepreneurial pitch in Spanish (based on Daly and Davy's 2016 model), translate it into English and analyze the translation process (in terms both of linguistic choices and rhetorical strategies), and video-record themselves pitching in both languages. The purpose of this social entrepreneurial project was making the students aware of the resources needed for an effective entrepreneurial pitch not only in terms of lexis but also at the discourse level (i.e., its macro and superstructure, the pitching conventions and rhetorical strategies), since pitching is an example of a "soft skill" that may be of use in their academic, professional, or even personal life.

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Julia Valeiras Jurado, "Who is Talking to Whom Now? Communicative Aim, Roles and Authenticity in the Business Communication Classroom"

Business communication tends to have a clearly definable communicative aim. For example, meetings have an agenda to cover and pitches try to persuade an audience of the value of a product. The communicative aim of these instances of business communication can be more or less overt, but in most cases, it shares two characteristics:

a) it happens in distinct environments and among people with highly recognisable roles, e.g., a job seeker and an employer.
b) it frequently contains an important persuasive element, e.g., persuading a business angel to finance a project (Valeiras-Jurado, 2019).

These characteristics of business communication imply that students need to have opportunities to practice business discourse in realistic settings (Nestel &Tierney, 2007). This is not always easy to achieve in a classroom environment, because of what we might call a duplicity of roles. Students and teachers adopt two simultaneous personae during practice in class: the roles of teacher and student, and the role of business professionals. This duplicity expands to the communicative aim of the interaction. For the teacher and the student, the aim is assessing and being assessed. For the professionals, the aim is business related (e.g., to fulfil a transaction).

This duplicity complicates the task of assessing business communication practical activities, because performance at each layer can vary. For example, a student can show language flaws, but at the same time show ability to achieve the business-related communicative goal. The question becomes more challenging when we take into account that business communication teachers are not always practitioners themselves and need to learn about the practices of professionals. An additional element in the equation is that the duality of roles and aims can also affect the motivation and performance of students. For example, when students give a pitch and are more worried about the grade they will receive than about their message, they will not come across as particularly persuasive.

The challenges presented by this duality of roles are still not overcome. In this study I suggest that increased authenticity in activities and closer collaboration with professionals can be useful tools to achieve this goal and smoothen the transition from student to practitioner (Vandendaele, Bruyer, and Jacobs, G. 2016).

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Learning, Research, and Practice in Business Communication: A Careful Balancing Act on the Road to Success - Part II

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Tom Bruyer
VIVES University College

Jonathan Clifton
Universite Polytechnique Hauts de France

Jose Santiago Fernandez-Vazquez
University of Alcala

James Michael Dubinsky
Virginia Tech

Students of business communication are challenged with transitioning from a learner role into that of an independent communication practitioner over the course of one or several years. Along the way, they need to understand and engage in business communication practices, find and complete an appropriate internship; conduct research; meet deadlines; manage expectations and deal with feedback; oversee various projects; master foreign languages for professional purposes; work in a team as well as individually, and establish rapport with peers and a wide range of other stakeholders.

This panel invites case-based explorations of the complex interactions between learning, research, and practice in the fields of business and professional communication (see Bruyer, Jacobs, Vandendaele 2016 a and b). We welcome proposals that raise and answer questions concerning the – at times difficult – balancing act faced by the parties (both academic and professional) involved in the training of emerging business communication specialists. In particular, we encourage empirical, data-driven research contributions to the panel, relying on ethnography, video and/or audio data, interview and/or meeting transcripts. Our aim is two-fold: on the one hand, we wish to identify when and why the difficult balancing act between learning, research and practice succeeds or fails, and how the different stakeholders negotiate their and each other's identities in the process. On the other hand, we wish to deconstruct our own practices as business communication teachers and researchers.

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Tom Bruyer, "From the Boardroom to the Classroom: The Practitioners' Call for More Involvement and Impact"

This study aims to add a new dimension to earlier empirical and data-drive research on the interaction between learning, research, and practice in the field of business communication. This previous research zoomed in on the challenges linked to preparing students for the successful execution of a research project commissioned by selected multinationals. The practitioner's role in facilitating the transition from a student-researcher to a well-seasoned communication professional is paramount.

While research focusing on the students' role has allowed us to distinguish between three main researcher personae – the Student, the Researcher, and the Practitioner – the practitioners' perspective can add valuable learnings and help the academic staff involved fine-tune their coaching role. This paper aims to study the practitioners' role in facilitating the students' learning process in the workspace while also channelling back their observations to the teaching practice in the classroom.

Our data include a set of 65 semi-structured interviews conducted by students during their internship in a multilingual corporate environment. The analysis of the audio recordings and transcripts provide interesting insights on the practitioners' perspective: How do the communication professionals help students navigate between a familiar role as researchers and their new identity as junior practitioners? Is it possible to discern different personae and patterns of role -switching within this group as well? Finally, which valuable learnings could be exchanged between the practitioners and the teaching staff and thus channelled back from the boardroom to the classroom?

Jonathan Clifton, Julia Valeiras Jurado, Geert Jacobs, and Astrid Vandendaele, "Who's Shortlisting? (I) An Exploration of an Online Career Coaching Service for Young Talent"

The world of employment is constantly changing. Today, it is no longer sufficient for recent graduates to have thorough knowledge of an academic subject in order to be successful when applying for a job. As employers are often looking for skills that go beyond qualifications and experience, employability and 'soft skills' are said to be the new building blocks of a young graduate's career. Research shows that young people themselves feel vulnerable about their immediate employability and are deeply concerned whether they have the training and skills needed to compete in the long run (Brack & Kelly 2012). Moreover, there is increasing international recognition that the transition from the world of higher education into the world of employment is not always straightforward (Fallows & Steven 2000). Various career coaching companies have taken note and are explicitly marketing their services to first-time job seekers, presenting themselves as a helpful guide towards the graduates' place within the job market.

In this paper, we zoom in one such career orientation ecosystem for young talents: a spin-off project of a company that helps employers find new talent. This platform consists of both an online and an offline component. In particular, we aim to find out what kind of job-seeking 'reality' is being presented in the Shortlist online environment (website, modules…). Our examination of these questions is based on the multimodal analysis of the two organizations' websites, the online modules and videos (Kress, 2010). By exploring the discourse employed by these coaching platforms, we note that the students are being treated as customers and that, while students have become ingrained with the notion of employability, the 'discover yourself, be true to who you are' discourse seems to be encouraged. In fact, it seems to instill in them how the jobseeker – rather than the employer – actually draws up a shortlist. With these insights, we not only want to refine our own practices as business communication teachers, but also want to contribute to ongoing research on these topics.

The research presented here was carried out in conjunction with a second study, which is presented in a paper that was submitted to this panel as well and where we investigate whether the framing presented in the online materials identified above is also adopted in the career coaches' actual interactions with first-time job-seekers.

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Geert Jacobs, Jonathan Clifton, and Astrid Vandendaele, "Who's Shortlisting? (II) An Exploration of the Interaction Between Millennial First-time Job Seekers and Career Development Coaches"

According to Fotiadou (2017), the idea that 'a degree is not/no longer enough' is becoming increasingly prevalent. In addition, young people are told that they need to develop (transferable) skills (Assiter 2017) and universities increasingly promote their ability to help students cultivate them. In this context, Mayr (2008) notes the university's use of 'business-related' lexical items, such as 'competitive' and 'employability', and 'new capitalism' buzzwords, such as 'creativity and confidence', 'adaptable', and 'flexible' (Mayr 2008: 34). Fotiadou (2017) demonstrates how this ties in with the neoliberal notion of the commodification of Higher Education, where students are framed as customers who are entitled to a return, usually in the form of (highly-paid and rewarding) employment. Various career coaching companies have taken note of this trend and are explicitly marketing their services to first-time job seekers, as a bridge between 'school' and the job market.

For this study, we explore the trajectory designed by one such career orientation ecosystem for young talents and aim to uncover how the consultants perceive their own professional role in the process. In addition, we want to find out what we (as teachers of business communication) can learn from the way the consultants and students interact. Our examination of these questions is based on a series of interviews with the career coaches as well as an analysis of the interactions between the consultants and students during individual coaching sessions. In doing so, we build on previous research, in which we focused on students' transition towards the professional world by looking at their interactions with teachers, researchers, and practitioners in the context of university-assigned research projects.

The research presented here was carried out in conjunction with a preliminary study, which is presented in a paper that was submitted to this panel as well and where we focus on a multimodal analysis of the career coaching websites, including videos, and where we pointed to a 'discover yourself, be true to who you are' where it looks as if it is the jobseeker – rather than the employer – who actually draws up a shortlist. With the insights from the second study presented here, we not only want to refine our own practices as business communication teachers, but also want to contribute to ongoing research on these topics.

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José Santiago Fernández Vázquez, "Climate Change and Business Communication: A Multimodal Ecolinguistic Approach"

This paper presents a multimodal analysis of the corporate sustainability webpages of some of the greatest polluters. Our intention is to determine how global corporations address climate change in their online business communications. To do so, we examine the major discourses and narratives on climate change used by global companies in their website communications, in comparison with the conceptualizations put forward by other social agents, such as NGOs. From the methodological point of view, our study follows the theoretical principles of critical discourse analysis, multimodal studies and ecolinguistics. To conduct the analysis of webpages, we apply Halliday's systemic-functional grammar and Kress and Van Leeuwen's grammar of visual design. This methodological framework enables us to describe and classify images on the webpages and to determine how these images work to enforce certain narratives and ideologies. We also consider the type of language used on the webpages and the values with which these linguistic choices are associated.

Discussion led by Jim Dubinsky, ABC Executive Director.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Research Focus

Measuring the Impact of the Business Communication Center

Elizabeth Tomlinson
West Virginia University

As part of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), this presentation begins the scholarly work of establishing strategies business communication center (BCC) directors can use to demonstrate efficacy to external audiences such as college and university administration. One challenge BCC directors face is that while writing centers have a robust body of scholarship, extant research on BCCs, which often operate somewhat differently from the generalist approach most writing centers use, includes fewer than eight scholarly articles. The dearth of scholarship stings, especially when a BCC needs to provide metrics demonstrating its efficacy. The writing center literature rarely deals with students' grades and only occasionally discusses other center metrics, which means that few models for data collection within either a writing center or BCC context are available.

The context of the BCC itself creates philosophical challenges related to demonstrating efficacy to external audiences. The guiding philosophy for most centers involves students setting their own goals for sessions. Tutors typically situate these goals within the larger context of helping the student learn lifelong strategies for communicating their ideas to others, as opposed to focusing on a grade on just one assignment or even a course grade. While many BCCs may begin with this tutoring philosophy adopted from writing centers, BCCs, by their very nature, tend to use a specialist approach, employing tutors who have experience in the genres germane to the business world. BCCs typically focus on supporting students' own goals for becoming more effective communicators as they move into the workplace; the tutors help students see their own work through the audience's perspective and then show them how to revise content and edit for readability. Even working within these type of contexts, BCCs do need measurement strategies they can employ to demonstrate the ways they are meeting university and college-level needs.

To those ends, the data, collected with IRB approval, includes student attendance records at BCC sessions, student satisfaction survey data about their BCC sessions, records related to whether sessions were required or optional, course grades and overall GPAs. The presenter will discuss the types of data collected, the process of data collection, the findings, and how these results were then used to demonstrate the BCC's work to administrators.

Overall, this presenter seeks to accomplish the following rhetorical tasks:

- to first weigh the challenges of programmatic assessment within the BCC context
- to then demonstrate the importance of collecting a variety of metrics
- to show participants that the data collection does not have to be an onerous process
- to provide participants and other directors with strategies for advocating on behalf of their centers.

In light of the economic strife many universities now face, BCC directors will likely encounter ongoing challenges when advocating on behalf of the student populations we serve, and even in continuing to provide the services that help our faculty build students' workforce-ready communication skills. This presentation will, ideally, provide a starting place for additional conversations among BCC directors and business communication faculty about the work we do and the ways we can continue to demonstrate its value to various constituencies.

Old Habits, New Reality: Making the Struggle to Learn Visible Again

Justin McGlothin; Pam Chisum; Jacob Matig; James Edmund Johnson; Theresa M. Evans
Miami University

The changes made to accommodate remote learning in days due to the COVID-19 pandemic undoubtedly shifted notions about business communication in a virtual space. Faculty moved their classroom to their living rooms, and in some cases, taught their own school-aged children at the same time. Time seemed fluid and because teaching was remote, it was always with you.

In a clearly difficult time for all us, we made concessions for the teaching of business communication, and we made innovations. The panel of First Year Integrated Core faculty from the Farmer School of Business at Miami University, discusses their learnings from the quick move to remote learning - where the divide between perception of engagement and the reality of engagement (student and faculty) grew significantly - and shares the pedagogies and innovations they will take with them when face-to-face classes return to campus.

The First Year Integrated Core (FYIC) is a skills-based curriculum, and students take the four courses within the FYIC concurrently. The four classes include: (1) Business Foundations; (2) Foundations for Business Communications; (3) Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurial Thinking; and (4) Introduction to Computational Thinking for Business. At the end of the semester, all four classes collaborate to help students apply what they've learned to a client challenge. During this client challenge, students work with external clients such as Fifth Third and Cleveland Clinic to solve real-world business problems with real-world data.

Faculty from the Business Foundations course discuss the need to accelerate and enhance students' skills, strategies, and tools necessary to work together remotely. In its on-campus version, student teams learn what makes a team successful and what tools can help facilitate communication. Tools used across campus now reached across the world as students went home to countries far beyond the US borders. Teams used WebEx, Zoom, Trello, the Google Suite, and others to stay connected and manage their work in a real-world remote environment. These unexpected times pushed students into uncomfortable situations, and of course, they thrived.

Faculty from the Business Communication course discuss their experiences with students delivering two classroom-based team presentations. The shift to remote learning left faculty wondering, how do we help students feel confident that they can deliver effective synchronous, recorded team presentations?

Synchronous classroom instruction complemented by asynchronous activities has proven effective. Faculty first review concepts from readings; discussions are followed up with homework activities that help students perfect those concepts.

During the panel, faculty will highlight two of the most successful activities.

Best/Worst Slide Activity

This activity gave students experience with visual design. Students created a slide deck that showcased University-provided information about distance learning. Students created the worst slides they could, followed by effective slides that highlighted the same information. At the end of the slide deck, students included a paragraph explaining their decisions using terms from the reading.

Animal Mascot Activity

This activity gave students experience with planning and delivering a synchronous recorded virtual presentation. Students argued for why a specific animal should be the mascot for our program. This was a fun way for students to build their confidence in creating team presentations while learning how to overcome potential technological hurdles.

Faculty from the Creativity class discuss their experiences with students' perception of their creativity. When asked, only about 10% of our new business students raise their hand when asked if they are creative. Especially our freshmen students are arriving at college believing that they are not creative, and creativity is not needed in the workplace. If there has ever been a year to show us that creativity is needed in business, 2020 has been it. Learning to embrace ambiguity, learn from failure, uncover personal curiosity, and use divergent thinking are the core creative mindsets to help students re-discover their form of creativity and prepare them for the ever changing world of business.

Faculty will share their experiences using a flipped classroom, ambiguous assignments, online tools, and pushing beyond working for a grade to see how 1400 students a year are embracing the infinite game and experiencing the value of creativity. Included will be examples of mind-blowing student projects and tips for teachers who want to use remote learning tools to enhance the future capabilities of the live classroom experience.

The presenters wonder how companies will deal with disruption of this unprecedented change. We believe they will seek out business graduates who can creatively solve problems for real-life challenges. Miami University helps students develop creative potential and problem-solving skills through immersive and unorthodox learning experiences where classes do not teach students how to do something, rather, learn how to do anything. Experimentation and open-ended challenges push them to embrace ambiguity, foster curiosity, seek divergent thinking, and develop resilience from risk and failure. As a result, they can not only perceive a better future, but they can also make it a reality.

Finally, Chris Anson (2015) argued that writing habits can lead to entrenchment: What makes a writer successful in one context can lead to failure in another. Miami business students in the First Year Integrated Core spend a rigorous semester developing new habits of writing, along with their confidence. Their next stop is Professional Communication for Business. Some students arrive brimming with over-confidence; others wonder aloud what anyone else could possibly teach them.

Faculty examine five threshold concepts of writing studies, as outlined by Adler-Kassner and Wardle (2015), as a way of explaining student perceptions as they adapt to a more expanded view of business communication. The presenter discusses how these concepts can help us recognize our own entrenched

habits, now that teachers and students alike are forced to adapt to a pandemic world that makes everyone's struggle to learn visible again.

Suddenly everything is unfamiliar again: Students are introduced to new and more ambiguous business communication problems, with no clear answers. They become frustrated when their newly forged habits fail to serve them. If they leave the advanced business writing class understanding that they will always be learning how to be business communicators, then we have done our job.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Research Focus

Perceptions and Performance in Business Writing: Individual and Group Comparisons

Ellis Hayes
Wingate University

This project is reminiscent of the conference theme: "Strengthening B-comm in an era where perception is reality."

An analytical review of two semester course sections in Managerial Communication examined group workshop writing in the school's Innovation Lab; and compared that with concurrent submitted individual writing assignments. A baseline compilation of pupils' perceived writing aspect challenges was compared to subsequent identification of writing problems in both the group workshop and individual online assignment modes.

To partially illustrate the extent of inspection, following is a listing of the composition aspects under consideration. Pupils received briefing and reference examples of the aspects during the courses' beginning sessions. Technical aspects (not displayed here for brevity) doubled the total. For either grouping, numerous aspects could either lack or bear decreased relevance in a given document.

- "you" concept development
- clarity
- persuasion techniques
- direct vs. indirect approach
- positive vs. negative terminology
- concluding the message
- completeness
- sentence construction
- word usage in context
- correctness
- tone
- emphasizing significant points
- concreteness
- concise wording
- coherence
- diplomacy/tact
- trite expressions
- originality
- logical focus and flow
- relevant details
- "you" concept development

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- originality
- logical focus and flow
- relevant details

Typically, workshops included documentation such as: open-style and probing interview questions; bottom-up outlining; varied analysis memoranda; internal proposal and recommendation reports; visual enhancements in context; and messages of varying types to employees, customers/clients, and other constituents. While workshop writing was ideally completed within the class period of the designated tasks, standard procedure permitted submission by one representative of the foursome at a later time on the same date. Occasional lab pauses were designed for brief speaking among the six groups per workshop session—enhanced by large monitors on each group's background bulkhead.

Individual assignments—which allowed more time and included more discrete elements—roughly paralleled the workshop themes. Within the backdrop of managerial effectiveness as better achieved and sustained by effective communication, earlier semester weeks focused upon the managerial process stages of planning, organizing, composing, enhancing, reviewing, and revising messages. The mid- to late-term emphasized application of the aforementioned process fundamentals in areas such as employment & human resources; efforts to solve problems or enable beneficial change; various types of report/presentation tasks involving both internal and external stakeholders; and public or social media relations.

To maintain a reasonably closer sibilance between group and individual documents, the broader individual portfolio was subject to selectivity for purposes of the investigation. However, student scoring was not altered on the basis of whether any document was part of the investigative pool. Perceived difficulties were derived from a sorting technique that distributed the composition and technical aspects into nine quasi-normal ranges from "most difficult" to "least difficult." These results were compared with assessed deficiencies only in the individual portion of the investigation—for three primary reasons: (1) deriving a uniform group perception would lack validity; (2) rotating group membership during no less than half of the semesters' workshop sessions was a standard practice, offering surpassing benefits to both writing and speaking course externalities; and (3) the bulk of individual-to-group comparisons

involved actual writing quality as measured by extent and amount of assessed deficiencies in both the composition and technical areas.

Findings revealed extent of convergence and divergence among the writing aspects within both technical and composition categories. This data is further represented in the form of percentile ranking charts, affording clear discernment among substantial, moderate, and slight differences in perceived difficulties and assessed deficiencies. In addition, both trends (changes within both individual and group outcomes as assignments continued) and comparisons (manifestations per all aspects by individuals alongside those revealed in roughly paralleled group tasks) were examined to better discern overall progress in reducing incidents of assessed difficulties.

Implications are derived from findings comparing: (A) the group documents' assessed quality via extensive composition and technical aspect listings (a total of eighty applied to each document) with those of individuals; and (B) Each pupil's perceived difficulty of each aspect with the aforementioned individual documentation. Commensurate with the science and art of managing, the importance of workplace-related findings in instruction, training, and development will be offered as a beneficial take-away.

Discerning attitudinal and behavioral outcomes in documents invites many alternative approaches. Per this particular approach, determining the extent to which shifting awareness toward more legitimate areas of concern—or, ameliorating those rightly perceived as difficult in actual writing—warrant emphasis and follow-up in either remedial or pending writing tasks.

Professional Communication+Intercultural Communication+Community: Preparing for the Diverse and Global Workplace

Laura Maria Pigozzi
Northwestern University

Through working with a different community and culture, I feel like I have changed how I treat and speak about others. There are so many unknown barriers that exist not only between cultures but between individuals that may hinder or effect communication. With this in mind, I feel like I am more understanding of others and have become better about giving people the 'benefit of the doubt' in situations that I may have previously been angry or upset. –student reflection

Diversity and inclusion, intercultural and global communication, teaching and learning, social responsibility, and civic engagement; all of these conference track elements were present in the service-learning course described in this paper. The course, a section of Technical and Professional Writing (a 3xxx-level writing-intensive undergraduate course), partnered with a faith community serving a large, Spanish speaking, Latino-immigrant community. The purpose of this presentation is to describe the benefits of integrating an intercultural experience into a service learning course. This presentation will give examples of intercultural interactions that were part of this course and the outcomes of those encounters. The presentation will conclude with consideration on how this experience might be created online to provide an e-service experience (Strait & Sauer, 2004).

Service-learning is not new to technical and professional communication pedagogy. A variety of articles and books have been published demonstrating how this approach provides students with professional client experience, as well as an example of community engagement (e.g., Chong, 2016; Dubinsky, 2002; Sapp & Crabtree, 2002; Cargile Cook, 2014). Kastman Breuch (2001) notes that "…students may not always be prepared to listen or respond to clients in transactional or 'real world' writing projects" (p. 208). Her work showed that during experiential learning, students acquired important behaviors such as interviewing, listening, and clarifying.

The reflection component of this pedagogy enables the students to consider the ethical and civic dimensions their professional lives might contain. This course focused on the following outcomes:

- (knowledge) Understanding how professionals act in socially responsible ways.
- (skills) Determining how to apply one's professional skills to the betterment of society.
- (values) Understanding responsibility to others applies to those pursuing all kinds of careers.

As important as the integration of service into the course was the focus on intercultural communication.

In the course described in this paper, students began by writing their own cultural narrative in order to appreciate that "culture" isn't an exotic concept, but rather, something every individual embodies. After this exercise community leaders and liaisons visited the classroom for a discussion about the realities experienced by community members. The students then attended a community event, sharing food and a faith service, after which the students again met with leaders and community members.

The final deliverables to their community clients were informational pieces on topics identified by community members. The topics included nutrition, diabetes, mental health resources, and small business start-up resources. The development of these deliverables included writing technical and professional communication genres while nuancing audience analysis, social context analysis, and intercultural communication skills. The students formally presented the deliverables to the community.

> *I never thought I could love writing, but having that extra element [service] truly made me appreciate it. I think the impact we had on the community was more than just writing up a report and printing out a brochure. We showed the community that outsiders care about them and want to learn about who they are on a deeper level. We weren't there just to survey them, get our data, and get out. We left something behind for them, and I think that is something to be really proud of. –student reflection*

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Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Research Focus

Providing Effective Feedback to Students: The Medium is the Message

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Introduction and Background

While learning objectives and student growth are often discussed in concrete terms based on evidence, student learning is much more complicated. The meaning and impact of a professor's comments on an assignment (or a letter grade) are dependent upon subjective and highly personal factors. In other words, a student's feelings about the professor who "gave" them the grade as well as how a student feels about the subject matter ultimately influence how the feedback will impact future learning. Therefore, the "how" matters just as much as the "what" when assessing students. In the wise words of Marshall McLuhan: the medium is the message. If we want our students to have a growth mindset (Dweck, 2006), we must seek to create the necessary conditions for this to occur.

Today's business communication professor faces challenges when considering how best to assess students. Concerns about rampant grade inflation (Lindsay, 2019) and calls for increased academic rigor (Berrett, 2015) put pressure on professors to be wary of doling out too many high grades. Professors also must balance meeting diverse student needs while maintaining a defendable level of fairness. Add to this list concerns about maintaining consistency across sections of a course as well as students' need for a high GPA to stay competitive in the job market, and professors find themselves in a tough situation.

Taking into account the dizzying competing factors, it can be helpful to focus on the big picture. According to Adrianna Kezar, director of the Pullias Center for Higher Education, students, especially students from underserved populations, are more likely to succeed when they have meaningful connections to their professors (St. Amour, 2020). Research shows that professors who are available before and after classes to talk, who encourage students to participate in office hours, and who support students in out-of-class activities are contributing to the likelihood that their students will thrive in college (Kezar & Maxey, 2014). To help our students succeed, instructors need to be intentional in both the specific feedback they provide on an assignment as well as the broader ways they make themselves available to students. The macro-level climate and micro-level comments (assessments) both matter, and, in fact, work in tandem.

In this session, three experienced professors will share their classroom practices and assessment techniques, highlighting the complexity and importance of judgement in establishing an inclusive and rigorous classroom environment. The presentation will address how issues of identity, student characteristics, class chemistry, subject matter, and institutional expectations relate to assessment and student learning in a business communication setting. Participants will interrogate how theory affects practice and be invited to set practical goals toward creating a richer learning environment within their own classrooms.

Objectives

In this session, participants will

1. Engage in a guided discussion of the complexity of assessing students
2. Contemplate scientific and anecdotal evidence on best practices
3. Reflect on their own practices and draft personal goals to incorporate into their respective teaching

Outline

1. Introduction (4 minutes)
   a. Introduce presenters
   b. Introduce topic and extant issues
   c. Lead a guided reflection for attendees on their current assessment practices and classroom climate
2. Presenter One (4 minutes)
   a. Share quick-takes from research that has influenced classroom practices (including Nel Noddings, Patricia Owen-Smith, George Kuh, and student course evaluations)
   b. Discuss effective classroom practices (a) Beginning of class liturgy, (b) Student voice activity, (c) Assessment strategies, (d) End-of-semester closure
3. Presenter Two (4 minutes)
   a. Share relational assessment strategies: rationale and examples (a) Recording first two team presentations, (b) Required self-assessment and team assessment, (c) Grading based on preparation for discussion
   b. Describe the utility of student-led debriefs
4. Presenter Three (4 minutes)
   a. Detail relationship building and its effect on classroom performance (a) Beginning of class check-in, (b) Guitar playing / playlist, (c) Club sponsor
   b. Explain intentional assessments (a) Recorded audio feedback (b) In-person meetings
5. Closing (4 minutes)

Using the initial guided reflection, attendees will draft personal goals toward fostering a rich learning environment in their respective classrooms

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Scaffolding Assignments: Strategies to Help Students Connect the Dots

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In Colorado State University's Bus 300: Business Writing and Communication course, assignment components are scaffolded to help students integrate a variety of communication skills as they move through the semester. Scaffolding relies on the creation of simple exercises and assignments that build on each other to become larger assignments. In teaching students effective business communication, scaffolding reinforces the central goals of planning a message first, drafting the message, and revising the message to make sure that it is complete, clear, and considerate.

The presentation will review the scaffolded series of assignments created in Bus 300 in order to reinforce the key elements of effective business writing. The Routine Message, an assignment for students to send a message to a business audience that would be considered a "normal" or routine part of the audience's work responsibilities, will be presented as an example of these scaffolded assignments which lead students through the communication process.

Routine Message Assignment Components

- Planning and audience analysis paragraph: One paragraph (3-7 sentences) analyzing the audience, purpose, and appropriateness of email as a channel for this message. This paragraph helps students prepare the message content and practice the habit of thinking through the message before writing it.
- Outline: A brief alphanumeric outline to organize the message.
- Email: A three-paragraph email (9 sentences) using a direct approach for a routine request. The request should be specific. The message should be considerate and concise.
- FAIR test: One paragraph (3-7 sentences) analyzing the message with regard to Facts, Access, Impact, and Respect. Students include specific quotes from the Email as evidence.

The central feature of the Routine Message is the Email, one of the most integral forms of communication occurring in business writing today. But the additional components help students practice and integrate the skills of planning messages and organizing message content before beginning to write. The FAIR test encourages students to reflect on the choices they have made in preparing their message, to analyze those choices, and to integrate their own words, phrases, and sentences as evidence to illustrate the choices they have made. The assignment itself is scaffolded by incorporating these components, and students spend the first 5 weeks of the course practicing the individual components multiple times both in class and homework.

Class activities over the next 5 weeks focus on practicing planning, outlining, and assessing (using the FAIR test) messages in preparation for submitting the Routine Message. Student work is compared to

teacher-prepared work so that students have many examples of what good work looks like and can calibrate their own skills. Students also review each other's work. The presentation will review these class activities as further illustrations of how scaffolding can be effectively integrated into business writing courses.

"Practice" Routine Message

One preparation exercise has groups of 4-5 students write a "practice" Routine Message (all 4 parts) by revising an example provided in class. At the next class session, these "practice" Routine Message Assignments are exchanged with another group, who then grades the assignment using the same rubric instructors use. Students are evaluated on how closely the score they assign the "practice" Routine Message matches the score the instructor gives to the same "practice" Routine Message. Because they are graded on how well they are grading, students learn to use the rubric more effectively rather than focusing on how "nice" or "mean" they are toward their peers.

Workshop

Shortly after this exercise, students bring drafts of their actual "Routine Message" assignment to class for peer review. Again, drafts are exchanged and reviewed using the rubric, but this time with the goal of making suggestions for improvement. Students are reminded that they are learning these skills and so the benefit of peer review is in reviewing, not in the feedback they will receive from their peers—who are not experts. The first student to review a draft provides 5-10 comments and completes the rubric. The second student comments on the first reviewer's comments, indicating whether they agree or disagree with the previous reviewer. This palimpsest complicates the feedback students receive, helping them identify gaps and questions rather than simply "fixing" what their peers thought might be incorrect.

Reflection Comments

After the assignment is graded and returned, students are encouraged to submit reflection comments. These comments ask students to review the rubric and feedback to identify areas for improvement and make specific plans and goals to accomplish those improvements. Additionally, students are asked to integrate quotes from the feedback into their reflection, demonstrating that they read the feedback and understand how to implement it.

This method of breaking business writing tasks into smaller components, sharing examples, incorporating peer review, and requesting reflection can also be integrated with adult learners in professional settings to help them become more effective business writers.

Bus 300 coursework is based on this textbook: Cardon, Peter W. (2018) Business Communication: Developing Leaders for a Networked World, Third Edition

Resources related to scaffolding include
https://www.educationcorner.com/scaffolding-education-guide.html
https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/articles/the-importance-of-instructional-scaffolding
http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/111017/chapters/Scaffolds-for-Learning@-The-Key-to-Guided-Instruction.aspx

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Research Focus

Teacher-Scholar Journeys: An Update

Janis Forman
University of California, Los Angeles

The purpose of this presentation is to update the ABC membership about the progress on a new anthology, *Teacher-Scholar Journey*, to be published as the first in a book series by ABC. I introduced the book concept to the ABC membership at our October 2019 annual conference as my keynote address for the Meada A. Gibbs teaching award and would like to share an update of the contributors' work.

The essays for the collection will be written by leaders in the field who have been invited to reflect on the links between their teaching philosophy and research and between their personal and professional lives. The essays will be written by many of the award winners of the ABC Kitty Locker Researcher of the Year award or the Meada A. Gibbs Teacher-Scholar award. This will be the only collection to bring together the reflections of our discipline's leadership in essay form, a genre that invites contributors to speak in their own voice and to move fluently between reflection on their personal story as this influenced choice of profession, teaching and scholarship. Contributors have been asked to respond to the following themes:

- the contributor's personal story as this influenced choice of profession, teaching, and scholarship
- preferred approaches to research or scholarship
- the history of instruction and placement of business communication in the contributor's home university and departments as this institutional context influenced teaching and scholarship
- professional challenges, including academic politics.

Contributors have been encouraged to draw upon presentations and publications relevant to the ABC awards they received (e.g., the key influences on their thinking at the time, the evolution of their thinking about the discipline since then). The noted Harvard University historian Richard Marius tells us that "to write essays well, we should think of them as stories we tell to a community. The story helps make the community and communities may be partly defined by the stories they find compelling. The way the story is told informs the community of its values and puts those values into practice." (p. 81 in "From Stories to Essays," in "What Do I Know? Reading, Writing, and Teaching the Essay" J. Forman, Editor, Boynton/Cook, 1995). The essays in "Teacher-Scholar Lives" should take us beyond the boundaries of what is conventionally understood about the discipline of business communication, and, in so doing, reach out from the generation of scholars who began work in the 1980s to future scholars and teachers of the discipline. In sum, by retrieving our history through the personal voices of the discipline's leaders, we prepare for the future.

This collection is quite timely. At the 2018 annual Board meeting, a growing consensus emerged that we need to "retrieve" our history, build our discipline's and organization's reputations, and re-investigate our understanding of business communication as an academic discipline that has its foundation in

teaching. At the same time, leaders in the discipline have spoken to me about their desire to give back to the discipline as mentors to the new generation. This is a generous and generative group of teacher-scholars.

From these perspectives, the published essays in "Teacher-Scholar Journeys" will not only shed light on ABC's history and on teaching and publishing about business communication in the last twenty or thirty years but will also serve as primary research for future scholars who want to learn from the personal statements of the discipline's leadership. This talk will continue the conversation about these issues begun at the 2019 ABC annual conference and invite feedback about the book-in-progress. At the time of this conference, contributors will have submitted their full essays for review.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Research Focus

The Platform Sets the Pace: Discourse Practices in Collaborative Service-Learning Groups

William Carney
Cameron University

In this presentation, we explore, through closely observing naturally occurring interactions in a virtual team, how team members discursively create group identity and bring their teams to life. Our main aim is to explore in what ways virtual team members create shared knowledge about team identity and their working practices. To explore these questions, first we provide case study information about two working student service learning teams and their respective projects, how these teams used multiple software platforms to create a team identity, and the theoretical basis for our discourse analysis and the resulting analytical approach.

At a small public university in Oklahoma, two teams of upper-division undergraduate students worked on two projects: (1) editing and rewriting a popular Outdoor Guide to the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, and (2) attempting to address food insecurity at our satellite campus. The teams were allowed to use their choice of software platforms, the only caveat being that they had to choose more than one platform with one allowing conversation or face-to-face interaction. The editing team chose Google Docs and GroupMe. The food insecurity team chose GroupMe, Zoom, and email. During our observation period (August 2019–February 2020), we collected over 1600 exchanges from the software platforms. We used a method similar to the one employed by Darics & Gatti (2019) to analyze the data. Team members had developed practices in each group and were increasingly engaged in discursive practices that indeed contributed to their perceived sense of belonging and the maintenance of a collegial, friendly atmosphere. Their choice of computer-mediated platforms, however, led to differences in discourse practices and to very different sorts of group identities. Using Markham's (1998) notion of communication software as something   conceptualized as 'space' or 'place,' the virtual environment is not only a structure for the interaction but also a shared cultural space.

The Outdoor Guide group tended to create a more "rigid" team with very specialized roles and somewhat formal language in their interactions. This team was very task-oriented with a well-defined leader (chosen by the group). The leader was more likely to refer to the technology and to the work as "ours" and seemed to show a "platform as tool" orientation (Laitinen & Valo 2018). The food insecurity team, however, was far less well organized, but acted in a much more informal and collegial manner with each other. They spent more time was spent in deciding who was responsible for each task. There was, however, much more praise of members' individual efforts. As in Bucholtz & Hall's (2005) principle of indexicality, this group sought to minimize differences between the team members and to more-or-less foreground similarities between members. The group never seemed to be able to understand how their choices of platform influenced the work, but they were able to meet all project deadlines.

The presentation will discuss some of the results of the project and how these findings might influence work in similar projects. We will also discuss how instructors can tailor service learning and internship

projects using different software as well as how to teach students how the choice of a platform (or the combination of platforms) influences the work experience.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Research Focus

Turning the Me Into Team: Envisioning the Business Plan as a Focus for Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Ashley Patriarca
West Chester University of Pennsylvania

The business plan genre is frequently advanced as a method of teaching entrepreneurial behaviors (Kelmar, 1992, among others), negotiation (Ulijn, et al., 2004), and more to business students. In many versions of business plan assignments, the following entrepreneurial traits are often highly prized (as synthesized in Kerr, et al., 2018):

1. Independence
2. Innovation
3. Self-efficacy
4. Risk tolerance

Of course, these are not the only traits to be emphasized in business plans, but they are critical to the genesis of a business plan (and a business plan assignment): find a gap in a local market and then develop a business aimed at filling that gap.

However, the very traits that can be so valuable to an entrepreneur as they launch a business can be a hindrance as they attempt to sustain a business. Bureau of Labor Statistics data indicates that roughly half of all businesses fail within five years, and Entrepreneur magazine attributes many of these failures to business owners becoming so independent that they fail to develop or lead a team effectively. As a result, business owners (and, thus, entrepreneurially minded business students) cannot rely solely on entrepreneurial traits if they wish their businesses to be successful.

How, then, can a genre so closely tied to ideas about entrepreneurial independence and innovation also be used to encourage students to develop the leadership and collaborative skills that will help them sustain their future businesses beyond that critical five-year mark?

This presentation argues that a critical re-envisioning of the business plan assignment is necessary. It contends that a business plan taught as a collaborative assignment within an interdisciplinary service course can be even more valuable for those student entrepreneurs for several reasons:

1. It can encourage student entrepreneurs to develop the non-entrepreneurial skills needed to sustain their future businesses (i.e., collaboration and leadership).
2. It can encourage student entrepreneurs to better value the crucial knowledge and skills brought by their classmates in other majors. Given the range of potential majors represented in this service course at one university, student entrepreneurs could work with classmates from marketing, English, finance, geography, or political science, among others. Each of these majors provides knowledge that can be crucial in drafting the business plan.

3. It emphasizes the collaborative writing process and strategies involved in developing the business plan, in addition to the final product. Although students are familiar with collaborative writing tools such as Google Docs and may have worked collaboratively in other courses, they do not always come to the business communication service course with a firm understanding of what it means to *write* collaboratively. Including the assignment in a writing-focused service course can give students the tools to polish their collaborative writing processes.

At the same time, this re-envisioned business plan assignment maintains the benefits of the business plan assignment taught within major courses: namely, it can encourage creative solutions to problems, as well as critical thinking. To be clear, this presentation does not argue that teaching the business plan should only be done in the business communication course; rather, it should be seen as a valuable complement to the work being done in major courses.

To develop this argument, the presenter draws on three years of pedagogical research into the business plan assignment within the undergraduate business communication service course. Audience members will leave the presentation with concrete strategies and sample assignments for implementing and scaffolding the business plan assignment in a service course.

Using Self-Assessment to Achieve Student Success in the Business Communication Classroom

Kevin Matthew Carr
University of Texas at Arlington

The use of self-assessment as a pedagogical tool within the Business Communication classroom is not a new approach. Yet, there is little consensus regarding what such an instrument can assess or accomplish for our students. This session will explore some of the latest research regarding the value of self-assessment and how such instruments can be used most effectively within a Business Communication classroom to achieve student success.

Some of the questions this session will address include: What are some of the benefits and limitations of reflexive self-assessment in the Business Communication classroom? What does an effective student self-assessment process look like and measure? How can such an instrument be used most effectively? What specifically can we measure and assess regarding verbal, non-verbal, textual, and technological communication skills? What is the instructor's role in a student's self-assessment process? How can self-assessment be used to help to articulate a student's goals and to measure their progress and success throughout the course (and beyond)? How can instructors implement the self-assessment process to create a sense of accountability and accomplishment with students? Finally, what role can technology have in helping students with their assessment and accountability?

I argue that an effective student self-assessment process must be part of a semester-long interaction between student and instructor which focuses on goals and course outcomes. The self-assessment process is part of an ongoing conversation which focuses specifically on a student's progress identifying, developing, measuring communication competencies.

A student's self-assessment at the beginning of the semester is not only a valuable part of the process of self-discovery, but it also helps students and instructors to define individualized goals for the course (and beyond). The continual review of the self-assessment instrument throughout the semester helps students to remain focused on their communication goals and personal accountability throughout the course.

Virtual Classroom Management: Shifting Business Communication Class Online in the Asian Pacific Region

Yunxia Zhu
University of Queensland

Sky Marsen
Flinders University

Misa Fujio
Toyo University

Catherine J. White
Central Queensland University

As is widely accepted, virtual classroom can be easily used for teaching a wide variety of subjects. Yet a sudden shift from face-to-face to virtual teaching especially during this pandemic period has posed great challenges. The challenges are even greater for teaching business communication with a focus on interaction and classroom practice. Therefore, it is important for the online educators to manage the learning process in virtual environment.

Purpose and Goal

In this panel discussion, we share our experience and lessons based on our challenges of teaching business communication courses in the Asian Pacific Region.

Methodology

Our methodology is based on our reflections and participant observation as we are experiencing online challenges in this extreme difficulty pandemic time.

Yunxia will present her experience and lessons about using a case-based approach to do live activities in her business negotiation class. Based on the sociocultural theory of situated learning students need to learn through doing (Belcher, 1999; Blain, 2019; Vygotsky, 1978). Within a matter of one week's notice, the negotiation program was shifted online in Blackboard, video production and Zoom meeting. To guide this challenging process, Yunxia applies sociocultural theory to online learning to encourage student participation by doing a range of activities ranging from case analysis, role play, online simulation games, guest talks, and observations. Especially valuable is experienced practitioners' real-life narratives they brought to class to offer insight and inspiration to student learning process. Students

achieved the dual outcomes of linking theory to practice and also cultivating confidence in participation for future real-life activities of virtual communication.

Sky will offer some reflections on moving both an undergraduate course in discourse and media and a graduate course in research communication to emergency remote teaching at very short notice. She will focus on the challenges of engaging students in an online environment, of maintaining a degree of interactivity in lectures, and of adapting assessment, such as tests, to online delivery. Throughout her discussion she will be highlighting the pivotal role of student response and feedback in the process.

Misa will present both challenges and possibilities during this pandemic and restricted situation, sharing the drastic changes in the current Japanese educational system. Many Japanese universities have just introduced virtual teaching for the first time since Japan has not been advanced in on-line education. She will first present how professors in the field of English and professional communication are struggling with virtual teaching based on group discussions and questionnaires. Then, she will report some project-based courses with the theme of good leaders in the times of crisis. Through the courses, students have opportunities to consider good leaders, to observe and reflect their roles in the project, and then think about how to connect this experience to their future career.

Mingsheng will present his pedagogical experiences in teaching Business Communication at the postgraduate level during the COVID-19 lockdown in New Zealand and his exploration of the opportunities and challenges facing both academics and students in the transitioning process from traditional face-to-face teaching to virtual classes. He notes that in the pandemic-induced pedagogy, the virtual classroom setting has undergone significant changes and technological solutions provided by Zoom, Wechat, and Stream have brought many advantages for blended learning and pedagogical practice, such as virtual lectures, digital texts, classroom interactive engagement, timely learning support, and assessments. Some of the challenges require pedagogical flexibility, constant reflection, and familiarity with the online tools to virtually engage with students, understand their needs and expectations, and strengthen the quality of course delivery and course contents.

Catherine will discuss the creation of assessment within the virtual learning environment. Academic integrity is always important irrespective of the mode of delivery, and the continuing growth of contract cheating presents a general challenge that educators must address. The virtual learning environment presents some unique challenges for ensuring that students maintain the highest level of academic integrity. In this presentation, she will discuss the development of both an on-line learning context and authentic assessment that encourages and potentially limits the desire and opportunity to engage in contract cheating behaviours.

Takeaways/Outcomes

In sum, this extremely difficult time offers us some opportunity to explore virtual learning challenges and implications in different courses and at different levels. We present these reflections as guidelines to future teaching innovations in the virtual classroom. Additionally, we also developed student experience-based learning and skills through using virtual class interactions and assessment. This kind of training not only helps to equip students with hands-on communications skills but also have life-long learning implications as virtual communication is becoming a new normal in our social and academic life.

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You Must Maslow Before You Bloom: Integrating Motivational Learning Theory in Business Communication Virtual Learning Spaces

Erin Paradis
University of Arizona

Theme, Purpose, Goals

The application of motivational learning theory to business communication classrooms has the potential to enhance virtual learning environments. Motivational learning practices enhance instructor-student connections and strengthen student engagement by addressing learners' needs; additionally, intentional application of motivational practices supports learners' development of self-awareness. This development is vital for students, particularly in coping with crisis situations. COVID-19 caused a paradigm shift for institutions, faculty, and students world-wide. As virtual communication becomes a norm for learning institutions and businesses, instructors must adapt and implement methods that build strong connections with students and effectively support their needs and professional growth. By examining common challenges in virtual learning environments, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as a framework, and applications for teaching, instructors can support students' socio-emotional development and steer outcomes toward improved empathy, audience analysis, and execution of audience-centered messaging.

Popular motivational theories offer guidance for instructors to maximize impact on student learning. For over 50 years, Bloom's taxonomy has been a framework to delineate levels of cognitive comprehension, which can allow instructors to structure curriculum and assessment in a more meaningful way (Bloom & Krathwhol, 1956). However, in times of stress and uncertainty, students' needs for empathy and security may increase. A study conducted by Gallup and Purdue (2014) examined variables that influence college graduates' experience and well-being later in life. Three primary factors for success identified by graduates were: 1) having a professor who made them excited to learn, 2) feeling their professors cared about them, and 3) having a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals (Gallup-Purdue, 2014). This suggests instructors must tap into the affective domain for learners to enhance feelings of safety and security; however, virtual classroom environments often pose barriers in developing this connection (Vonderwell, 2003).

To address these barriers, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs illustrates domains in which human beings must achieve a level of comfort or satisfaction in order to engage in the world around them and thrive (Maslow, 1987). Applying Maslow's model to virtual learning environments is a critical endeavor, especially when students feel uncertain about their safety and emotional well-being. By adopting practices that support learners' needs at all levels of the Maslow hierarchy, instructors can effectively engage students in their learning community, encourage them to actively reflect on their needs and

strengths, and guide them to strategically apply their learning to tailor messages to audiences with empathy.

Addressing student needs based on Maslow's model in the virtual learning environment may offer innovative techniques for strengthening connections between students and instructors and result in increased student achievement. By sharing best practices in business communications instruction, faculty may adopt new strategies that promote students' development of intrapersonal and interpersonal communication skills.

Methodology

Creating emotional and social connection in any learning environment is a challenge. Students' needs for safety and comfort are often beyond the control of online instructors, but faculty can utilize instructional practices that create a learning environment where students feel more connected and engaged. Identifying these practices in online environments begins with addressing basic levels of need (physiological, safety, security, belonging) and progresses to complex levels (esteem, self-actualization), in order to maximize student satisfaction in their online learning experience (Milheim, 2012). By taking action at each level and by focusing on self-awareness, instructors can guide students toward levels of esteem and self-actualization. Furthermore, students may demonstrate deeper understanding of interpersonal skills through thoughtful written and verbal messages as a result of this progression. A strategic approach to motivational learning theory and online tools offers the following avenues for instructional impact:

1. Dedicated space for authenticity and transparency
2. Enhanced connection between students
3. Formalized practices for intentional reflection
4. Increased opportunity to relate current events to business communications and audience analysis

Techniques for building rapport with students, promoting active personal and professional reflection, and extending critical analysis of business communication to real-world examples provides learners with an enriched learning experience.

Outcomes

Motivational learning theory as a pedagogical framework offers business communications instructors several practical techniques for engaging online students. Examples of instructional activities that emphasize student self-reflection, situation analysis, and audience analysis highlight the importance of meeting students' needs at a myriad of levels. These actions can lead to student preparedness in crafting audience-centered business communications as students develop intrapersonal communication skills and empathy. Feedback from students on their online learning experiences demonstrates the impact of motivational learning practices in ensuring students feel supported, motivated, and encouraged. These experiences showcase the potential for students to progress as business communicators, culminating in the delivery of well-crafted, audience-focused messages.

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and stockholders as well as the environment are reflected in its policies and actions" (Hopkins, 2004). Although this is a rather straightforward definition of CSR, corporate social responsibility is heavily nuanced and has come to mean different things in different contexts. For example, CSR can also be thought of as corporate citizenship, which involves companies integrating social, environmental, and economic concerns into their values and operations in a transparent and accountable manner (Hohnen & Potts, 2007). CSR is thus integral to creating and maintaining legitimacy for the corporation.

Regardless of its specific conception, CSR has become an increasingly critical aspect of how corporations conduct their business. Companies see CSR activities as a way to generate goodwill and build legitimacy with their stakeholders. Much of the research on CSR has focused on the relationship between corporate social responsibility initiatives and financial performance (Margolis & Walsh, 2003). Indeed, scholars have sought to examine whether or not CSR "pays off" for corporations who engage in these activities. However, CSR is more than just a strategic business decision; it reflects the values and priorities of the corporation and the society in which it operates.

This paper seeks to understand how two of the largest banks in the United States—JPMorgan Chase and Wells Fargo—utilized corporate social responsibility rhetoric following the 2008 financial crisis. In particular, this paper examines how these two banks communicated their CSR efforts with respect to their employees over the last decade. The paper proceeds as follows. First, we provide an overview of the 2008 financial crisis and its impact on the banking industry. Second, we outline our methodology and data collection process. Third, we present our findings and discuss the implications of our analysis. Finally, we conclude with directions for future research.

Background: The 2008 Financial Crisis

The 2008 financial crisis was a watershed moment for the banking industry. Triggered by the collapse of the subprime mortgage market, the crisis led to the failure of several major financial institutions and a severe global recession. In the aftermath of the crisis, the banking industry faced intense scrutiny from regulators, policymakers, and the public. Many banks were criticized for their risky lending practices, excessive executive compensation, and lack of accountability.

investors, and the environment are reflected in the organization's policies and actions" (Smith, 2002, p. 42).

Societal expectations and demand for such behavior continue to increase--with no clear consensus about what necessarily constitutes 'responsible' behavior. Additionally, larger social issues often change and alter an organization's CSR agenda. We see this in recent examples of increasing dedication to combat climate change, dedication to diversity, corporate transparency, and the like. Therefore, we argue that CSR cannot simply be reduced to a corporate fad or simply a PR stunt as seen externally. In fact, from a more internal view, little work has been done in exploring how organizations act responsibly to their own employees from a CSR perspective (see Hameed et al., 2016). However, we are finding more organizations prioritizing employee-specific activities (e.g., health and wellness initiatives, flexible and remote working, diversity programs, resource groups), which arguably can be a form of corporate responsibility. In the banking industry in particular, this is important as initiatives designed to increase the number of women and minorities faced steep hurdles to success.

Method

For this project, we completed a longitudinal comparable case study of two organizational websites, Wells-Fargo and JPMorgan Chase, with a focus on each company's CSR communication and rhetoric. A case study is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (i.e., the case) in depth and within its real-world context" (Yin, 2014, p. 16). A longitudinal take allowed us to examine the evolution of each organizations' corporate responsibility communication as reflected in annual reports and other online messaging since the 2008 financial crisis. For this comparable work, we took a rhetorical approach to analyzing these messages. In particular, we adopted O'Connor and Ihlen's (2018) argument that "rhetoric is instrumental in the conceptualization, construction, and negotiation of CSR between corporations and stakeholders" (p. 402). With a focus on organizational rhetoric, scholars are "concerned primarily with discourse's strategic dimensions" (Grant et al., 2004, p. 7). In viewing CSR rhetoric as dialogic and dialectic, with a focus on improving communication with stakeholders, these authors presented a new understanding of the corporations' role in society. In other words, in emphasizing this dialogue with relevant stakeholders through CSR rhetoric, corporations are arguably seeking moral legitimacy (p. 408).

Outcomes

In conducting a rhetorical analysis of each organization's online CSR communication, we assessed how the banking industry is framing and legitimizing corporate social responsibility, and how these differ between two of the largest financial service organizations in the world. In particular, our findings suggest a turn toward a more employee-directed approach to CSR (Miller, 2019) in general--with some initiatives taking a more internal focus to benefit employees. Implications for the banking industry and theorists alike are discussed.

Millennials, Gen Z, and the Fair Trade Revolution

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Greenwashing is a widespread business communication phenomenon of many United States based consumer enterprises that do not have any concrete commitment to sustainability and the environment. The ethics of such business communication practices that falsely construct their brand identities on tropes of sustainability, ecology and fair-trade is explored in this presentation. Also, recommendations are provided on how businesses can be redesigned and regulated to reflect true environmental commitment and subsequently authentic, green business communication.

Big Business in the US need to adopt fair trade, green and sustainable practices to meet environment as well as consumer goals. Sustainable business models are an urgent global need to create a circular green economy that places environmental wellness as a central structural focus rather than only prioritizing staggering profits. This presentation also brings forth the connection between fair-trade, ethical corporate consumption and the population demographics of Millennials and Generation Z in the US and their consumer preferences, which can carve the way for the future of US corporations and consumption.

Millennials and Generation Z, more than any other generational group associate consumption with identity. Both of these population demographics connect consumption with their ideology- which is a unique blend of individual expression, need for speed, love for authentic, high-quality, artisanal experiences and sense of service to a larger global and ecological community. Not only can big business create a plan to reduce negative environmental impacts, but also make a lot of money while building a circular economy by attracting new groups of consumers as their loyal clientele.

Millennials and Generation Z are the specific demographic studied in this research project since Millennials alone make up almost 50 percent of the US workplace and they are the largest living generation of adults in the US (Fry, 2019). Case-studies of select major US retailers is presented in this qualitative study to demonstrate consistent patterns of corporate greenwashing and the pitfalls of such communication and branding strategies for building a long-term consumer base with Millennials and Generation Z, who are the largest group of consumers in this country to increase their profit share.

This presentation provides specific strategies and methods to consumer-oriented businesses to replace greenwashing in the global economy with a sustainable, green fair-trade model that integrates the needs, preferences and buying power of the generation now. Mirroring ethical and sustainable production practices with authentic green communication and branding strategies should be the retail industry goal, by moving away from widespread greenwashing that is employed by large corporations.

The presentation will address the following questions:

1. What is corporate greenwashing?
2. What shapes and forms do they take in the United States consumer enterprise?
3. What are the common business communication markers of greenwashing in large mainstream United States consumer enterprises?
4. Why should green production practices and greenwashing be replaced by authentic, green, fair trade models in United States consumer enterprises?
5. What are the ideological and consumer aspirations of Millennials and Gen Z?
6. How do these ideological and consumer aspirations of Millennials and Gen Z impact the future of American consumerism and big business models?

Platform Rules: Unfair Competition in the Smartphone Industry

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Previous studies on platform governance or control mechanisms generally investigated how a certain platform provider manipulates the architectural advantages in order to encourage or control other platform participants to increase the value of the entire platform ecosystem. The current study explored how the operating system provider that is on the top of the smartphone industry uses its architectural advantages in order to heighten the entry barriers in highly profitable heterogenous platforms (e.g., app markets or streaming platforms) and make its own services more attractive and competitive than those of its competitors. Though existing studies also insist that platform providers protect their core platforms through modularization (Jacobides et al., 2006), this research reveals that the owner of a top-level platform can also tightly control sub-platforms or profitable services that are out of the core area, abusing its authority as a platform provider. In particular, this research focuses on the unethical practices of dominant platform providers such as Google.

This research provides empirical evidence and critical explanations of the control mechanisms in the Android ecosystem by exploring the challenges of global leading manufacturer Samsung, especially Samsung's Media Solution Center (hereinafter, MSC) which was in charge of software and platform services of the company. This research poses three research questions: RQ 1: How did the platform governance and control mechanisms in the global smartphone industry influence Samsung's platform services? RQ 2: Why did Samsung MSC's control mechanisms fail to establish the authority to control its platform ecosystem? And RQ 3: What external factors such as hierarchy or power discrepancies in the smartphone industry affected the failure of Samsung in launching platform services including its app market and operating systems?

The research relies on in-depth interviews with 25 platform experts who once designed and worked on platform services such as Samsung Apps or Bada OS in Samsung's MSC. Based on the interview data, this research found that Google limited Samsung's platform businesses in somewhat unethical and also unfair ways, using their hierarchical relationship and power discrepancies in the smartphone architecture. With Google Mobile Services (GMS), which provides rules for adopting Android, Google forced software bundling as Microsoft did decades ago in the PC industry. With these rules, Google pressured Samsung to prioritize its platform services such as Google Play Store ahead of Samsung's own app market, Samsung Apps. They went through negotiation processes, but the default rules were provided by Google and it never conceded when it came to profitable platform services.

Moreover, through unofficial or confidential channels such as a conversation between the executives, Google allegedly demanded that Samsung withdraw its platform services such as its app market or streaming services in the Android ecosystem. Most interviewees in this research insisted that Google's direct or indirect controls exerted negative influences on the performance of MSC's platforms, which

ended with the termination of these services and the closure of the organization itself. This research maintains that Google's control mechanisms manipulating unofficial channels or compelling unfair bundling aggravate free competition in the global smartphone industry. With these unfair control mechanisms, Google excluded competing services and monopolized its services (e.g., Google Play Store, Google Maps, etc.) that collect ever-increasing amounts of user data, which is more problematic. The value of these user data would strengthen the power of Google even more.

This research is significant in two ways. Previous studies have discussed many conceptual aspects of control mechanisms in the platform ecosystem and developed theoretical areas successfully. However, no empirical studies have explored how these control mechanisms are activated in reality, and who has the authority to activate control mechanisms with which reasons. By investigating the case of Samsung Electronics which contributed hugely to Android ecosystem but also competed against Google with its platform services, this study provides empirical evidence of how power discrepancies and control issues affect the entire smartphone industry and smartphone platform businesses.

Second, while existing studies mainly explain how platform providers adopt control mechanisms to protect the core platform and encourage platform participants to contribute to their platform ecosystems, the current study reveals that platform providers, especially the OS providers, use the power discrepancies in order to protect and monopolize sub-platforms which generate substantial value within the platform ecosystem even with unethical means. Although some studies regard these practices as efficient management strategies, this study insists that these control mechanisms should be approached from more critical perspectives, cognizant of anti-competitive intent.

The U.S. Constitution Comes to Campus

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Theme

How do we balance the tension between freedom of speech guaranteed in the Constitution and the rights of protected groups to ensure a safe learning environment?

Purpose and Goals

The goal is to examine the role of law in establishing campus policies.

Methodology

The presentation will examine case and statutory law as it applies to campus rules and regulations.

Outcomes

This presentation will provide a guide for developing legal parameters in developing both teaching and administrative policies for University faculty and those with administrative responsibilities.

Background

"Congress shall make no Law…abridging the freedom of Speech." This is the very first sentence of our Bill of Rights, and our courts have seen it that way from the beginning. The French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, adopted within a few weeks of our Bill of Rights, and the European 1950 Declaration of Human Rights both refer to free speech. However, in both cases free speech is buried in the documents, and both documents list more exceptions to free speech than affirmations of free speech. A European judge noted, with some justice, that we Americans have a "fetish" for free speech.

The American text is absolute, but as soon as that is said, it becomes clear that there are restrictions as well. In 1919, Oliver Wendell Holmes who served on the Supreme Court until he was 93 years old used the famous phrase "screaming fire in a crowded theatre" as an exception. A typical law school example is as follows. If The New York Times were to publish a list of the sailing of troop ships, that would be a justified restriction of free speech.

The Bill of Rights takes away the power from Congress to abridge freedom of speech. Does that also apply to state legislators and university administrators? The Bill of Rights does not create rights because these rights are already there as part of the natural order.

It is important to understand this background to have a meaningful discussion of the issue of free speech on campus.

We will examine three areas of free speech as they relate to universities.

Speech Codes

We will look at free speech on campus and due process in disciplinary procedures. Over the past 40 to 50 years, several laws have been established to protect rights of previously discriminated groups. Frequently these rights and freedom of speech clash, and there are big debates and rallies on campuses today what is more important: freedom of speech or protection from being offended. Universities frequently argue that protection from hateful speech is necessary to create a positive learning environment. In that spirit the University of Michigan developed a speech code making it a violation of university rules to "denigrate" by act or word anyone because of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation etc. Recently any number of these speech codes have come under attack.

We will also examine how limitations on free speech may hinder research projects. For example, a graduate student was doing research on gender differences based on genetics rather than social factors. Given the atmosphere, he was concerned that someone might be offended by his work, complain to the administration, and begin a process to get him expelled because of alleged hateful speech. To make sure that he had the law on his side, he took his concern to the lowest level of a Federal Court where the judges had no sympathy for the university. They argued that the remedy for bad speech is more speech rather than suppression of speech.

Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

Restrictions of free speech are also entering the classrooms. Suppose you are a tenured professor of American literature. A state school may declare that to protect sensitive students, you may no longer teach "Huckleberry Finn" arguing that the novel uses offensive language. This is not just a question of free speech, but now we also have an issue of academic freedom which is a very important part of most tenure contracts. We will examine the issues and the tensions between freedom of speech and restrictions to speech.

Freedom of Speech and Due Process

Due Process means that the proceedings must be fair and protect the rights of the involved parties. Studies have shown that 20% of female undergraduate students are victims of sexual violence during the course of their studies. There have been increasing arguments that women who have been sexually violated could be traumatized by making them confront their aggressors. The Department of Education told universities to do something about this or risk losing funding. They also put out a letter not directly requiring but strongly suggesting changes in the process in dealing with the accused. This has far reaching implications. The Constitution proscribes certain rights for the accused in criminal proceedings. The question is what rights an accused person has in university proceedings. Currently, this issue is on its slow way to the Supreme Court. Being disciplined or kicked out of school for sexual violence of any sort is serious and can stay with the accused for a long time. Yet, both sides need protection. At a minimum it should be obvious the accused has a basic right to be informed about the charges against them. But there are additional questions. Does the accused have a basic right to legal representation? Does the accused have the right to confront, examine, and cross examine witnesses against them? The accused

may not have a right to a jury although that is basic in criminal proceedings. However, the accused has the right to an impartial judge or panel to determine culpability and punishment.

This presentation will explain these legal issues and their ramifications for university policies and communication issues in the classroom and the broader campus community.

Keeping Up with Corporate Civic Engagement: Adapting Critical Pedagogies to Teach Mission Statements in Business Communication

Nathan Bollig; Brigitte N. Mussack; Saveena (Chakrika) Veeramoothoo
University of Minnesota

This panel presentation offers conference attendees three pedagogical approaches to using the evolving corporate communication trend of mission statements to analyze the intersection of ethics, social justice, and how language constructs corporate identity. We build on Linda Stallworth Williams' (2008) findings in "The Mission Statement: A Corporate Reporting Tool with a Past, Present, and Future," where she correlates rhetorical strategies in mission statements with employee allegiance and success in higher performing firms. In turn, we argue that Internet-age corporate mission statements exemplify the notion that "perception is reality" because the symbols and language used in these statements impact material reality for target audiences, sustainability efforts, consumers and stakeholders, and more. Our method for teaching mission statements employs research in business communication pedagogy, critical and feminist pedagogies, business ethics, and philosophy to engage students in rhetorical analysis. Our assignments invite students to question the ways in which increased online engagement and developments in digital technologies renders Williams' findings even more relevant as business communication increases focus on social justice, sustainability, and community engagement. Our three presentations on distinct approaches to teaching business communication students about 21st-century mission statements and their impact on audiences and material reality are as follows:

Speaker 1

Although students often frame business communication as neutral, language used by corporations is steeped in ethical considerations and cannot be disentangled from matters of ethics and social justice (Shelton, 2019; Speck, 1990). If business communication is often perceived as neutral or disengaged with ethics and social justice, how can business writing courses emphasize ethics by situating such conversations in specific, tangible moments? Speaker 1 describes a low-stakes, team activity that asks business communication students to find and analyze corporate mission statements and then to create their own team mission statements that will guide their group projects (including presentations, business proposals, and revision memos) throughout the rest of the semester. This activity also emphasizes corporate language as inherently value-laden and engaged in matters of ethics and social justice. In other words, while business writing is often framed as neutral, this activity frames business writing, using the genre of mission statements as example, as always engaged in or against diversity and social justice.

Speaker 1 reflects on how this activity evolved from a desire to focus on tangible manifestations of ethics in business communications, and how research in the field led to a shift from studying "business

ethics" towards "business communications and social justice." Speaker 1 draws from Shelton (2019) and Speck (1990) in understanding business communication as always engaged in either acts of social justice or in perpetuating problematic or unjust systems. By rhetorically analyzing corporate mission statements as moments of corporate action, Speaker 1 frames such documents as not only creating a corporate identity but as actively constructing material realities.

Speaker 2

How do corporations ethically participate in 21st-century civic engagement? What value should be placed on trust for such activist-esque business communications? Speaker 2 invites attendees to think critically (Canavor, 2018) about these questions when teaching mission statements in business communication. To tackle these questions in the classroom, he proposes an individual rhetorical analysis report that asks students to evaluate corporate mission statements in light of the United Nations (UN) 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Buy1Give1 business model. Since the end of the UN Millennium Development Goals in 2017, the SDGs, now hyper-focused on businesses, are attracting a handful of enterprises around the world to take up SDG principles via #B1G1, which integrates goals into a business or enterprise mission statement (Legacy, 2019). Using these 52 changemaker stories as representative cases, students are asked to research a local or global business of their choosing and collect evidence from annual reports, mission statements, and consumer/stakeholder websites to perform a rhetorical analysis on the enterprise's mission statement and online corporate identity with a focus on ethos (credibility) and the philosophical notion of "authentic trust" (Solomon & Flores, 2003).

Speaker 2 reflects on the pilot deployment of this rhetorical analysis assignment and evaluates how well students responded to learning about the UN SDGs as well as business ethics and the rhetorical/philosophical concepts of ethos and trust. He addresses the evolving and new ways that businesses and professional enterprises communicate and convey their mission statements to align with the UN's SDGs via social media trends like Buy1Give1 (#B1G1) business model. Speaker 2 concludes with initial successes and failures for the deployment and offers attendees ideas for how they might adapt these texts and/or assignment to their classroom, some troubleshooting tips, and the implications for practicing business professionals.

Speaker 3

In a world where corporate social responsibility is essential (De Jong, Harkink & Barth, 2018), corporations increasingly take up social issues in prominent ways that influence how customers react to these brands. It is therefore imperative that business communication writers and students learn how these social justice stances are represented in mission statements. Speaker 3 uses corporate mission statements in a collaborative class activity to give students a sense of ethics, social justice, and values in the business world.

Shin, Pang and Kim (2015) discuss the importance of looking at organizations' online presence through all the channels they use. Therefore, for this activity, speaker 3 asks students to examine the ethical stance of three companies operating within the same industry by focusing on both their websites and their Twitter accounts. Since corporate mission statements on websites often target different audiences than tweets, looking at both illustrates how companies target similar messaging to different audiences. In addition, students learn to notice any discrepancies between what companies say to different audiences.

Finally, mission statements on websites and tweets are significantly different genres of writing that business communication students can be asked to produce. In particular, tweeting is a dynamic mode of communication that allows companies to react live to social justice issues that might impact how customers view them. In contrast, corporate mission statements on websites tend to be static documents. This activity then helps students readily observe the broad variety of writing that is included in business writing as well as these writings' impact on companies' social image.

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An Exploration of Student-Professor Social Media Relationships

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Theme, Purpose, and Goals

The relationships between students and their professors have changed with the modern proliferation of social media platforms. This evolution creates potentially blurred boundaries between academic and personal lives. The present study involved a survey of undergraduate students and examined the dynamic of student-professor social media connections through the lens of organizational research. Previous research by Cistulli and Snyder (2019) exploring supervisor-subordinate social media relationships has established the associations among workers' feelings of social media efficacy, social media privacy, and supervisor trust. That study reported that when employees perceive infringement on their privacy, they view their supervisor as less trustworthy. Given the comparable power dynamics at play between professors and students, this study asks if the variable relationships are in line with this previous workplace research.

Methodology

The study included a snowball sample of 428 undergraduate students from a mid-sized, four-year comprehensive liberal arts institution. The survey was administered online and included items about student social media use, their personal social media connections with professors, and information about the nature of those relationships. In addition, students were asked about their social media efficacy, perceptions of social media privacy, and their feelings of trust in the professors to whom they were connected and their university.

The sampling technique yielded a sample of 428 students. The distribution of male and female students was 40% and 60% respectively with an average of 21. Many racial and ethnic backgrounds including White (70%), Asian (11%), and Black (9%) were represented. Respondents reported spending about 2.5 hours per day using social media platforms and approximately 33% of students reported being connected to one or more professors.

Takeaways/Outcomes

Data are still being analyzed, but preliminary results suggest that the variable relationships in this study are comparable in some ways to previous workplace research. Students with high social media self-efficacy also reported higher levels of social media privacy. If students believe they are adept at using social media, they will also be less concerned about their university's ability to infringe upon social media privacy through unwanted access to social media content.

Students who reported being engaged in a personal social media relationship with a professor reported greater trust in both their professor and their university. One possible explanation for these social media relationships being related to an environment of greater trust may be linked to research in areas of in-group identification (e.g., Jans, Leach, Garcia, & Postmes, 2015; Shepherd, Spears, & Manstead, 2013).

Unlike workplace research, students high is social media self-efficacy were more likely to be engaged in personal social media relationships with their professors. Workers high in self-efficacy were less likely to be engaged in personal social media relationships with their supervisors. The possible reasons for this difference are discussed. This finding warrants further investigation. Does self-efficacy create a false sense of privacy? Having grown up in the Web 2.0 world, have students come to embrace the loss of privacy that comes with social media? How accurate are people's perceptions of their social media self-efficacy? According to Vogels and Anderson (2019), understanding of online-related technology varies significantly from context to context. In fact, that study distributed a survey of ten questions related to digital topics and found only 20% of people got seven or more questions right, and only 2% got all 10 correct. The median score was 4 correct answers – far from high efficacy.

To the degree that students were concerned about having their social media privacy infringed upon, they were less likely to trust their professor or their university, as they become co-owners of student information. If social media efficacy drives perceptions of social media privacy and indirectly influences trust, then it may be worthwhile for professors and universities to help enhance students' feelings of social media efficacy through training and clear policies.

Anonymity, Expertise, and Trustworthiness: The Credibility of Redditors in r/books Recommendations

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Social media sites (SMSs) are transforming how consumers exchange and search for information about products and services online. Consumers now have access to user-generated content via a wide range of asynchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC), which enables them to interact with other consumers in unique and novel ways and facilitates electronic word of mouth (eWOM).

Existing research exploring online consumer reviews (OCRs), a subcategory of eWOM, has found that the discursive construction of identity (in particular, reviewers' perceived credibility, the combination of expertise and trustworthiness) are crucial components of effective reviews on reviewing platforms such as TripAdvisor and Epinions (Mackiewicz, 2010; Vásquez, 2014). While structurally and interactionally different in nature than OCRs, user-elicited recommendation posts found on SMSs – such as Reddit – can be considered a type of eWOM as they allow users to share their opinions of products and services with others. Reddit complicates the concepts of identity, expertise, and trustworthiness due to the reciprocal anonymity among its users. This study thus considers an understudied form of eWOM and explores how anonymity affects the ways in which users of the SMS establish themselves as credible discursively when making recommendations of an experience product, books.

Adapting Mackiewicz's (2010) framework, which considers features such as situated (given in context, such as a user's profile details) and invented (discursively constructed) identity, assertions of expertise and explicit indications of trustworthiness in the discourse (e.g. expressed knowledge of a product or personal evaluation), the present study analyzes the discursive construction of identity, expertise and trustworthiness of Reddit users' evaluative discourse made in response to requests for book recommendations on the subReddit community page, r/books.

Analysis of 100 r/books recommendations made in response to book requests indicates that Reddit users appear to rely on implicit identity, rather than situated or invented identity, which contrasts with previous eWOM findings that have shown both situated and invented identity are critical for the co-construction of credibility. Additionally, Reddit users with more successful recommendations seem to relationally position themselves oppositionally with respect to the requester through self-proclaimed limitations of qualifications in making their recommendation. Furthermore, recommendations reveal an "addressing the other" characteristic and references to particular details from the requester, indicating the conceivable importance of intertextuality in this subset of eWOM.

In conclusion, findings suggest that the success (with success here defined as those recommendations with enthusiast uptake, in the form of upvotes, from the requester and other r/books community users) of book recommendations on Reddit is not necessarily determined by markers or claims of identity or aspects of identity such as assertions of expertise or explicit indications of trustworthiness as has been

shown in other forms of eWOM such as OCRs; rather, Reddit users appear to attend to other factors when deciding whether to take the user-elicited recommendation seriously. This suggests that the discursive construction of successful Reddit books recommendations is based more on features such as implicit identity, and intertextuality with recommenders making more explicit reference to details provided in the original request.

These findings, although preliminary and exploratory at this time as the data have not gone through a second round of coding for inter-rater reliability, are important because they diverge from previous eWOM literature which indicates that discursive identity and the co-construction of credibility in OCRs play critical roles in enabling other users to evaluate reviews and determine whether they can trust them. This suggests that the discursive features associated with effective eWOM may vary depending on the platform on which they appear, as well as on the nature of the community producing and reading that eWOM. In the case of Reddit, marketers may consider establishing a brand representative as a member of the associated Reddit sub-community to establish implicit identity as a member of that community and use the aforementioned discursive features of identity, expertise, and trustworthiness in making product recommendations to Reddit users to be considered credible and bolster effectiveness in marketing efforts.

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Artificial Intelligence for Business Communication

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The purpose of this workshop is to develop research projects at the intersection of artificial intelligence and business communication. The goal of the workshop is to collaboratively write and publish the research in academic outlets over the year following the workshop. Beginning four to six weeks prior to the workshop, participants are required to complete pre-work reading (existing literature), activities (including experimentation with AI tools), and online meetings. We expect the pre-work to take approximately two hours per week. The workshop is a hands-on, collaborative process where we actively discuss our joint research and work together in Google docs. The workshop will be run by a working group that emerged from a similar workshop last year. The working group has several research streams in progress. Attendance at last year's workshop is not required and new members to the working group are welcome! The workshop will be capped at 15 participants.

Examining the Double Moderation Effects of Communication Components in Online Restaurant Review Platforms

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In the digital age, diners quickly become online critics on restaurant review platforms, of which large amounts of information are widely available to many audiences. Especially in the context of restaurant experience sharing, the communication effect of digital storytelling can be persuasive in delivering rational and emotional references with stronger trust as the restaurant experience could be intangible (e.g., the taste of the food and the ambience of the restaurant). Digital storytelling is a communication form of personal expression that allows individuals to share aspects of their stories with a mixture of text, image, and sound through digitalized technologies (O'Byrne et al. 2019). Digital storytelling could be suited for emotionally engaging presentations in which different communicative elements interact (Johnson and Kendrick 2016). Digital stories have interactive features such as authors (storytellers), audiences, stories from unique perspectives (Weissenfeld et al. 2017). Due to the effectiveness in expressing personal experience, there has been growing interests in academics of digital storytelling in terms of decision-making (Lenette et al. 2019).

From a similar theoretical standpoint, Jakobson's model of the functions of language includes six factors of communication: (1) a context, (2) an addresser (a sender), (3) an addressee (a receiver), (4) a contact between addresser and addressee, (5) a common code (a channel), and (6) a message (Jakobson 1960). As individuals tell their stories online to numerous audiences, three communication components are derived, which explain how people communicate in the context of online restaurant reviews. With digitized communications, such factors are co-related in the form of a poster (addresser), a reader (addressee), and a posting (message). Although some efforts have been put in the investigation of the antecedents and the consequences of tourists' exposure to digital storytelling (e.g., Jiang et al., 2019), there has been a dearth of research attention on the roles of main communication components (i.e., addresser, message, and addressee) in an online restaurant review (ORR) setting from a communication effect perspective with regard to digital storytelling.

This paper aims to validate the relationships among the three main communication components of digital storytelling in the context of online reviews (i.e., poster, posting, and reader) and their influences on review readers' voting and visiting intentions by conducting a 2x2x2 scenario-based experiment. Two situations of poster's expertise (Elite Badge: absent vs. present) combined with posting's two textual quality (Textual Quality: high vs. low) and two visual presence situations (Visual Presence: absent vs. present) generate a total of eight treatment groups. Moreover, the double moderation effects among the features of communication components (i.e., Elite Badge, Textual Quality, Visual Presence, and Reader's Prior Knowledge) on readers' voting intention are investigated as experiential sharing behaviors are likely to be influenced not only by a single factor but also by multiple factors concurrently. An imaginary French restaurant named 'La Gastronomie,' which is imaginarily located in Los Angeles, California in the United States, was invented for this study, as a well-known restaurant could possibly

generate local readers' familiarity towards a target restaurant that could result in an endogeneity issue of the experiment. The target participants are users of Yelp.com (the most popular restaurant review platform) who reside either in New York City or Los Angeles in the U.S. A professional research company, MFour is used for data collection. As the company has a GPS-based navigating function to find the panelists who use 'Yelp' app on their mobile phones, more appropriate data samples would be collected for the experiment purpose.

Theoretically, this paper builds one more layer on the literature of communication components of digital storytelling in the context of online restaurant reviews. It further identifies and examines the moderating and double-moderating roles of features of these components in proliferating review usefulness and intention to visit restaurants, which has rarely been examined. Practically, this study would provide implications to both managerial and individual levels on how to strengthen the business communication, especially in the tourism and hospitality sector by suggesting a way to be more effective and relevant in delivering messages that increases review usefulness and further purchasing (or visiting) intentions of potential customers.

Framing Multilevel Marketing on Corporate Websites and Consultants' Instagram Posts

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The rise of smartphone applications and related internet-based technologies has been accompanied by an increased interest in the so-called "gig economy" in which workers labor in one-off arrangements with no guarantee of continued employment. Some workers seek these arrangements for their flexibility or as a "side hustle," while others may struggle to find other types of work (Abraham, Haltiwanger, Sandusky & Spletzer, 2018). At the same time, these and similar forms of creative labor via social media are valorized as being entrepreneurial (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017). Such digital entrepreneurship is often positioned as a way for women to "have it all" and balance work with traditional family life (Duffy & Hund, 2015).

In recent years, the networked aspects of social media have intersected with societal trends toward a gig economy to produce a rise in multilevel marketing companies (MLMs) that rely heavily on the internet to recruit and sell. Multilevel marketing is a subset of direct selling or network marketing approaches to doing business that relies on recruiting new participants in a complex system of uplines and downlines to move product. MLMs have existed for decades, and like current discourse around creative work on social media, have often used a rhetoric of entrepreneurship to attract participants and project legitimacy (Carl, 2004). Many of the most well-known MLMs, such as Avon and Mary Kay cosmetics, are targeted toward women and are sometimes framed as home-based businesses (Amundson, 2008). MLMs and related direct selling schemes are big business, generating over $35 billion in retail sales in 2018, with 6.2 million people acting as direct sellers, 75% of whom were women (Direct Selling Association, 2019).

To date, there is limited research on the intersection of multilevel marketing, social media, and digital entrepreneurship. Given existing research that demonstrates the centrality of entrepreneurialism to MLMs' framing of their legitimacy in order to attract potential independent consultants or sellers (Carl, 2004), the focus of this study is on the visual and textual framing of MLM opportunities on corporate websites and in public Instagram posts made by presumed consultants for those MLMs in order to qualitatively identify and assess themes that emerge. Doing so will help us to better understand the role of MLMs within the current media and economic environment and provide insight into gendered aspects of such digital entrepreneurialism.

The following research questions are posed:

> RQ1: What themes emerge in how MLM companies use their websites to frame participation in the MLM for potential sellers as entrepreneurialism?

RQ2: What themes emerge in how MLM consultants use their Instagram posts to frame their participation in the MLM as a form of entrepreneurialism?

Ten MLM companies were identified for inclusion in this study: Amway, Thirty-One Gifts, Stella and Dot, Paparazzi, Youngliving, Scentsy, Mary and Martha, Norwex, Isagenix, and Pampered Chef. For each company's website, analysis focused on visuals and text on the home page, "about us" and "join us" pages. Two popular Instagram hashtags, one product-related and one seller-related, for each MLM in the study were identified, and 10 recent public posts for each of the hashtags collected, for a total of 200 Instagram posts A random number generator was used to select which 10 specific posts to collect for each hashtag. Screen capture was used to save the website pages and Instagram images and captions for analysis.

The authors engaged in close reading in order to parse out emerging themes through an inductive process. The following overarching frames were identified and used as the basis for the rest of the analytical process: aspiration, gender, social desire, work/life balance, entrepreneurship, and legitimacy. Coding of the corporate websites is completed, and coding of the Instagram posts is ongoing.

Preliminary results suggest that MLM companies continue to rely on themes of entrepreneurship and legitimacy to attract potential sellers, in keeping with how the direct selling industry as a whole positions itself. The Direct Selling Association (2019a) refers to direct sellers as "American entrepreneurs in the truest sense of the word" (para. 5), with a lower cost to entry compared to being a Realtor or opening a franchise restaurant or similar business.

In terms of these MLMs studied here, there is a noticeably gendered aspect to the specific ways in which MLM entrepreneurship is framed on corporate websites to attract potential sellers. For example, many of the companies point to work-life balance as a benefit, but that balance is centered around women's varied roles within the family or speaking to women's desire to spend more time with family. There is a noticeable use of feminized language and imagery throughout. This includes the discussion of altruism through helping others as a reason to join; helpfulness being more associated with women as a desirable trait. Some MLMs present as an exclusive group or sorority of sorts, which is also a gendered approach.

Overall, the way MLMs use their websites to frame their company as an opportunity for entrepreneurship is in keeping with the current trends toward "side hustles" and the gig economy. These MLM opportunities are presented as a fun opportunity to make one's dreams come true by using times carved out from the margins of the seller's "real" life or family life. This gendered approach to framing entrepreneurship could have real implications for women in regard to the gender pay gap and other similar considerations that often impact women more than men. Shade (2018) describes this kind of framing as "neo-liberal feminism, which commends the independent and entrepreneurial work spirit" (p. 46). Indeed, some MLMs used the economic turmoil caused by the 2020 coronavirus pandemic as an angle to promote entrepreneurship and economic security via their business opportunities (Parker, 2020). At the same time, the economic fallout of the crisis is anticipated to affect women more than men, in part due to caregiving responsibilities and expectations in addition to existing structural norms (Hutt, 2020; Hutzler, 2020). While the data for this study were collected in the fall of 2019, these results shed light on this important phenomenon.

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Graduate Studies Sponsored Panel: Emerging Trends in Business and Professional Communication (Rounds 1-2)

Stephen Carradini
Arizona State University

Levon Galstyan
Temple University

Yeqing Kong
North Carolina State University

Emily Kathryn Gresbrink
University of Minnesota

Yaqian Jiang
University of South Florida

Philippe Meister; Michael Dorneich
Iowa State University

Jianfen Chen; Sungae Kim
Purdue University

Levon Galstyan, "Developing Diverse Leadership for Corporate Sustainability"

Research shows that leadership diversity is crucial to an organization's success. This project examines the President's Leadership Forum created by one multinational corporation to develop sustainable and diverse leadership. We present the results of a longitudinal study of PLF programs over three years, two sessions per year, to determine whether and how the program succeeds in fostering sustainable, diverse, and competent leadership.

Yeqing Kong, "'A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words': Exploring Visual Communication of Risk in Flint Water Crisis"

This study explores how visuals facilitate risk communication in Flint Water Crisis and how those visuals circulate in digital media. Integrating the method of visual content analysis and iconographic tracking, I

analyzed 200 visuals from multiple sources. The findings of this study provide implications for better rhetorical interventions of visual design in risk communication situations.

Emily Gresbrink, "Investigating Digital Communications and Responses to COVID-19 Induced Institutional Changes"

The rhetorical styling and tone of communication regarding COVID-19 changes on university campuses raise essential questions about change management and leadership in times of crisis and uncertainty. This study seeks to examine, compare, and contrast the rhetorical impact of public-facing communication and COVID-19 related announcements from eight D1 schools.

Yaqian Jiang, "Commodification of English and Linguistic Creativity on Douyin: Translanguaging, Language Ideologies and Humor"

This study explores how a popular microcelebrity on a Chinese short video app (Douyin/Tiktok) draws on multiple semiotic resources and his multilingual repertoire to promote his online English lessons. The analysis shows how translanguaging as a means of linguistic creativity is used to commodify language and to attract followers, while at the same time reinforcing standard, monolingual language ideologies.

Philippe Meister and Michael Dorneich, "A Communication-Based Approach to Integrating Augmented Reality Content into Aviation Weather Training"

Aviation weather training materials were enhanced with augmented reality weather models and flight scenarios. The pedagogy and usability of these enhancements is discussed, as well as their role in the curriculum.

Jianfen Chen and Sungae Kim, "Creating Chatbot for Better Accessibility to Purdue Graduate School"

Office of International Students and Scholars (ISS) at Purdue has been challenged to offer timely answers to queries from international scholars and students in the uncertain times of COVID-19. To meet users' needs, this study explores the feasibility of creating a webpage-based Chatbot as an AI communication tool to assist international users with their less complicated yet frequent queries.

Hashtag Frequency and Co-occurrence in Top Digital Companies' Tweets

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Introduction

Social media has become an important part of business communication strategies for companies, with hashtags playing an important role in those strategies. Chris Messina originally proposed hashtags (a # symbol with a word or phrase) to Twitter in 2007 to organize groups (Black, 2018), but hashtags are now used to fulfill a variety of communicative purposes. Hashtags enable social media users to search social media because they serve as metadata (Zappavigna, 2015). Hashtags uniquely represent a form of information management and a tool for users to find communities and discover what other users are talking about in real-time (Zappavigna, 2015, p. 274). Further, users can integrate hashtags into the linguistic structure of the social media message (Zappavigna, 2015, p. 277). These hashtags can indicate the topic of the social media message; they can also evaluate the message's topic (Zappavigna, 2015, p. 287; Page, 2012). Laucuka (2018) explored the communicative functions of hashtags using a close reading of various examples across Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Of these communicative functions, marketing and branding may particularly interest business and professional communication researchers and practitioners.

Marketing researchers have analyzed how hashtags on Twitter provide insight into the brand perceptions of consumers and companies' marketing strategies. For example, users' brand perceptions on Twitter correlate with brand perceptions gathered through traditional survey methods (Culotta & Cutler, 2016), so companies might use hashtags to analyze Twitter users' perceptions of brand association as measured through co-occurring tags (Nam, Joshi, & Kannan, 2017). In addition, Twitter users' engagement with companies' hashtags demonstrates how some users hijack organizations' branded hashtags to criticize organizations (Sanderson, Barnes, Williamson, & Kian, 2016), and companies can increase hashtag engagement through the use of novel television advertisements (Stathopoulou, Borel, Christodoulides, West, 2017). This research suggests that hashtags function as an expression of companies' brands and efforts to engage users with those brands.

Marketing researchers have also observed potential strategic marketing uses of hashtags. In their analysis of tweets from 289 Fortune 500 companies, Swani, Brown, and Milne (2014) found that B2B marketers use a higher percentage of hashtags than B2C marketers do. Comparing celebrity, everyday-user, and corporate tweets (including four technology companies), Page (2012) found that corporations used hashtags more frequently in update tweets than celebrities and everyday users did, observing that

the use of hashtags in such messages "are used to make updates visible" (p. 187). This information sharing was also seen in the tweets surrounding one frequently used corporate hashtag: the tweets most frequently declared information rather than asked questions or directed followers, suggesting that corporations were initiating consumer action less (e.g., motivating sales or conversation) and sharing information more (e.g., providing updates). Further, Page (2012) found that corporations use relatively fewer evaluative hashtags and more topic-based hashtags than celebrities and everyday users. These studies provide valuable insight into the ways marketers and companies are using hashtags, but more research is needed to expand this understanding. Consequently, this study's research questions are as follows:

- How has the frequency of digital companies' hashtag use varied over time?
- How frequently do these companies use branded and non-branded hashtags?
- Where do hashtags appear most frequently in companies' tweets?
- What hashtags co-occur among companies' tweets?

By answering these questions, the proposed study will expand marketers' and instructors' understanding of the nature of company hashtag use.

Methods

This study analyzes the frequency of hashtag use and the use of collocate hashtags by the 77 English-tweeting digital companies from the Forbes Top 100 Digital Companies ("Top 100," 2019) list. This analysis expands Page's (2012) study of 4 technology companies to 77 and expands the number of tweets analyzed to 559,680 and the number of hashtags analyzed to 607,867, representing every scrapable tweet and hashtag these companies have tweeted up until early 2020. Data were compiled into the text analysis program, WordCruncher (wordcruncher.com), to assist in answering this study's research questions.

Results

Results suggest that although the total number of hashtags used by top digital companies has dramatically decreased since 2015, the decline can be explained by a decline in the number of tweets posted by these companies during that same time period. Overall, the average number of hashtags per tweet has stayed steady during that same time period.

Within the top 25 most frequently used hashtags, four appear to be branded hashtags associated with three companies: HP, SAP, and PayPal. The top 10 nonbranded hashtags include #digital, #cloud, #iot (internet of things), #tech, #ai (artificial intelligence), #bigdata, #cx (customer experience), #5g, and #mobile, and #contentloop (a social media strategy).

Companies most frequently embed hashtags within the middle of tweets at 57%, then at the end of tweets at 26%, and then at the beginning of tweets at 17%.

Collocating hashtags provide additional insight into the networks and people that companies may be seeking to connect through their marketing efforts. For example, the most frequently used hashtag #digital, a non-branded hashtag, collocates with industry-related hashtags such as #banking and with people-related hashtags such as #cio (chief information officer). The second most frequently used hashtag #hp, a branded hashtag for the company HP, collocates with more promotional and other

branded hashtags such as #giveaway and #hpci (HP converged infrastructure). Other hashtags, such as #itsimplification, #heavyequipment, #thetechrevolutionist, #mediaandentertainment, #multichannelmarketing, or #servicecentre, do not appear in the dataset without being collocated with the frequently occurring hashtag #digital.

These results provide expanded insight into how top digital companies use hashtags in their tweets and how businesses can align their own social media communication with methods used by these top companies.

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Practitioner Perspectives for Digital Workplaces: Strengthening Business Communication Research Through Remote Methods

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Statement of Purpose

Using qualitative methods in business communication research can identify the unique perspectives of research participants, including their perceptions of world events and personal experiences. With the longstanding effects of COVID, however, field studies are becoming harder to conduct, supporting the need for alternative research methods. Practitioners have started to explore best practices to ensure the implementation of effective remote methods, with some researchers suggesting little difference using these modes versus face-to-face interactions (Janghorban, Roudsari, & Taghipour, 2014; Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004). Furthermore, when studying practitioners who work with digital technologies, researchers must choose methods that allow them safe and ethical access to the decision-making and reasoning behind this work.

This panel extends the study of remote qualitative practices by exploring the following questions: How can remote, qualitative methods strengthen business communication research? Further, how are these methods valuable for studying practitioner perspectives of their work with social media and adaptation to Web 2.0 communication strategies? Our panel advocates for remote research methods by reviewing four studies in which practitioners participate in remote interviews and usability testing in place of face-to-face alternatives. We argue that remote, qualitative interviews and observation-based methods can strengthen business communication research by facilitating further study of how practitioners approach their work with digital technologies.

We begin by applying remote methods to two business communication studies of professional social media work. Next, we situate emergency managers as technical communicators, arguing for remote interviews in organizational communication studies. Then, we introduce a mixed-method approach to learning from practitioners about industry practices through remote data gathering. Finally, we end with shared takeaways from remote methods, including limitations and future research opportunities in business communication.

Observing Social Media Communication Work from a Distance

Purpose

This presentation advocates for employing remote qualitative interviews and observation-based methods to map out social media communication practices used in industry. Drawing from two studies of professional social media work, this presenter describes how these methods were used to detail the social media communication genres, skills, and standards practitioners regularly engage with. Additionally, this presenter will highlight how these methods can be used remotely to continue studies of professional communication workplaces.

Literature Review

As social media careers have become common in business and professional communication industries, scholarly research has examined social media through external policies and content (Cho, Furey, & Mohr, 2017) and as the focus of pedagogical approaches (West, 2017; Lam & Hannah, 2016). Though valuable, scholars have not fully explored the internal practices, decision-making, and organizational policies that structure this work, leaving gaps in our understanding of professional experience.

Methodology and Conclusions

The presenter will discuss both projects -- the first is an interview-based study of the role of listening in social media communication and the second is a larger workplace study of social media communication practices that remotely observed participants through logs of work activities. Next the presenter details how an inductive modified grounded theory approach to data analysis (Breuch, 2019; Charmaz, 2006) was critical for both studies in that it involves frequent memoing to develop a deeper understanding of participant perspectives. A review of these methodological choices demonstrates how researchers can collect and analyze practitioner data remotely to cultivate a clearer vision of social media workplaces and to bolster pedagogical approaches.

Involving the Perspectives of Emergency Managers in Communication Design

Purpose

This presentation supports qualitative interviews of practitioners by describing an investigation into digital communication strategies used by emergency managers during Hurricane Florence in 2018. In addition, the value of remote qualitative interviews, specifically related to confidentiality within workplace studies, and the allowance of a wider range of participants is considered.

Literature Review

First, an overview of the study will be provided, in which emergency managers participated in remote qualitative interviews about their organizational structure, workflow, and experiences during Hurricane Florence. This will follow with literature supporting remote testing, including it being a cost effective and convenient means of collecting data for both researchers and subjects (Martin, Shamari, Seliaman, & Mayhew, 2014).

Methodology

Next, the analysis of the interviews will be described, focusing on the use of grounded theory (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2012; Glaser & Strauss, 2017) and analytical tools described in Clay Spinuzzi's Topsight (2018). After providing the means of analysis, the results of the study are reported, and the speaker argues for the need of localized testing to improve emergency communication during disasters, and how scholars in business and professional communication can bridge the gap between theory and practice by involving emergency managers in additional research and user testing.

Conclusions

Collaboration with emergency managers, in turn, can improve pedagogical practices in technical communication programs as students apply real-life scenarios to classroom concepts. Finally, the speaker will reiterate the benefits of using qualitative interviews in this study over alternative methods such as quantitative surveys, and the value of conducting remote qualitative interviews with practitioners.

Uncovering the Complexity of Industry Work in Technical and Professional Communication

Purpose

This presentation demonstrates the use of a two-stage, mixed-method approach to collect research data to reveal the organizational complexity faced by technical and professional communicators (TPC) working in the industry. The presenter discusses a method to collect qualitative interview data for their research and its implications on pedagogy.

Methodology and Literature Review

The goal of qualitative interviewing was to analyze the junctures where audiences, stakeholders and infrastructures meet to produce knowledge artifacts. To study how complex communication processes take place in the industry, the speaker first conducted interviews with industry stakeholders. Since the quality and credibility of a research study relies on the data, the depth and scope of the data are crucial (Charmaz, 2006). Interview questions were designed to depict participants practical workplace experience to help narrow down themes emerging from the data. In the second phase, the researcher studied artifacts that resulted from collaborations among various stakeholders to get deeper insights on process workflows. Relevant case studies, which inform and extend the findings (themes) emerging from the interview data were picked. Cases belonged to organizations where interview participants were employed to map findings and interview data.

Conclusions

In this presentation, the speaker will first describe the details of this study and then draw attention to the pedagogical implications of conducting detailed investigations to understand stakeholder communication. The process of designing interviews to retain the quality and credibility of a research study (Glaser, 1998), deriving the appropriate scope of the data (Charmaz, 2006) and theoretical frameworks to analyze the artifacts will be described.

Stronger Together: Crisis Resiliency and Consumer-Brand Relationships on Twitter

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Companies—and the advertising and marketing executives that work for them—try to tailor their messages to consumer audiences in order to sell products and services. For decades, these communications professionals have looked to the psychology and sociology literature in order to better understand how consumers think and which methods they can employ to be more effective. Several theories stand out in explaining consumer behavior and giving insights to marketers and advertisers to aid their work. Specifically, interpersonal and intergroup communication and relationship theories help companies and brands build relationships with consumers.

In order to build relationships that engender customer loyalty and even advocacy behaviors, brands must position themselves as dependable partners. Customers must receive the benefits of friendship from brands in order to give the benefits of friendship to the brand. These beneficial behaviors include brand loyalty, brand commitment, and brand advocacy. But how can a brand become a relational partner? Theories of anthropomorphism, social identity, social comparison, identification, and parasocial interaction can all inform companies and brands as they make efforts to become their customers' trusted friends.

Such relational outcomes are perhaps never more important than when a crisis arises. The crisis may be nation-, industry-, or company-specific, but having built strong relationships with consumers will help brands better withstand whatever type of problem they face. Today's brands must often create and maintain relationships through social media, since many consumers use them to find information about and interact with the brands they love. Social media are often also a first line of communication in crises, so brands must have a strong presence there to stay ahead of breaking news and other topics that affect them and their customers.

Not all social media platforms are created equal in the breaking news and crisis contexts, however. Research shows that Twitter is the platform most adapted for breaking news and commentary about crises. Therefore, in order to deal with crises, it is particularly important for brands to have a Twitter presence and to cultivate relationships with individual consumers through Twitter. In addition, their brand communities should be strong, interconnected, and satisfy both the need for community and the need for uniqueness, in order to maintain the highest quality consumer-brand relationships.

This study will look at how popular corporate Twitter persona Wendy's handled the COVID-19 crisis and whether their existing relationships with customers increased engagement with their crisis response messaging. A qualitative approach will be taken to analyze the Wendy's Twitter feed as opposed to those of their largest competitors. It will illuminate how the Wendy's Twitter persona employs theories of communication to foster strong relationships with their consumers and examine whether those

relationships contribute to greater engagement, perceived competence, and continued allegiance during and after crises.

This presentation has application for researchers and practitioners alike. It contributes to the body of literature by applying communications theories in social media and consumer-brand relationships and furthers researchers' knowledge about how these theories apply in modern real-world communication contexts. For practitioners, it describes how social media professionals can build stronger relationships and perceptions of friendship, which can help companies large and small to better thrive through crises.

Test It Out on Your Next Project: The Risky Rhetoric of Freemium Communication Tools

Ryan Wold
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Theme

Freemium is a pricing model, where one version of the product or service is provided for free, but a premium is charged for additional features. Many popular business communication tools, such as Zoom, Slack, and GitHub practice this pricing model. Firms seeking to purchase new communication tools can benefit from the freemium pricing model as it allows any member of the company to experiment with a new business communication tool prior to spending money. However, this same attribute, the fact anyone can test the product for free, creates risks for companies as well. Employees choosing to use unsanctioned communication tools can create a myriad of problems for a company (Hughes & Chapel, 2013). For example, if employees at a company that officially uses Microsoft Teams decide to experiment with a free version of Slack, the information shared on Slack would not be accessible to the rest of the organization. This proposed presentation shows how the rhetoric in the marketing materials for freemium business communication tools encourages employees to experiment with unsanctioned communication tools.

Purpose and Goal

The purpose of this presentation is to help researchers and business professionals understand how the rhetoric of freemium communications tools encourages employees of large organizations to experiment with new communication tools. When entire companies commit to using the same communication tools and technologies, the companies can experience improved team building and egalitarian decision making (Aten and Thomas, 2016), effective vicarious learning for new or less socially active team members (Uysal, 2016), and the formation of an organizational identity (Madsen, 2016). Employees experimenting with unsanctioned freemium communication tools can undermine the effectiveness of team communication, create information silos, and expose the company to data security risk.

Methodology

This presentation is based on a rhetorical analysis of the marketing materials of 15 companies that use a freemium model for selling business communication tools. Company websites, press releases, and media interviews of company executives served as the primary data set for this study. The analysis of the texts focused on identifying who the target audience was for each piece of marketing material and what actions the target audience was encouraged to take.

Takeaways

The study revealed that companies using a freemium model to sell business communication tools target their marketing efforts towards the average employee. Notably, the marketing materials are not targeted toward chief technology officers or other high level officials of a corporation who typically make the communication technology purchasing decisions. The marketing materials also encourage employees to start using the free version of communication tools immediately. Employees quickly and autonomously adopting new communication tools could expose firms to communication inefficiencies and data security risks. Since freemium communication tools are being marketed toward the average employee, firms interested in ensuring communication efficiencies and data protection best practices should proactively train all employees on the firm's technology adoption policies. These findings suggest firms should also continually invest in their communication technologies, so employees are not tempted to experiment with new freemium communication tools that might expose the firm to additional risk.

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What Happens to Global Virtual Teams When a Pandemic Hits? Maintaining Normalcy and Motivation with Disruption All Around

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In early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically disrupted the education throughout the world. As the pandemic became increasingly disruptive in March and April, we were running a global virtual team exercise for our students. This six-week client project involves students working in virtual teams across institutions and countries. There were approximately 530 students from roughly 40 countries at 14 institutions that are collectively located in 7 countries (Finland, France, Germany, India, Lithuania, Spain, United States). The global pandemic significantly impacted team dynamics and team performance as virtual team members face a variety of school, professional, and personal distractions and disruptions.

The general purpose of our study is to understand out globally disruptive events influence global virtual teams, particularly those in which team members have never met in person. Our study had these goals.: (a) identify how a major globally disruptive event (i.e., COVID-19 pandemic) influences the team communication and team dynamics of global virtual teams; (b) identify how this type of event influences attitudes about how to approach school and work projects in the future; and (c) identify how this type of event influences globalization attitudes. Regarding team communication and team dynamics, we were particularly interested in understanding the factors that led to some teams bonding and unifying under these exceptional circumstances whereas some teams fractured and lost their rhythm.

To address these study goals, we have developed a survey that students responded to in mid-April. Of the 530 students in the program, 440 students completed a post-project survey (83 percent response rate). The survey showed that the pandemic was indeed disruptive in many ways. About 43 percent said they generally experienced significant anxiety and nervousness during this time, 40 percent said a change in job or work responsibilities significantly impacted their schoolwork, 38 percent said being

forced to abruptly move out of their dorm or apartment impacted their schoolwork; 35 percent said a change in their family situation significantly impacted their schoolwork; and 32 percent said that moving classes online impacted their ability to participate in their schoolwork.

When asked what impacts the pandemic had on their team dynamics, 56 percent said it had a negative impact, 33 percent said it had no impact, and 11 percent said it had a positive impact. Clearly students perceived this stressful period as a negative influence on teamwork. Anecdotally, instructors in the project heard dozens of tragic examples of how the pandemic was affecting the lives of students. Yet, when students reported their general sense of satisfaction and inclusion in their teams, they were extremely positive. Roughly 90 percent said they were included in group decisions and 83 percent said they were valued for their contributions. About 80 percent said they were satisfied with team decisions and 71 percent were satisfied with their teams' performance. This project runs on an annual basis, and these satisfaction and inclusion ratings are similar to other years. Thus, even with all the challenges, the high majority of students rated their teamwork highly.

Working with team members from across the globe, students in the project were in a unique position to evaluate the long-term impacts of COVID-19. They were able to see firsthand how they could continue to work with team members while much of the world seemed to have stopped. They were asked a series of questions about what they viewed as the long-term impacts on business travel, globalization, and even online education. About 89 percent believed that business professionals will rely more heavily on virtual communication in the future; about 65 percent believed that people are more likely to adopt a global mindset; about 52 percent believed Business professionals will travel less in the future; about 50 percent believed the world will become even more economically integrated; about 42 percent believed students will want more online education in the future; and roughly 24 percent believed people will travel less for leisure in the future. Overall, we found several of these views quite encouraging. As a group of professors, we're heavily invested in supporting high levels of global integration and cooperation. We're quite concerned that the COVID-19 pandemic will lead to many influential people focusing more on isolationist and exclusionary political and corporate policies. However, our students hold a much more positive view, and it's gratifying to see this project draw out these global views.

Our group of global professors made several decisions and adjustments during the project to provide a sense of normalcy and to motivate students during a challenging time. Our group will share the following key lessons from running this global virtual teams exercise during the COVID-19 pandemic: (a) Overcommunicate and provide a sense of normalcy; (b) Demonstrate concern while adhering to accountability standards; and (c) Keep the overall structure of a project complete and coherent while making minor adjustments to meet students' emerging needs.

Online Personal Reputation Repair: Viral Instagram Post Takes a Near Fatal Bite out of College Student's Online Persona

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This proposal is concerned with personal online reputation management and reputation repair. Based on a case study, the purpose is to guide students in analyzing online personas and strategizing steps for managing and repairing online reputations.

Business communication courses at the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire integrate social media into career preparation units including career conference preparation and a LinkedIn project. Personal online reputation case studies offer an extension to projects of this nature.

In the case, an impetuous college sophomore learns the challenges of a viral video gone wrong. After catching a shark with his bare hands, the video ends with the viewer wondering what has happened to the shark. The student posts the video on his Instagram account and within minutes, it amasses more than 75,000 views. The video quickly becomes a viral sensation, but with very negative implications. In an era where perception is reality, the student takes on a negative online persona, one in which he is accused of abusing wild marine life. The video is popular because of general outrage, and the student receives death threats.

The case speaks to the power of social media networking. Now the student must work to repair a damaged online reputation before he begins to apply for internships and for future jobs in his chosen field.

Students who study the case are tasked with using the concepts of impression management, personal online reputation management, personal branding, and personal SEO to repair a damaged online persona.

Reputation management derives from the concept of impression management (IM) developed by Goffman in the 1950s (Thompson-Whiteside, Turnbull, & Howe-Walsh, 2018). As a foundational theory in reputation studies, impression management is still relevant today.

As well-trained Fnetizens, students are taught that the data they leave behind is known as a digital footprint (Joyce, 2016). Personal online reputation management seeks to strategically manage the impressions with well-placed posts and keywords among other strategies to frame one's self in the best possible light (Osborn, Miller, McCain, & Belle, 2016).

Also related is personal branding. One of the major objectives of personal branding is to gain employment using strategies not unlike product branding (Labrecque, Markos, and Milne, 2011). Personal branding makes use of marketing strategies and tactics for self-promotion.

Personal SEO is very similar to personal branding as it is focused on being virtually visible especially in searches (Joyce, 2016). Because LinkedIn and Facebook are popular search engine results, personal SEO should involve a strategic focus on those platforms (Joyce, 2016).

Reputation repair is a set of strategic steps that can be taken to fix a damaged online persona. The ultimate goal is to create new, positive content so the bad information is not on the first page of a Google search (Joyce, 2016, 96-104).

According to a 2017 Career Builder survey, 70 percent of employers use social media to screen candidates before hiring. And 69 percent are using online search engines such as Google, Yahoo and Bing to research candidates as well. Companies now have dedicated staff members that look solely at a candidate's online persona. That same survey found that 54 percent of employers decided not to hire a candidate based on what they found (Salm, 2017).

Teens are starting to do a better job of online reputation management on their own. Sixty percent have a private Facebook profile (Madden, et al., 2013). Although data isn't available for how many accounts are private, 72 percent of teens use Instagram (Newberry, 2019), making it the most popular form of traditional social media. It is only beat by YouTube which is considered a video sharing platform. While teens are doing a better job of reputation management, many are doing this by hiding or making accounts private, which may not be the answer. Employers surveyed by CareerBuilder also said they don't want to see a ghost online. Fifty-seven percent are less likely to call someone in for an interview if the candidate has no online persona at all (Salm, 2017).

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Teaching Coding Rhetorics Using Markdown in the Business Writing Classroom

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Theme and Purpose

As the digital world has increasingly become a part of 21st-century life, understanding the digital contexts around writing has become crucial for today's business writers. Content no longer exists in static environments like paper brochures or posters. Rather, business writing often must cross many different platforms to be successful in important business communication networks. Understanding how coding works is integral to making business writing work in today's world.

Despite common resistance among students to learning code, students seeking to write and communicate well in the future will need to add computer codes to their repertoire. Though business writers may not need to become computer programmers, they should be familiar with how code works and how they need to adapt their writing and composing process to these new contexts. The purpose of this presentation is to give attendees the theoretical context for using code in the writing classroom, along with practical exercises and assignments that integrate into the business writing curriculum.

Goals and Methodology

This presentation will both demonstrate the need to learn coding rhetorics in the business writing classroom and show how using Markdown (a lightweight version of HTML) can help ease students into the coding and content management world. This presentation will begin with a brief overview of how rhetorical theory has informed current understanding of computer coding languages, especially in writing-based fields like technical communication, content management, and marketing. Rhetorical theory helps us understand coding not simply as a functional language between human and computer, but as a language with its own social, cultural, and institutional context — just as any other kind of writing. Coding in the digital world both constrains and enables business writing. Understanding these rhetorical contexts will help students see how their content must travel across multiple platforms and networks.

This presentation will also show how using Markdown in the business writing classroom can help students understand these rhetorical contexts around code and content. Hypertext languages (like HTML) overlay written content and tells content management systems (like web browsers) how to display and manipulate content. Markdown can be used to format text and export content to HTML, PDFs, Word Docs, etc. For example, writers can create web content using hypertext to signify important formatting options like headings and emphasis, then import that directly into a content management system which can interpret that format in multiple ways. Markdown enables writers to create content that can be used and adapted across many different platforms. Since Markdown is easy to use, this

hypertext language is useful for teaching students the rhetorical contexts around code and the delivery of content, while also easing them into the coding world. Using specific exercises and student reactions from professional writing classes, this presentation will give attendees specific exercises and assignments to use in class.

Business texts still appear to us in traditional genres but are often embedded in multiple levels of code. Business writers should have some understanding of code in order to better write for these contests. Markdown provides an easy way to incorporate these ways of thinking into the business writing classroom without adding too much complexity. The presenter will show simple ways to incorporate markdown into typical business writing assignments, while also providing tutorials, activities, and other resources to help instructors get started. Attendees will leave with a better understanding of how code relates to every kind of business writing and how this could and should be easily implemented in business writing curricula.

Teaching/Training Virtual Global Teams in the Business Communication Classroom

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Virtual global teams (VGTs), "temporary, culturally diverse, geographically dispersed, and electronically communicating work group(s)" (Jarvenpaa & Leidner 1999), play an essential role in today's globalized economy. In increasingly project-based business settings, VGTs provide the necessary flexibility for businesses to solve complex issues and to coordinate a broad range of aspects along the value chain, from research and development over internal processes to marketing. Providing training for working in VGTs has thus become an essential part of the business communication curriculum (Swartz et al. 2020, Hazari & Thompson 2015).

Research on VGTs has emphasized the manifold challenges of working in such a setting. In addition to adapting to the affordances of the respective medium (Bjorvatn & Wald 2019), different conceptualizations of leadership or collaborative dynamics have to be resolved, and knowledge sharing and the division of tasks have to be identified and organized (Charlier et al. 2016). Different time zones may lead to delay and impede coordination, and the lack of informal contacts may affect confidence building and team building (Klitmoller et al. 2015). Without the possibility to interact outside of the project work, the formation of close human relationships and trust is difficult for VGT participants. Existing studies also stress the need to establish rapport and trust (Grosse 2002) and to develop a suitable team culture (Zając 2012) in the face of potential intercultural and corporate culture issues (Goettsch 2016). Team composition also plays an important role, as diversity has been shown to improve effectiveness (Simon 1978), Different backgrounds of the team members form an advantage by offering a greater variety of perspectives, which in turn make it possible to tap into a wider range of information sources and thus to promote creativity and problem solving. According to the theory of information processing, a variety of information and perspectives help to solve problems. Diversity leads to minority points of view and may cause task-oriented conflicts, which in turn promote the creation

and exchange of alternatives and solutions (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). Successful and diverse VGTs thus promote creativity, innovation, and adaptability. Although English is frequently the shared language and medium of choice in VGTs (Komori-Glatz 2018), studies also point out the need to negotiate terminology and integrate plurilingual elements to prevent or mitigate misunderstandings (Ehrenreich 2010, Vigier & Spencer-Oatey 2017).

Our panel will explore teaching approaches to integrate these challenges as part of a business communication course, improving students' ability to collaborate in international team settings using digital channels. We present contributions by practitioners implementing research-informed methods to train business communication students in order to provide possible impulses for classroom projects. The panel will reflect existing best-practice approaches that stress the importance of flexible means of communication and interaction, including virtual face-to-face settings (Swartz et al. 2020, Nordbäck & Espinosa 2019). The approaches presented here also emphasize the need to train and optimize conversational strategies, including multimodal aspects such as laughter, listener behaviour, and pauses (Shrivastava 2014, Brunner et al. 2017), as well as lingua franca strategies such as employing definitions and clarification sequences, pre-empting communication problems, and co-constructing meaning (Mauranen 2006). Intercultural training for VGT settings is also found to be important, not only in the preparation of how to address inter- and intracultural issues, but also in the leveraging of small talk to promote rapport (Komori-Glatz 2018). We will also discuss innovative teaching methods employed by the panel participants, e.g., global classroom cooperation, peer-to-peer projects, simulations, and case studies, in order to provide a broad overview of what is possible in a virtual context.

In addition, the panel will investigate how these approaches can in turn inform and advance research in the field of VGTs, for example the pragmatics of virtual communication, intercultural communication, organization of global teams, evaluation of virtual cooperation platforms and business team dynamics.

Stefan Diemer and Marie-Louise Brunner, "Project-Based Approaches to Teaching/Training Virtual Global Teams in the Business Communication Classroom"

Presenting project-based approaches to teaching virtual global teams in the business communication classroom and evaluating their efficiency and outcome.

Sofie Decock, Christophe Wybraeke, Marie-Louise Brunner, and Stefan Diemer, "Teaching Cross-Cultural Market Research and Marketing with Belgian-German Virtual Teams"

Presenting a case study of VGT teaching in a cross-cultural student team with an international business setting.

Archana Shrivastava and Aisté Ptakauske, "The Virtual Business Professionals Project"

Presenting the Virtual Business Professionals Project, a six-week project that gives students real-world experience using communication and collaboration, involving nine universities from seven countries.

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Using Standard Technology Tools to Facilitate Class Communication and Remote Work: Lessons Learned from the Implementation of Slack and Zoom in Two Remote Business Communication Courses

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In 2020, most universities across the globe have shifted to require classes to be facilitated online or adopt a form of distance learning causing educators to rush to adapt to the remote EdTech space. Education and the technologies that are designed for it are developed quickly and evolving so fast that technologies used in classes now, may not be present by the time students graduate (Janzen et al., 2017). While this technology diversity gives choices to instructors who are willing to embrace it, for many, the quickly evolving" EdTech" space may be overwhelming as there are so many technologies to choose from, it may feel like drinking from a fire hydrant (Benjamin, 2005, p. 3). This "change characterizes every aspect of life in the 21st century. As a result, lifelong learning is crucial to the survival of individuals and societies, and therefore there is an ongoing, critical need for effective learning experiences and environments" (Larson & Lockee, 2013, p. 2). However, EdTech tools are not the only way to respond to remote interactions, as some are never used outside academia. Businesses have also been using tools to facilitate communication and remote work. It is precisely these tools that can also be implemented in the business classroom to help facilitate class interactions. Instructors can use current and standard business communication technologies that are used in mainstream business interactions. Adding these tools may offer students a chance to work with tools that may be used in professional settings and provide an environment to work on their communication skills even when working remotely.

To shift online quickly—as needed recently— many classes that were initially designed as a lecture/exam became recorded lectures using mobile phones and standard services such as YouTube or Vimeo. The benefit of this shift to online asynchronous learning is that the students can access the lessons at their own time and pace. These kinds of recorded lessons supplements can be beneficial in the flipped classroom, as there is a balance of in-person interactions with the passive learning of watching a video lecture—and this can be helpful. A recent study showed that students studying business communication in flipped classroom environments developed their communication skills better because of increased practice time compared to a traditional lecture (Garner & Chan, 2019). However, when the in-person aspect of these classes is taken away, how can we best replicate the interactions and still give students the practice needed to improve their business communication competencies? The idea is to try and replicate their communication interactions as they would be in remote business, using those same tools.

This presentation will look at the implementation of two mainstream business communication collaboration tools—Slack and Zoom. These two tools were chosen as the remote replacements for the in-person communication interactions in two business communication courses from Spring 2020—an

Interpersonal Business Communication Class of 48 students and a Business Writing Class of 67 students. Slack facilitating the written communication; Zoom facilitating the verbal communication for both classes. While the students in these classes are English as second language learners, the presentation's focus will not be on their English learning. The presentation will focus on the communication interactions facilitated by the tools as a replacement for in-person interactions and class activities. Lessons learned from the instructor from a class management point of view, and some perspectives from the students' experiences will also be discussed. Overall, the tools were an adequate supplement for remote learning without sacrificing too many class communication elements. There were some improved class management and interaction between the instructors and students. Students missed interacting in person and preferred it over video lessons, however, found value in interacting with others by practicing their communication skills using the tools.

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Visualize Your Data: Designing a Corporate Dashboard

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Overview

With data-driven decision making being a key driver of operational efficiencies, most organizations today embrace a data-driven culture. The sheer volume and overwhelming velocity at which data is generated, however, has precipitated an increased need for multiple layers of abstraction to help organizations derive actionable insights from their data. One prominent layer of abstraction is the visual representation of data. To this end, data visualization is extensively integrated into communication instruments in the workplace, such as dashboards, to construct meaning and communicate information gleaned from vast amounts of data. This increasing ubiquity is largely a function of the scientifically validated ability of visualizations to accelerate cognitive and perceptual processing of data. Not surprisingly then, Berinato (2016), in an article in Harvard Business Review contends:

> "Not long ago, the ability to create smart data visualizations was a nice-to-have skill. That's changed. Now visual communication is a must-have skill for all managers, because more and more often, it's the only way to make sense of the work they do" (para.1).

While consensus largely converges on its inimitable value as an effective business intelligence and business communication tool, the opposite is true for what constitutes effective visual display of information on dashboards. Perspectives and attitudes continue to vary widely on best practice protocols for the selection of visual elements and the deployment of visual hierarchies that promote dashboard efficacy. The authors of this study seek to contribute to this area of inquiry by conducting an empirical investigation into best practice protocols for the selection of visual elements and representation of visual hierarchies in corporate dashboards.

Method

Using a set of heuristics empirically derived by Karami et al. (2017) for evaluating dashboards, this study will employ a between subjects research design to inspect a broad sample of corporate dashboards in order to evaluate visualization approaches and their efficacy as a business communication tool. These heuristics broadly encompass user customization, knowledge discovery, information delivery, visual design, and integration. Pioneered by Nielsen and Mohlich (1990, 1994) as a research method for human computer interaction (HCI) studies, heuristic evaluation is widely employed in usability investigations and appraisals of user interfaces such as websites. The method thus holds seamless transferability with regard to the evaluation of corporate dashboards. The results of the evaluation will help us define best practices for user-friendly visual representation of information on dashboards.

Research Questions

Two fundamental questions guide our study:

1. What visualization approaches and techniques communicate the key-aspects of the information in the most intuitive way?
2. What is the optimal balance between aesthetic form and functionality?

Contribution

The big data era has ushered increasing demand for simple and easy data integration and visualization in organizations. The data visualization design process, however, is both complex and nuanced. This presents an opportunity for business communication professionals. By extending their knowledge of and proficiency across a widening range of visualization approaches, they will establish an authoritative voice in the ever-growing organizational data communication ecosystem.

Designing Effective Resumes: Perceptions from Business Communication Instructors

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Research supported by a C. R Anderson Foundation grant

When business communication instructors teach students to write resumes, they know that hiring managers' perceptions are their realities. Effective visual design strategies facilitate easy reading for hiring managers (Bettridge et al., 2017). Although the resume assignment has changed minimally over the past 30 years (McDowell, 1987), visual design strategies have become more sophisticated and must often help students to account for international employment norms (Li, 2011; Randazzo, 2019). This presentation uses results from a qualitative study to outline business communication's best practices for teaching students to design their resumes for skimmability, consistency, alignment, attractiveness, and framing for students' strongest achievements and experiences.

Methodology

For this study, I surveyed, interviewed, and collected one course section of de-identified resumes and cover letters from 20 business and professional communication instructors. Each interview included questions about instructors' pedagogical goals, feedback on student writing, and retrospective recall (Still & Koerber, 2010) about feedback that instructors gave on their students' resumes. I conducted Critical Discourse Analysis (Dunn & Eble, 2015) to code instances of instructors' discussion of visual design until these five themes emerged.

Outcomes

Instructors mostly agreed on the general visual grammar for a resume across five major themes: designing to shape the content, for "skimmability," consistency, alignment, and attractiveness.

Designing to Shape the Content

Bullet points shape content; instructors often reminded students to use parallel structure and to use bullet points to condense information, rather than writing full paragraphs. When students wrote about their accomplishments and duties, instructors wanted to see parallel structure, with each bullet point followed by a present-tense verb for current jobs or a past-tense verb for previous work. As a content-shaping tool, instructors wanted to see students translate their experiences, showcasing their best skills. Students' skills sections must use bullet points to visually mark chunks of content but to also make that content meaningful for their audiences.

Skimmability

Instructors taught students to write "skimmable" resumes so hiring managers could read them quickly. Eight instructors mentioned that resumes are visually oriented for quick reading. Instructors talked about "scan-ability" as a holistic trait; however, several connected readability to specific visual design tools. Consistency of font size, of heading weight, and alignment were also desirable visual strategies for guiding readers through resumes. Bullet points acted as both a visual element and a content-shaping tool. Using bullet points, headings, and visual hierarchy to make students' names the largest visual element on the page acted both as tools for readability, but also as genre markers and evidence that students could respond to professional expectations. When students used genre conventions so their resumes "looked like" standard examples, students signaled to hiring managers that they were prepared to enter today's workplaces.

Alignment

The above consensus around bullet points was often connected with verbal parallelism, strong verbs, and with visual alignment. Instructors also wanted their students' headings to be left aligned. Aligning dates on the right sides of the page was still the most prevalent way to convey information about time spent in school or at each job.

Consistency

Considering alignment led to visual and verbal consistency. Because resumes are visually less dense than a cover letter or technical report, they leave little room for inconsistencies. Instructors noted that students often struggled to consistently capitalize headings, measure white space, use bullet points, and pay attention to visual hierarchy.

Attractiveness

Finally, instructors wanted their students' resumes to be attractive, while not distracting from the students' skills and achievements. Instructor 11 commented that one high-achieving student's resume "looked beautiful" as a way of helping the student stand out. Instructors' ideas of a well-designed resume include both attractiveness and how well students arranged and presented their visual and verbal content.

Takeaways

Helping students to balance visual attractiveness with their skills and accomplishments mattered to instructors; however, not all students were able to master these design strategies within the course of a single semester. Knowing what an effective resume looks like does help instructors shape their students' learning through the resume genre and prepare students for internships, co-ops, and future employment.

I "Do" What I "See": A Comparative Visual Analysis of Infographics of COVID-19 from China, United States, and World Health Organization (WHO)

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Backgrounds of COVID-19

First reported by the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission in China in late December 2019, a "novel coronavirus" was first identified. On February 11, 2020, the WHO announced an official name for the disease, "coronavirus disease 2019" which is abbreviated as COVID-19. As of mid-May 2020, more than 4.68 million confirmed cases and 316K deaths were reported worldwide (Statista, 2020).

Infographics and the Role of Governments and Health Organizations During Pandemics

In order to mitigate the effects of a pandemic such as COVID-19, all sectors of society are involved in pandemic preparedness and response. This involves individuals, families, communities, and health sectors. Among them, the government and its agencies at the international and national levels are deemed to be the natural leader for overseeing coordination and communication efforts (WHO, 2005). The World Health Organization (WHO) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in each country are among those who raise awareness of and provide information on the risk and potential health consequences of a pandemic and communicate the guidance on the actions needed during a pandemic. In a way to increase health literacy, health care providers including government agencies use infographics widely in the communication with the public (Martin et al., 2019).

Visual communication is recognized as significant in risk and crisis situations like a pandemic outbreak because communicating accurate information effectively to the public is the best way to prevent the situation from worsening (Dur et al., 2014; Stone, Gabard, Groves, & Lipkus, 2015). Although the importance of infographics in risk communication has been emphasized, few studies have investigated design strategies used in infographics and even fewer studies examine the role of culture and conventions in infographic design (Wang, 2006).

Purposes of the Study

With this in mind, it is meaningful to analyze how international and national government agencies have used visuals to provide reliable information on the risk, severity, and progression of a pandemic and the effectiveness of interventions used during a pandemic. In order to meet this goal, this study looks at the design characteristics of COVID-19 infographics across cultures in Chinese, United States, and WHO. We compare visualizations of specific themes, such as washing hands, in the three organizations. The visual

analysis is contextualized in Chinese and American cultural traditions and aesthetic conventions and framed by E. Hall's low and high context cultural theories.

Methods

Using content analysis of visuals, our pilot study used the keywords of "COVID 19" and "coronavirus 2019" both in English and Chinese and randomly selected a total of 30 infographics including 10 infographics respectively from WHO, CDC and CCDC (Chinese Center for Disease Control) website between Jan. 1 and May 1, 2020. Each infographic was examined by two coders. Five themes emerged from the pilot test analysis: (a) types of visuals (drawings, photos, etc.), (b) use of human and non-human figures, (c) race and gender representations and (d) use of colors and (e) ratio between text and visuals.

Initial Findings and Contributions

Our findings show differences between localized and universalized infographic designs. All three organizations used drawings rather than realistic photos in the infographics. Localized designs such as Chinese and American infographics used human figures more often than universally aimed designs by WHO. While Chinese human figures are vividly drawn with facial and clothing details; American human figures are often represented in an abstract minimalist style with little details. Human figures also appear more often in groups in Chinese infographics than in American infographics.

Both genders are represented equally in all three organizations. Regarding racial features, Chinese infographics only feature Asian human characteristics while both WHO and CDC feature diverse races. Buildings are used more often in Chinese images than in American and WHO images.

WHO infographics used the largest number of colors and American infographics used the least in the images. Color blue is the mostly commonly used colors for all three organizations. Chinese used more warm colors than those used in American infographics.

In all three organizations, text occupies more space than visuals in the design layout of the infographic. However, American infographics have comparatively more visuals than Chinese and WHO infographics.

In general, we find that COVID-19 infographic designs have demonstrated some universal genre features including the use of images, colors, and special layout in the three organizations. The infographic designs demonstrated attention to gender and racial diversity. However, the designs are also highly influenced by local cultures and artistic conventions. The design of human figures is especially culturally saturated. The cultural differences in Chinese and American infographics may be interpreted by low and high cultural theories and local artistic traditions.

This study contributes to the understanding of the role of culture in the visualization of information and offers professional communicators advice on the construction of globalized and localized designs in risk communication.

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Teaching Data Visualization in Business Communication Courses: Transitioning from Static Print Charts to Interactive Data Design

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Theme

With the huge advancements in digital technology, data design is playing an increasingly important role in business and accounting communication, both in print and online. Charts and graphs have long been an integral part of business communication courses, and they also play a central role in courses focused on visual communication and on data design and analysis.

However, most business communication instruction in data design has continued to examine primarily static, paper-based charts and graphs rather than the rapidly emerging realm of interactive data visualization. This focus on static data design occurs partly because textbooks still appear primarily in print and partly because students and instructors have little experience critiquing or producing interactive graphics. However, the affordances of technology have been rapidly changing, as contemporary digital tools now give students the ability to explore interactive charts and graphs as well as the means to create them.

Purpose

With the emergence of "big data," the increasing presence of online interactive data visualization, and the proliferation of charts and graphs that now probably number in the trillions annually (Tufte, 1990), data design inundates virtually every aspect of business and professional communication. In such an increasingly data-rich environment, how can we enable students to interpret critically the many forms of data design they encounter? How can we help students themselves visualize data in accessible, engaging, and ethical ways? More specifically, how do we teach these aspects of data design when static, paper-based charts are rapidly being displaced by dynamic, interactive ones?

This presentation will address these questions by explaining the functional and rhetorical differences between teaching print and interactive data displays and by providing a critical framework for teaching how to analyze and produce them.

Goals

I will provide a framework for teaching static and interactive data visualizations that will enable audience members to enhance their teaching of charts and graphs. I will also suggest sources for accessing innovative examples, identify technology tools for designing interactive data displays, and illustrate exercises and assignments.

Methodology

I will draw on research in perception and statistical graphics, the innovative work of leading data designers (Fry, 2020; Yau, 2013; McCandless, 2020), and my experience teaching data design in courses in business and accounting communication as well as courses dedicated to visual communication and data design. Several key criteria—perceptual clarity, viewing levels, efficiency, ethics, and emotion—provide a framework for effectively teaching data visualization and for comparing the relative benefits and drawbacks of static print charts vs. interactive charts:

- Perceptual clarity: how accurately and efficiently users can comprehend the data, based on perceptual principles (e.g., Gestalt) and empirical research (e.g., Cleveland and McGill, 1984; Heer and Bostock, 2010). How do interactive displays differ from static print displays perceptually, and how does that affect their clarity?
- Viewing levels: how easily users can interpret the data at both the "macro" level and the "micro" level (Tufte, 1990, pp. 37-51; see also Barton and Barton, 1993). How do print and interactive displays differ in their capabilities? For example, in interactive displays, users can personalize the data at the micro-level by mousing over data points or choosing which data to view; this agency changes the role of the audience from passive observer to active participant (Rawlins & Wilson, 2014).
- Efficiency: how much data the graphical elements visualize in a given display (Tufte, 1983). Interactive displays typically visualize large data sets, sometimes in real time (enhancing *kairos*). In both print and interactive displays, "chartjunk" (Tufte, 1983) can distract audiences, though it can also perhaps improve the long-term recall of data (Bateman et al., 2010).
- Ethics: how accurately and transparently the chart represents the data. Scales, aspect ratios, and genre choices all affect the transparency of the data, and interactive design sometimes adds multimodal elements to the mix, including animation and sound.
- Emotion: the extent to which data designs foster emotion—for example, through color, "chartjunk," and interactive features that allow users to customize displays according to their own interests (Kostelnick, 2016).

Teaching data visualization typically entails two complementary facets: analysis and design (production):

1. Analysis. One of the keys to initiating instruction in data design is analyzing existing examples using the above criteria. The resources for analysis are plentiful, including corporate (and nonprofit) annual reports, university fact books, and everyday documents like electric bills, newsletters, and investment statements. More importantly, students can examine data-rich interactive designs by accessing popular websites like Stockcharts.com (2020), Gapminder (Rosling & Rosling Rönnlund, 2020), and Name Voyager (Wattenberg & Wattenberg, 2020); websites of the U.S. Census Bureau (2020) and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2020); print collections like Yau's Data Points (2013) and Steele & Iliinsky's Beautiful Visualization (2010); and websites that contain archives of innovative designs, such as FlowingData (Yau, 2020) and the Kantar Information Is Beautiful Awards (2020)
2. Design (production). These same criteria can also be applied to designing data, though with the variations and affordances noted above. Static, print-based charts and graphs are often created with Excel, software with which most students already have some experience. However, because of their frequent encounters with online interactive data displays, students also increasingly want to explore that dimension of design, though doing so can initially seem daunting and time-consuming. Fortunately, tools like Tableau and Google charts offer students

relatively easy options for designing interactive displays in several common genres like bar charts, line graphs, scatterplots, and maps.

Takeaways/Outcomes

The audience for this presentation will learn practical techniques for teaching data design in communication courses for business (and accounting) students. Guided by a rhetorical and research-based framework for analysis and design, audience members will learn how to enhance their teaching of charts and graphs by exploring new and dynamic methods for visualizing data interactively.

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Visual Communications: Bridging the Gap Between Data Analytics and COVID-19

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Data Analytics is a core need in industry today. For students entering the workplace out of business schools, the ability to bridge the gap between the data scientist and decision-makers is an essential skill set. The primary plank in that bridge is data visualization, which is the ability to take dense multi-layered data and create meaningful visual communications.

Students that are unfamiliar with the use of data are typically apprehensive in courses that are constructed on uncommon ground. To ground students in the concepts of data literacy, academics need to develop coursework that students can relate to and deal with real-world relevant problems. The goal of the course lies in the use of the Constructivist Learning Theory (Hein 1991). The theory acknowledges the need for individuals to utilize real-world examples in current learning. The use of relevant data to the student's current situation fulfills both the sections of Lev Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky 1980). The utilization of appropriate data assignments enhances actual skills development that allows the student to solve problems independently. Also, the process enables potential development, where the student requires guidance and collaboration in problem-solving. To accomplish the goals of the method, the EDGE (Explain, Demonstrate, Guide, and Enable) Instruction Method functions as the primary tool to enable learning for visual communication, which stems from lean processes developed by Training in Industry practices (Huntzinger 2002).

The purpose of this presentation is to share how visual communication instruction methods were used to enhance the student learning experience. In the Spring semester of 2020, Stephen F Austin State University's Fundamentals in Data Visualization course was presented with a unique problem of helping students understand the rapid development of the CoVid -SARS-2 pandemic. The class quickly pivoted an assignment on constructing forecasting stocks and oil prices to tracking the progression of the disease across the United States and the world. The students were able to connect to validated datasets from John Hopkins University's COVID-19 Data Hub and review publicly available visualizations utilizing the data. The change of the original assignment fulfilled theory requirements, in that students, were being affected by the pandemic. The students were gaining other knowledge of the event through school-related hardships, as well as seeing impacts on businesses surrounding their daily lives.

After becoming literate in the provided data model, a primary assignment for the students was to create a data model from multiple cloud-based datasets utilizing Tableau Prep Builder 2020 and construct a forecast for seven days in the future of all related datasets with features built into Tableau 2020. Students were able to track in real-time, the accuracy of those forecasts and make adjustments to create a better estimate for the following seven day period. The students were able to correlate the original assignment of plotting stock information to follow the organizations that were suffering the most or scaling new heights during the assignment period. These seemingly disparate bits of information

were then tied back to the pandemic data model through blending relationships to develop business storyboards backed by data to demonstrate the effectiveness of data journalism in the communication and decision-making process.

The ability to pivot to a real-world scenario that directly affected the student's lives in the current period engrained the importance of being able to bridge the gap between a set of raw numbers and telling a story that ties together seemingly unrelated data streams. The students were enabled to demonstrate their mastery of the concepts of data literacy and best practices of visual communication utilizing the current leading tool of the market for big data visualization. Whether a student is majoring in management, marketing, accountancy, finance, or any other non-business related fields of study, the ability to be the bridge from complex datasets and the data scientists to decision making is a fundamental skill in today's workplace. The presentation will share some of the best student examples of current data, which lives in the cloud and automatically updated daily.

The construction of coursework in the area of visual communication with data visualization requires that academics continuously review the current data landscape for opportunities to ground students in relevant and meaningful data. The practice requires instructors to survey the current business landscape for the most appropriate tools, as well as data, and change accordingly.

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