JOURNAL OF THE SPEECH AND THEATRE ASSOCIATION OF MISSOURI

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Journal of the Speech and Theatre Association of Missouri

Volumes L & LI, Fall 2021

Published by the Speech and Theatre Association of Missouri – ISSN 1073-8460

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Policy Statement and Call for Papers
Journal of the Speech and Theatre Association of Missouri
Fall 2022 – Volume 52

The editor of the 2022 Journal of the Speech and Theatre Association of Missouri is presently accepting manuscripts. Scholarly articles, book and resource reviews, and teaching resources are all encouraged. Scholarship from all disciplines encompassing communication, speech, performance, and theatre will be considered. These areas include, but are not limited to: Speech, Debate, Theatre Instruction and Performance, Communication Theory, Interpersonal Communication, Intercultural Communication, Health Communication, Rhetoric, Persuasion, Organizational Communication, Political Communication, Family Communications, Communication Ethics, Listening, Mediation, Public Relations, Film, Mass Media Theory, Mediated Communication, Sports Communication, and New Communication Technologies. All methodologies are encouraged.

Updated submission information for volume 51 will be available in October of 2021 at the website for the Speech and Theatre Association of Missouri – **www.speechandtheatremo.org**

All submissions should in Microsoft Word, and emailed to the editor. References should follow the latest edition of the American Psychological Association style manual. A separate page with abstract, author affiliation and bio(s) should be included. All submissions should be received by February 15, 2022, to ensure full consideration for publication.

Other inquires can be e-mailed or sent to the editor:
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Editor's Note

As I am sure we all remember, the 2019-2020 school year saw many of us leave for spring break not to return in the year. We know that by mid-March, most of the country was in lock-down, several weeks for some and many months for others. We lost in person forensic tournaments and were forced to either abandon stage productions or find ways to move them to the virtual world. We were hopeful that after a summer filled with Covid, we would return to school as we left it in March. When the 2020-2021 year began, many of us returned to classrooms via zoom. Adaptation became the norm. The stress on our colleagues was great and the work was hard and ever changing. We navigated on-line classrooms and seeing kids through a screen. Most of us just saw black squares and names, but no faces. We also know that while teachers and administrators fought hard to keep some normalcy for kids, there were opposition groups who did not understand the importance of what we were doing. Given all these stressors, and the fact that this was happening in K12 and collegiate classrooms, I made the hard decision to hold the publication of the 50th STAM Journal for one year in hopes of the world returning to a pre-covid time. While my wish was only partially granted, I knew that this year, we must return to our beloved STAM Journal. In order to stay on the proper rotation, I have combined Volumes 50 and 51. In addition to the wonderful content to which we have become accustomed, I have included the lead article from our very first journal called Missouri Speech Journal. I have also included the lead article from Volume 25. If you are like me, you will find these articles from the earlier days of our journal as both relevant and interesting in 2021. I hope that you enjoy not only the historic reflections but the current articles, and teaching resources our colleagues have brought to us. And while we are still looking forward to the pre-Covid world we all once knew; the power of persuasion must continue for us all.

Gina Jensen
Editor

Exploring Student Motives for Communicating with Classmates

Jordan Atkinson, Joy Deatherage & Nicole Bilby

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine students' motives for communicating with their classmates. This qualitative investigation asked 139 undergraduate students to complete an open-ended questionnaire explaining their motives to communicate with classmates. Overall, two categories of motives were discovered: class-specific motives and relational motives. Class-specific motives included asking questions or getting help on homework or assignments, asking questions or getting clarification about lecture material, forming study groups, engaging in group projects, sharing notes or resources, in-class group activities, asking questions about a missed class, and comparing grades. Students engage in relational motives when they want to get to know someone or make a friend, share common interests, complain about the instructor or class, engage in small talk, are attracted to a classmate, gossip, and offer support or make a classmate feel better. Overall, this study provides a new area of exploration for instructional communication scholars and can provide insight about student communication dynamics with their classmates.

In recent years, instructional communication scholars have started to examine the communication between students and their classmates (Dwyer et al., 2004; Frisby & Martin, 2010; Mazer & Thompson, 2009; Myers, Tindage, & Atkinson, 2016). As LaBelle and Johnson (2018) noted, student-to-student communication has been established as a worthy area of study, however, scant research exists that investigates student communication dynamics in the classroom. Recognizing that the classroom setting is one that involves multiple relationships, the communication dynamics of student-student relationships should be considered, as they contribute to the overall classroom climate. In fact, Myers (1998) established that college students engage in more breadth of self-disclosure with their classmates than with their instructors. With regard to student-student communication, scholars have investigated classroom connectedness (Dwyer et al., 2004), student-to-student confirmation (Johnson & LaBelle, 2016), student-to-student rapport (Frisby & Martin, 2010), and supportive communication (Mazer & Thompson, 2009; Thompson, 2008). However, one area that has not received empirical attention is the investigation about why students communicate with their classmates. Therefore, the specific purpose of this study was to examine students' motives for communicating with their classmates. This study builds upon previous empirical investigations that examine student motives to communicate with instructors and student communication in the classroom. These constructs will be examined in the following section.

Literature Review

Motives to Communicate

The study of interpersonal communication motives is a well-established program of literature (Graham, Barbato, & Perse, 1993; Martin & Anderson, 1995; Rubin, Perse, & Barbato, 1988). Six communication motives exist: affection, control, relaxation, escape, pleasure, and inclusion. Graham et al. (1993) posited that interpersonal communication motives influence how, why, and with whom individuals communicate. The study of interpersonal communication motives has been applied to a host of contexts and relationships, one being student motives to communicate with instructors (Martin, Myers, & Mottet, 1999). Students can be motivated to communicate with their instructors for five reasons: relational (i.e., to develop an interpersonal relationship with the instructor); functional (i.e., to learn more about the course requirements, materials, or assignments); participatory (i.e., to demonstrate understanding of the course material); excuse-making (i.e., to explain why coursework is incomplete); and sycophantic (i.e., to make a favorable impression on the instructor). Positive relationships have been found between students' motives for communicating with their instructors and effective teaching behaviors such as immediacy (Martin, Valencic, & Heisel, 2001), confirmation (Goodboy & Myers, 2008), and self-disclosure (Cayanus, Martin, & Goodboy, 2009). Additionally, student motives to communicate with instructors can be predicted by students' communication traits such as communication apprehension (Martin et al., 2002) and Machiavellianism (Martin, Myers, & Mottet, 2006). Although a host of research exists examining student motives to communicate with instructors, an area that has not received empirical attention is the examination of student motives to communicate with classmates.

Student Communication in the Classroom

Several lines of research exist that investigate student-to-student communication in the classroom (e.g., classroom connectedness, student-to-student confirmation, student-to-student rapport, and student academic support). In the section that follows, each of these areas of research is reviewed.

Classroom Connectedness is conceptualized as the "student-to-student perceptions of a supportive and cooperative communication environment in the classroom" (Dwyer et al., 2004). The classroom environment is co-constructed by the instructor and the students. When students perceive connectedness in the classroom, they are more willing to participate in class (Sidelinger & Booth-Butterfield, 2010), report more communication satisfaction (Johnson, 2013), and report gains in learning (Prisbell, Dwyer, Carlson, Bingham, & Cruz, 2009). When students have high-quality peer relationships in the classroom, they report higher levels of classroom connectedness (Sollitto, Johnson, & Myers, 2013).

Student-to-student confirmation is the "transactional process by which students communicate that they endorse, recognize, and acknowledge their peers as valuable and significant individuals" (Johnson & LaBelle, 2016; LaBelle & Johnson, 2018). Johnson and LaBelle's (2016) research revealed that students communicate confirmation to their peers through acknowledgement, assistance, and individual attention. Furthermore, students communicate confirmation for the motives of recognition and personal attention. Student-to-student confirmation has several positive benefits to students as it is related positively to classroom connectedness, perceived cognitive learning, affect, state motivation, and academic self-efficacy (LaBelle & Johnson, 2018).

Rapport is defined as the overall feeling between two individuals encompassing a bond that is prosocial, trusting, and mutual (Gremler & Gwinner, 2000). Scholars have established that rapport can have positive effects on the classroom environment (Coupland, 2003). Specifically, when students have high rapport relationships with instructors, they report higher levels of participation, motivation, and affect (Catt et al., 2007; Coupland, 2003). Though student-student rapport has received limited empirical attention, rapport with classmates has been found to increase student participation in courses (Frisby & Martin, 2010).

Thompson (2008) described student academic support as supportive messages that involve assistance with courses and emotional support related to academic issues. Students have indicated that their peers serve as their primary source of academic support more than formal academic support services (Mazer & Thompson, 2011). Students can communicate supportive messages to their peers through a variety of mechanisms: informational support, esteem support, motivational support, and venting support (Mazer & Thompson, 2011; Thompson & Mazer, 2009). The communication of peer academic support is positively related to relational closeness (Mazer & Thompson, 2011) and internal academic locus of control (Arslan, Cardak, & Uysal, 2013).

Though the body of research investigating student-to-student communication is increasing, what remains missing is an exploration about why college students are motivated to communicate with their classmates. A better understanding about the reasons why students talk to classmates, and the frequencies in which they occur, can provide insight about classroom communication dynamics. Therefore, this study intended to address one overarching research question:

> RQ: What motives for communicating with classmates do college students report?

Methodology

Participants

Participants were 139 undergraduate students (100 women, 33 men, and 6 did not indicate sex) enrolled in courses at a small Midwestern university. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 41 years (M = 20.12; SD = 1.91). The majority of participants was White/Caucasian (n = 104; 74.8%), followed by Hispanic or Latino/a (n = 13; 9.3%), Asian/Pacific Islander (n = 9; 6.4%), Black/African American (n = 6; 4.3%), Middle Eastern (n = 1; 0.7%), Multiracial (n = 1; 0.7%), and five participants (n = 5; 3.6%) chose not to indicate their race/ethnicity. Thirty-one (n = 31) participants indicated they were currently in their first year of college, whereas 46 were sophomores, 29 were juniors, and 33 were seniors. On average, the participants were enrolled in 5 courses (M = 5.1, SD = 1.1) across 15 credit hours (M = 15.8, SD = 1.2).

Procedures

Participants were recruited from several face-to-face communication courses at a small, Midwestern university. The participants were provided with an open-ended questionnaire containing the following instructions: "As college students taking several courses each year, you may have countless interactions with your classmates. For the purposes of this study, think about the interactions you have had with classmates across all of your classes. Please complete the items below." Participants were then instructed to: "Please briefly list one reason (or motive) you might communicate with a classmate." After the participant listed the first motive, they were asked to provide a second motive and a third motive (if applicable). Finally, participants were asked a series of demographic questions.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data pertaining to the research question, a content analysis was conducted based on the grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2000). The first author used the constant comparative approach to create categories for the responses and then used axial coding to collapse the data into categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The second and third authors then used the codebook created by the first author to code the data. Using kappa, the intercoder reliability .96 and disagreements were resolved through discussion between the coders.

Results

Student participants provided 395 written examples about their motives to communicate with classmates. Results from the content analysis suggest that students are motivated to communicate with their classmates for two overarching reasons: (a) class-specific motives and (b) relational motives. Individual reasons that were provided by the participants were categorized into these two categories.

Class-specific motives are used when students communicate with other students about an issue related to the course (i.e., assignment, material, or project). Specifically, class-specific motives were the most common type of motive reported by participants (n = 282; 71.4%). Of these responses, students were motived to communicate with classmates for these reasons: questions or help about homework/assignments (n = 77; 27.3%); lecture material questions or clarifications (n = 60; 21.3%); form study groups (n = 41; 14.5%); group projects outside of class (n = 37; 13.1%); share notes or resources (n = 31; 11.0%); in-class group activities (n = 21; 7.4%); questions about missed class (n = 10; 3.5%); compare grades (n = 5; 1.8%). See Table 1 for representative examples of each class-specific motive.

Relational motives are used when students communicate with classmates to form a relationship or to speak about other topics. Specifically, relational motives included 113 responses (i.e., 28.6% of the total responses) from participants. Of these responses, students were motivated to communication with classmates for these reasons: get to know someone or make a friend (n = 78; 69.0%); common interests (n = 10; 8.8%); complain about instructor or class (n = 8; 7.1%); small talk (n = 6; 5.3%); attraction (n = 6; 5.3%); gossip (n = 3; 2.7%); offer support or make someone feel better (n = 2; 1.8%). See Table 2 for representative examples of each relational motive.

Discussion

The purpose of this exploratory study was to investigate student motives to communicate with classmates. Overall, this qualitative study offered insight about the reasons why students communicate with other students. The first overarching motive that emerged from the data was class-specific motives. This motive included asking questions or getting help on homework or assignments, asking questions or getting clarification about lecture material, forming study groups, engaging in group projects, sharing notes or resources, in-class group activities, asking questions about a missed class, and comparing grades. The second overarching motive that emerged from the data was relational motives. Students engage in relational motives when they want to get to know someone or make a friend, share common interests, complain about the instructor or class, engage in small talk, are attracted to a classmate, gossip, and offer support or make a classmate feel better. Overall, this study indicates that students are communicating with their classmates frequently and for various reasons. The majority of responses included class-specific motives, indicating that students are highly motivated to speak with classmates about issues related to the course. To a lesser extent, students are motivated to communicate with their classmates for relational reasons.

The results of the study highlight the importance of student interactions in the classroom. Several factors could influence the frequency of student communication motives with classmates such as classroom structural issues, instructor teaching behaviors, and individual student characteristics. However, regardless of these influencing factors, students still communicate with each other. In some regard, the communication motives with classmates were similar to the communication motives with instructors (Martin, Myers, & Mottet, 1999). For example, the class-specific motive is similar to the functional motive whereas the relational motive appeared with both classmates and instructors. However, differences existed as the participatory, excuse-making, and sycophancy motives did not appear in the data in this study. This is plausible because these three motives are not necessary when communicating with classmates.

A noteworthy finding in this study was the high frequency of communicating with classmates for help with or questions about homework, assignments, or lecture material. Of course, instructors can use effective teaching behaviors in the classroom and students might still have questions or need assistance. However, this research could offer important implications for classroom instructors. Instructors should engage in clear and relevant instructional strategies so that students are certain on assignment details. Instructors should also be confirming and approachable in their behaviors so that students feel comfortable asking them a question or seeking assistance with a course-related issue. Perhaps in some cases, students seek their classmates' assistance because they might consider their instructor to be unapproachable or not helpful.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study is not without limitations. First, data were collected at only one point (i.e., around the midpoint) of the semester, which provides a limited view of the data. Perhaps data should have been collected later in the semester to provide students more time to reference their own motives to communicate. Furthermore, Myers (2017) indicated that student motives to communicate with instructors fluctuate throughout the course of the semester. Perhaps student motives to communicate with their classmates also change throughout the semester. To investigate this notion, a longitudinal analysis would be necessary. Second, given the exploratory nature of this study, participants were asked to list only their motives to communicate with classmates. However, the data indicated that some of the motives were instructor enforced (i.e., group projects or in-class activities). Future researchers should be clear about investigating any possible communication motive or only student-prompted motives (i.e., not instructor enforced). Given that student motives to communicate with classmates has been introduced as an area of instructional communication research, future research should include developing a quantitative scale so that relationships between motives and other variables (e.g., instructor behaviors, environmental factors, student behaviors, and student characteristics and traits) can be investigated.

Conclusion

The results from this exploratory study add to the growing body of literature regarding student-to-student communication in the classroom. Overall, this study is advantageous for researchers as it introduces a new avenue for instructional communication research. The study of student-to-student communication should consider communication between individual dyads like the current study. Student-to-student communication can be helpful factor in student retention efforts (Tinto, 2012) and exploring the motives why students communicate with each other can assist instructors in understanding their role in facilitating conversation between students.

Table 1 – *Class-Specific Motives for Communicating with Classmates*

Motives and Representative Examples	N	% of Responses
Homework/Assignment Questions or Help "To discuss homework (e.g., how to do something, when something is due, where to submit, etc.)"	77	27.3%
Lecture Material Questions or Clarifications "If I didn't hear what the professor said, but I don't want to stop class to ask the professor, so I just ask the person sitting next to me"	60	21.3%
Form Study Groups "To look for potential study buddies or people who would work well in a group study session"	41	14.5%
Group Projects Outside of Class "If there is a group project and I am required to work with someone outside of class"	37	13.1%
Share Notes or Resources "If I need a pencil or paper" "To inquire help with class notes"	31	11.0%
In-Class Group Activities "Sometimes my professor asks us to speak with other students for an in-class activity or a pair-share"	21	7.4%
Questions About Missed Class "When I have to miss class, I will ask a classmate about the things I missed"	10	3.5%
Compare Grades "To see if they did better, worse, or the same on work" "I would ask them what they thought of a certain exam or assignment and compare how we did"	5	1.8%

Note. Class-Specific Motives for Communicating with Classmates represented 282 of the 395 total responses (i.e., 71.4%).

Table 2 – *Relational Motives for Communicating with Classmates*

Motives and Representative Examples	N	% of Responses
Get to Know Someone or Make a Friend "Because I enjoy getting to know people, and I think it's valuable to be friendly with my peers and to cooperate with them for mutual benefit"	78	69.0%
Common Interests "To talk with people who share the same interests with myself, like sports and movies"	10	8.8%
Complain About Instructor or Class "Talking about the class we are in, excluding academics (dislikes about the professor and the course)"	8	7.1%
Small Talk "We may have small talk before class starts to pass time—this helps with breaking awkward silence"	6	5.3%
Attraction "I might try to talk to a classmate if I find them attractive or cute"	6	5.3%
Gossip "I might ask someone a question about some gossip I heard or something that happened on campus"	3	2.7%
Offer Support or Make Someone Feel Better "Support in general because higher level classes tend to carry a lot more stress"	2	1.8%

Note. Relational Motives for Communicating with Classmates represented 113 of the 395 total responses (i.e., 28.6%).

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Iconic: A Musical Theatre Dance Concert in the time of COVID-19

Ashley Miller-Scully

Abstract

This is a narrative that shares my firsthand experience of producing our university spring dance concert, Iconic, and how the production process changed dramatically from a cancelled show to a live in-person performance due to COVID-19. Creating Iconic was a journey unlike anything I have ever experienced. My hope is that by sharing how we overcame obstacles, it can provide assistance, inspiration and insight to other theatre and dance educators who might find themselves in similar situations as we continue to navigate the challenges of live performance due to COVID-19. Iconic encouraged collaboration across disciplines and an innovative use of technology. Testimonials from performers and audiences reinforced the essential need for dance and art in these challenging and changing times. By pushing ourselves out of our comfort zone and thinking outside-of-the-box, we were able to produce a live Musical Theatre dance revue on our university football field to over 500+ audience members enforcing all COVID-19 and Dance/USA guidelines. I will discuss our process of what we thought was a normal inception and beginning, into the derailment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the many stages we experienced producing this show which caused a deep reflection of a production nearly a year in the making.

At the start of 2020, no one could have predicted the many lives, careers, and plans halted, changed and destroyed due to COVID-19. The pandemic forced everyone to stop in our tracks and pause as the whole world shut down around us. In a time where we needed art the most to help us cope and process the severe amount of loss, sadness, and trauma across this country, theatres and venues closed their doors and could no longer hold events and gatherings of any sort. Schools and universities around the country immediately worked to transfer their instruction online with many important in person events cancelled along the way. In fall of 2019, I began the process of our spring dance concert, *Iconic*, initially scheduled to be produced in April 2020. Due to COVID-19, our timeframe, process and work changed dramatically as we shifted the performance to October 2020. Producing *Iconic* was a journey unlike anything I have ever experienced. From what we thought was a normal inception and beginning, into the derailment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the many stages we experienced producing this show caused a deep reflection of a production nearly a year in the making.

Every year at the University of Central Missouri (UCM), we produce a spring dance concert as part of our season. As the Artistic Director of this annual production, I strive to make each year unique by selecting a new theme or vision that the show centers around. I make every effort for collaboration, innovation and risk-taking within our students and faculty. This prevents us from producing mixed repertory dance concerts year after year that could become both monotonous and boring for both performers and audiences. Each season, our patrons expect to see something completely different then the year before. By giving each show a set intention/theme, the student and faculty choreographers discover more purpose and passion in their artistic choices. As a director, it also pushes me to think outside of the realm of possibility while also focusing on what will be best for our students.

UCM currently offers a BFA in Musical Theatre and a dance minor, and at this time, I am the advisor for both programs and the sole full-time tenured dance faculty in our department. What drew me so much to the job at UCM was that they were looking for a dance teacher to teach not only ballet and modern, but tap, jazz, ballroom, choreography, musical theatre, etc. The Dean, Chair and faculty were open to allowing me to grow and steer the dance program in a way that was best in order to help build and develop the dance curriculum for the BFA Musical Theatre degree. After this was completed, the administration was very open and optimistic about creating a dance minor and then eventually a dance major.

It took us three years to begin the BFA Musical Theatre degree after my arrival at UCM, and then two years later we were able to begin offering a minor in dance. Many of our Musical Theatre majors choose to minor in dance, and many of our dance minors choose to audition and participate in our musicals as performers or choreographers. I am very interested and invested in working to find opportunities where I can merge both our dance minors and our musical theatre performers on various projects and shows. This led to the choosing of our spring 2020 dance concert which was entitled *Iconic.*

Typically, we only include one musical every other year in our theatrical season. In order to provide both an additional musical, as well as a dance opportunity for our students, I chose to make our dance concert a Musical Theatre Dance revue style show. This would be a great opportunity for Musical Theatre students to explore various styles of their craft and push their dance abilities, while also challenging dancers to develop their acting and singing skills. *Iconic* would feature iconic musical theatre dance pieces throughout history with the intention that students would learn and appreciate various Musical Theatre Dance styles while also learning Musical Theatre history, dance history, and the background of influential choreographers and contributors to these popular songs and shows.

When deciding what pieces to include in this revue, there were many factors considered. My plan was to work through the show in a chronological order of musical theatre history so I wanted to include pieces from the Golden Age to more contemporary musicals of today. I planned to incorporate an emcee that would introduce the pieces and provide a little context of the time period of the show and significance of the number in musical theatre history. Within the last ten years or so, musical theatre has begun to see an evolution in style, which has started to include a larger variety of non-Western dance and music styles. It was important that we explored a variety of musical theatre dance styles in the show ranging from jazz, tap, ballet, hip-hop, Latin dance, etc. We also needed a range of pieces that were duet or small ensemble numbers to larger full-cast numbers. In addition, I also needed to consult our Music Director, Ms. Page Gravely, on what she felt would be realistic on the vocal side knowing the pool of students available to us.

When considering iconic musical theatre dance numbers, I knew that certain choreographers such as Agnes de Mille, Jerome Robbins, Michael Bennett, and Bob Fosse could not be overlooked. I also made a list of highly popular dance musicals such as *Anything Goes*, *Cats*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *An American in Paris*, and *Newsies* to name a few. I consulted Google and YouTube with quick searches of "Top Musical Theatre Dance Numbers" and polled my Facebook friends, our Alumni, and our students on what they deemed to be the most 'iconic' of the musical theatre cannon. I found that most responses were similar to my own so I ended up with an initial list of roughly twenty dance numbers. Knowing that we could not do a show with that many pieces, I knew we would need to narrow them down so I then again consulted with Ms. Gravely and our student and guest choreographers.

One obstacle we ran in to was that some numbers on our list would not be able to be included because we simply did not have the diversity in our program to cast all the roles. For example, *Shuffle Along* has significant iconic status in musical theatre history due to it being a breakthrough for African-American musical theatre performers. *In the Heights* is also significant for being the first American musical to include hip-hop music and dance; however, we do not currently have enough African-American or Latinx students to be able to cast these shows appropriately.

West Side Story is at the top of iconic dance musicals due to the use of Jerome Robbins's "choreographed action" and the innovative way he used dance to tell a story in a way not seen before on a Broadway stage. "Cool" is arguably not the most iconic dance from *West Side Story*, but selecting this number allowed us to cast the piece appropriately racially because it is danced by the Jets, a gang of white men. We did however end up casting non-white students along with white students in addition to women in traditional male roles to make up the Jets. We could justify this choice because conceptually the Jets could be a gang of both men and women of mixed races.

The other pieces selected to be in the show were: "Anything Goes" from *Anything Goes*, "Too Darn Hot" from *Kiss Me, Kate*, "Pas de Deux" from *An American in Paris*, "Singin' in the Rain" from *Singin' in the Rain,* "Steam Heat" from *The Pajama Game*, "Mein Herr" from *Cabaret*, "The Rich Man's Frug" from *Sweet Charity*, "The Time Warp" from *The Rocky Horror Show*, "One" from *A Chorus Line,* "Nowadays/Hot Honey Rag" from *Chicago*, "The Audition" from *42nd Street*, Mungojerrie and Rumpleteazer from *Cats*, and finally, "Seize the Day" from *Newsies* for a total of 14 numbers. We were very confident we could be successful in casting all of these numbers and perform them well.

Once the pieces were selected for the show, I assigned individual dances to the student choreographers, myself, and guest choreographers. Our guest choreographers were our adjunct ballet faculty, Amy Gilchrist, and Spinning Tree Theatre from Kansas City, MO. Spinning Tree's co-founders were a part of the both casts for the US and European tours of *West Side Story* and were able to set the original Jerome Robbins "Cool" choreography on our students during a weekend residency. We also included the original choreography to “The Audition” from *42nd Street*. It was important for our students to have this challenging educational experience of learning original Broadway choreography, but for the other pieces, the choreographers sought inspiration from the original shows and choreography and then created their own versions of the iconic pieces. This required all the choreographers to research their assigned pieces and to know their significance in musical theatre history. We held auditions for the show in November of 2019 and began our first vocal and dance rehearsals on February 24th, 2020. Rehearsals went very well for the first three weeks, but then, as we all know now, the whole word shut down and COVID-19 changed everything.

Our campus, like so many others, announced over our Spring Break that all instruction would move completely online and that all remaining events and activities were cancelled for the rest of the academic year. No one was to set a foot on campus for at least the next 8 weeks. To say we were disappointed and heartbroken was an understatement, as this meant our seniors would no longer perform their final collegiate production, attend graduation, or celebrate so many of the fun end of the year events. But we also knew everyone in the country was in the same unfortunate circumstance and this was the right call in order to keep everyone safe and healthy. Nevertheless, even though the show was cancelled for the spring, I still wanted to keep this opportunity available for the students and find a way to continue with the project.

Over the summer, our faculty met to discuss our options for how we could re-envision our previously announced 2020-21 Theatre & Dance season. Before that meeting, I had consulted the Dance/USA COVID-19 guidelines along with our new university COVID-19 guidelines and had a plan in place for how I felt we could safely remount, recast, and perform this show. In following these guidelines, I knew we could no longer do any partner or floor work. Every dancer would need to dance at least 8-10 feet apart, and we could no longer sing live as we would need to keep the dancers masked throughout all rehearsals and performances for everyone’s safety. The reconfiguration of the show completely altered all aspects of our normal rehearsal and performance routines, which proved to be a bit of a logistical challenge at times, but it also forced us to work together, be resourceful, and think outside-of-the-box. The production staff was determined to make this show work and to give our students a live performance, showing them that the “show must go on” and we could do it in a safe way. If nothing else, this could be a bright spot in a very dark year for these young artists and our audiences.

During this reconfiguration period, I soon discovered that we would also need to find enough rehearsal spaces in order to exit or switch spaces to let the air cycle through the space and do a cleaning of the space after each hour-long rehearsal. I worked out a schedule where we rehearsed either outdoors on our football field, in our theatre lobby, or in our dance studio from 6:30-10pm each Monday-Friday evening. Rehearsals were limited to an hour each; with a 5 min break at the half-hour and a provided half-hour break in between dances so the air could circulate. We were fortunate that between August and October 2020 we never had one rainy day where we couldn't rehearse outside; however, the weather fluctuated from the 50's to the 90's so the students had to be prepared to dance in various temperatures.

I was also in search of new performance venue because we did not feel it was safe to have audience and dancers indoors. My hope was to find a space outdoors on campus. I began consulting with UCM Meeting & Conference Services on what could be a feasible space. We went through nearly five different locations with them all leading to an eventual "no" for some reason or another. At the time we were searching for a space, the UCM football season was cancelled for the year and practices were not allowed. I inquired with Meetings & Conferences Services and though they thought it might be a long shot, Athletics agreed to let us use the UCM Football Field for our show. This solved so many of our logistical problems and we were so grateful. Using a space as large as the football stadium allowed us to safely distance both the audience and performers, provided an AstroTurf surface to safely dance on, and we could utilize all the lights and sound equipment that the stadium system provided for us.

With this show being a Musical Theatre revue, my next challenge was to find a way to keep the singing element in the show. I was determined to find a creative solution to this problem so our students could still get the experience of singing these songs. I did not want to have to revert to using prerecorded Broadway tracks as the whole point of the production was to provide triple threat training. With the singing challenges in mind, Page and I enlisted the help of our Digital Media Production program and our Music Technology program on campus. In our discussions with them, we decided we could solve our problem by recording both the audio and visual of each dancer singing one at a time.

For the live show, the dancers would perform masked while a video of them singing projected onto a screen behind them. This would allow the audience to still watch and listen to the students singing the numbers while they danced.

To accomplish this, we would need to have each student come into our Music Technology recording studio to sing their individual part for each piece. From there, our Music Technology faculty and a Music Tech student, Dr. Eric Honour & Mackenzie Schlogl, would mix and blend the voices together to make one track. They would then send the tracks to our Digital Media Production faculty, Dr. Joe Moore, and he would layer the audio tracks over the visual recording. Dr. Moore utilized Zoom-like boxes on the screen allowing the audience to see each individual singer for their portions of the song. During the instrumental breaks, we would fill the video with images from the original Broadway production or revivals of that show.

We had a great plan in place and now our main challenge was our timeframe. We had yet to recast the show, and once cast, the dancers would need to start recording the music almost immediately in order for us to get the video together in time for the production. We held virtual auditions and recast roles left vacant by graduating seniors or non-returning students. We gave the new students a week to learn the music, and by the next week, we were recording the vocals and completed all 19 vocalists' recordings within two weeks. Choreographers began re-envisioning and restaging their pieces to remove partner and floor work and we were on our way.

Before rehearsals began, every student was provided with a list of the new COVID-19 policies and procedures so that everyone knew what was expected going into this new and unique process. I wanted to emphasize to the students that we had done a great deal of research and would take the safety of everyone seriously. The Stage Management team stocked up on hand sanitizer, Clorox wipes, facemasks, etc. When it came to props and costumes, we solved those concerns by assigning them to individuals for the entire rehearsal and run of the show. Each prop and costume piece was disinfected before and after use and stored in sealed containers between uses. For costumes, we provided black masks for everyone and the dancers were required to provide their own solid black dancewear and shoes. We asked the dancers to choose pieces they could use again in dance classes or auditions so they could see it as an investment in their own dance stock. During the production, each cast member stayed seated on an individual box on the football field distanced ten feet from another dancer. The dancers remained on their box during the duration of the show and watched the show from their box when they were not dancing. The performers also kept all of their props and costumes at their box and changed discreetly from pants/skirts if needed. Because we could not tap dance on a football turf, we constructed our own tap floor, which we placed on the track of the stadium to perform our tap numbers on and it worked beautifully. In addition, since we could not leave our scenic, costume and lighting elements on the football field each night, it gave our students the chance to experience what it might be like to tour a production since we had to tear down and set up each day.

Of course, we did have challenges that occurred due to COVID-19. Throughout our entire rehearsal process and production, only one student tested positive, and thankfully, she was asymptomatic. It was confirmed that her case did not come from our production. If there was ever a concern about exposure or quarantine, I consulted with the University Health Center. There was a period of several weeks where many of our freshmen were forced to quarantine due to exposure in their dorms; however, if anyone was quarantined, we had them Zoom into rehearsal. Though we had some challenges due to quarantine periods, we had our full cast and crew by the time the show opened. That feat alone was a success, and I was proud in the ways we demonstrated to the students, our audiences, and our administration that we had found a way to do live theatre safely.

For three nights of outdoor performances, we had the most beautiful 75-degree weather. This production proved to be our most highly attended dance concert we have ever had in my 12 years at UCM with over 500+ people attending the production throughout the three nights. We had rave reviews from our audiences. Many people commented on how wonderful it was to be able to see live theatre again, how safe they felt, and expressed their overall admiration knowing how much we overcame to make the show happen. To eliminate paper, we provided QR codes for digital programs and we sold tickets digitally. Our ushers used measuring sticks to space patrons safely apart, and with a seating capacity of 12,000 people, everyone who came to the show had plenty of space to spread out. This was also our only fall production that brought in revenue for our department.

Early in our process, we decided to submit *Iconic* to the Region V Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival as a "Participating Entry". We provided a recording of the show to two respondents from different institutions within our region at the closing of our show. Respondent Sean Byrd from Normandale Community College in Bloomington, MN, and respondent Deidre Mattox from Hutchinson Community College in Hutchinson, KS both gave the production positive feedback and critiques and awarded Meritorious Achievement Awards in Choreography to every choreographer. They also recommended the show receive an invitation as a featured production in the Region V KCACTF virtual festival in January 2021.

Iconic was the only Musical Theatre/Dance production out of a 7-state region selected for the festival. As an invited production, we received an additional feedback session with two respondents from different KCACTF regions throughout the country. Dr. Adriana Dominguez from the University of Texas – El Paso, and Dr. Vicky Lantz from Sam Houston State University, served as our respondents in addition to serving as the RED (Representation, Equity and Diversity) Coordinators in their respective KCACTF region. Their feedback was also positive and led to a very eye-opening discussion for my students and myself.

The discussion led us to the question: "What is 'iconic'?" We must consider that what is iconic to one person may not be iconic to another. This can vary based on a person's age, race, gender, and overall aesthetic, knowledge and exposure to musical theatre as a whole. We began to dive deeper into our decisions on what made these particular pieces iconic to us as a company, which in turn led us to ask ourselves if there were shows missing and why? We discussed that many of the pieces we included had validation for being deemed iconic, but we also took note that twelve out of the fourteen pieces were directed and choreographed by white men. We also acknowledged that there are certain challenges and limitations higher education institutions face when producing diverse work due to a lack of diversity among our student population.

This brought me back to a question I have often asked myself: "Why are there not more students of color in theatre/dance and what can we do to change this paradigm?" This is something that desperately needs examination in higher education, and in our industry as a whole, but I believe it goes back much farther than that. Much of this can stem back to our public schools and children's accessibility to the arts, affordability of participating in the arts, and knowledge and support for career paths in the arts. Children need be able to identify with those they see on stage to inspire them to follow in their footsteps. Every person needs to be able to see their own stories on stage to feel accepted and welcome into the field. Until we begin to shift the industry, we are in a vicious cycle of seeing the same white cis-heteropatriarchy plays, musicals, ballets, etc. on our stages.

Though we began a systemic change in our Theatre & Dance program at the start of the 2020-21 academic year, our KCACTF response session further inspired my students, my colleagues, and myself to continue to examine our own theatrical practices and curriculum. It again reestablished our focus on the actionable steps we put in place as a way to begin to shape and change the future of our program to be a more equitable, safe and just place for all. I hope that when, and if, we revisit iconic works in 5-10 years from now, we can be proud to say there is no longer a dominate race being represented as the creators and performers of these works. Until then, we have work to do.

Iconic is a show that will remain with me forever. I had such a tremendous sense of relief when it was over, but looking back, I am so grateful for this roller coaster of an experience. Every unexpected twist and turn, and up and down, pushed me as a director and leader and stretched my creative mind in ways no other show has before. Through it all, I learned that we need theatre and dance to lift us up, and carry us through some of our darkest times. *Iconic* was a bright light in the darkest of times.

Joining the University of Central Missouri Department of Theatre & Dance in 2009, Ashley has been instrumental in developing the BFA Musical Theatre degree and creating the dance minor at UCM. As a Professor of Dance at UCM, Miller-Scully choreographs all departmental musicals and serves as the Artistic Director of the Spring Dance Concert each year. She has choreographed regionally for Crane River Theater, Kansas City Cappies, and has produced work locally and abroad at the Kansas City Fringe Festival and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe alongside UCM faculty and students. Miller-Scully has received the KCACTF Meritorious Achievement Award for Choreography on several productions and awarded the KCACTF/ATHE Innovative Teaching Award in 2018. Under her direction, two UCM productions were invited to perform at the Region V KCACTF, receiving both regional and national awards. Ashley is the current Meredith Harmon Sauer Distinguished Professor of Theatre & Dance at UCM and holds teaching certifications in YogaFit Levels 1 & 2, Progressive Ballet Technique, and beginning ballroom dance. Miller-Scully is an active member of the Speech & Theatre Association of Missouri, Musical Theatre Educators' Alliance, Stage Directors & Choreographers Society, Missouri Dance Organization, National Dance Education Organization, and American College Dance Association.

Teaching the Art of Play-by-Play in the Digital Age

Joseph H. Moore

Abstract

In-depth interviews were conducted with 15 play-by-play announcers to determine how the profession has changed, how they prepare for an event, how they view themselves as professionals, and how aspiring announcers should prepare to enter the profession. This phenomenological study discovered the internet and cell phones have changed the profession, but that these tools have not made preparation easier. The announcers noted the basics of knowing the game and teams, and preparing thorough notes are still required. Play-by-play announcers viewed themselves as journalists and entertainers and stressed writing skills and hands-on learning as the best means for preparing for the profession. They also emphasized the impact they have on their audiences as the most rewarding part of the job. These findings suggest that, while technology has had some impact on the profession, aspiring play-by-play announcers must still focus on the basics if they are to succeed in the digital age.

On April 11, 1921, Florent Gibson of the *Pittsburgh Star*, picked up a microphone for KDKA radio to provide play-by-play for the fight between Johnny Ray and Johnny "Hutch" Dunee at Motor Square Garden in Pittsburgh (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2019). With that broadcast, he changed forever the way sports fans watch and listen to athletic events. Rather than having to purchase a ticket and join the throngs of supporters ringside or in packed stadiums, fans could enjoy sporting events in the comfort of their own homes.

For sports fans, the men and women who call the events are a huge part of the experience. On December 20, 1980, NBC executive Dan Ohlmeyer tried an experiment to bolster ratings for a meaningless game between the Miami Dolphins and New York Jets; both teams were already out of the playoff hunt (Cosentino, 2017). Ohlmeyer decided to broadcast the game without commentators. Instead, the game would feature more graphics, more information from the public address announcer, and more sensitive microphones to pick up crowd noise.

Aside from an attempt to improve ratings in what he called "this dog game", Ohlmeyer tried the experiment because "I always felt that announcers talked too much. And on the other hand, viewers always complain about announcers, and so here was an opportunity to send a subtle message to the viewer that you're going to miss these guys if they are not there" (Cosentino, para. 5). Apparently Ohlmeyer was correct; the experiment was not well received. While it earned a 13.5 rating (just a bit under NBC's regular-season average of 14.9), critics believed the experiment put too much of a burden on the viewer.

While they may appreciate the commentary, many fans do not realize what goes into play-by-play. They may assume these professionals (also known as announcers, commentators, and sportscasters) just have great heads for sports trivia and superior voices for sharing those nuggets of information while watching the game. The typical sports fan might not realize how much homework play-by-play announcers do before the event—checking statistics, scouring game notes and media guides for any useful bit of knowledge, interviewing coaches and players, examining trends and so forth. The fact that they so poignantly articulate what is happening and draw on their preparation makes the job even more impressive.

Still, little research exists related to play-by-play. Several textbooks (Gisondi, 2018; Owens, 2007; Schultz, 2002) have addressed sports commentary as a subset of the overall production. Hedrick (2000) wrote one of the most complete texts that relates solely to sports commentary, addressing everything from play-by-play to radio sports talk, and Bender (1994) wrote one of the first "how to" books on play-by-play. Fulks (1998) and Smith (1997) developed anthologies of major college and professional sportscasters through the ages, and many other biographies have been published featuring individual sports commentators.

What is missing, however, is a thorough inspection of play-by-play announcers across various levels (high school, small college, large state college, and professional sports). Also missing is a clear understanding of how technology, including the internet, cell phones and social media have changed the game. Ohlmeyer attempted to innovate, believing the technology of the time could help the broadcast overcome the lack of announcers (Cosentino, 2017). But, as Collins (2001) warned, "Technology cannot turn a good enterprise into a great one, nor by itself prevent disaster" (p. 158). So, as high school, college and professional sports teams and organizations have embraced various technological advances, how have play-by-play announcers turned to technology, and to what effect? Further, how should aspiring sportscasters train as they enter the profession? Halberstram (2018a) addressed the growing trend in streaming services and the increased demand for announcers, stressing this provides excellent practice for budding young sportscasters. “From a training perspective, broadcast students in the past had one place to turn, the student radio station. Now, many student announcers call their college’s video streams. It better prepares them for a career in television” (para. 10). It would stand to reason, then that if more and more young people are getting into the profession, it is incumbent upon educators to prepare students for the field of play-by-play.

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to learn from professional announcers and to discover how they prepare for covering an event, what they view as their primary roles, and how the profession has evolved. Additionally, as aspiring broadcasters prepare to enter the field, it is important to learn in what classes and activities students should be involved as we learn what it is to be a play-by-play announcer in the digital age.

Literature Review

Over the last two decades, technological advances, including high-definition television, streaming audio and video, increased usage of mobile devices, and social media have greatly impacted communication. Schultz and Wei (2013) provided a history of how broadcasting has shaped and re-shaped the sports viewing experience, and Sheffer and Schultz (2013) and Clavio (2013) addressed the rise in social media among athletes, journalists and fans. Clavio noted services like TuneIn Radio allow fans from around the globe to “tune in everything from sports talk to play-by-play of games” (p. 265) while FirstRowSports allows fans to create and share their own video streams of sports. Clavio noted that “These types of streaming services, when used in conjunction with conversation-focused media such as Twitter or FanCake, may eventually promote a new kind of online sport media environment” (p. 265). Krikke (2004) lauded the arrival of streaming video and the ability to watch anywhere. Ainslie (2016) and Kariyawasam and Tsai (2017), on the other hand, argued live streaming has caused a major issue for sports leagues attempting to protect their broadcast rights.

Similarly, much has been written in trade journals related to technology and sport and how it is used to enhance and improve performance. As a sampling, football uses electronic playbooks and position-specific game film loaded to tablets (NFL.com, 2019); hockey is using tracking devices to follow the puck and map trajectory, distance and speed (Lashbrook, 2019); and basketball teams are experimenting with virtual reality (McLaughlin, 2018). And, of course, everyone is using technology for replay. Even baseball is experimenting with robotics for umpires (Acquavella, 2019).

Little literature, though, is found related to technology and play-by-play. Fourteen years after Krikke (2004) first discussed the topic, Halberstram (2018a) addressed streaming services and what this means for announcers. Halberstram (2018b) also discussed a relatively new concept as announcers call the game from the network studios. "In recent years, albeit infrequently, ESPN and other networks have pulled their basketball announcers from venue to studio," he said. "Earlier, it was a practice networks only resorted to for overseas events, circumventing set up fees" (para. 2).

Companies like Play-by-Play Spotting Boards.com have created software in order to take some of the tedium out of creating the handwritten spotting board (Schultz, 2019). And Hoffer (2009) discussed John Madden's use of the telestrator on his way to becoming a top-flight color commentator.

Aside from the aforementioned literature on trade web sites, there is scant research related to if or how technology, particularly the World Wide Web and social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter have changed the face of play-by-play. What is present related to social media is focused on sports marketing and sports reporting and on how audiences use social media to consume sports. Many industry professionals have written about social media as a marketing tool (Fisher, 2011; Karr, 2017; Ma, 2018; Smith, 2011), and Abeza, O'Reilly and Sequin (2019) conducted an in-depth study of the social media marketing practices of professional sport managers in MLB, NBA, NFL and NHL.

One might expect that play-by-play announcers have been either encouraged or frustrated by the rise of social media. On the one hand, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat have given media professionals another way to interact with their audiences. On the other hand, maintaining a social media presence is just one more task in an already loaded schedule. But it would seem worth their while, given the number of sports fans utilizing such tools. Seventy percent of the U.S. adult population follows sports (Sporting News Media, Kantar Media Sports, & TV Sports Markets, 2014). Of those, 35% consume sports via social media, with Facebook as the primary source (70%), followed by YouTube (40%), and Twitter (24%). Delgado (2014) reported that 42% of U.S. sports fans follow their favorite teams and athletes via mobile device and that social media usage was up among sports fans from 25% in 2013 to 35%. Tang and Cooper (2018) learned that fans of the 2016 Rio Olympic Games took advantage of social media as a way to engage with other fans while simultaneously viewing the games on television, while Spinda and Puckette (2017) found fans use Snapchat because it is easy to use, it provides a behind the scenes glimpse into their favorite teams and the lives of athletes, it offers a vicarious experience, and it provides a unique point of view as they share with other users.

Many researchers have examined how print and broadcast journalists are taking advantage of these new means of telling stories (Deuze, 2017; English, 2016; Schultz & Sheffer, 2010; Sheffer & Shultz, 2010; Swasy, 2016). Deuze noted that social media offers innovative ways in which to tell stories with the primary platform being Twitter. Swasy and English noted that Twitter allows journalists new means of gathering and communicating information. English learned that sports journalists find the tool extremely beneficial as they reach their audiences. End users agree. Barthel, Shearer, Gottfried, and Mitchell (2015) reported an enormous growth since 2013 among Twitter and Facebook users who turn to social media for news of all subjects, not just sports. Still, though, technology and social media usage among play-by-play announcers has not been addressed.

Bonnet and Lochard (2013) said few works have been dedicated to sports announcing at all. Race (Angelini & Billings, 2010; Billings, 2004), gender (Billings, Angelini, & Duke, 2010; Billings, Halone, & Denham, 2002; Grubb & Billiot, 2010; Poniatowski & Hardin, 2012; Trujillo, 1995), and combinations of the two (Coventry, 2004; Eastman & Billings, 2001; Daddario & Wigley, 2007) are the primary foci of research when it comes to sports announcing. Trade publications and scholars alike have provided some analysis of play-by-play announcers (Ferguson, 2008; Keene & Cummins, 2009; McGuire, 2002; Street & Smiths, 2016; Wanta & Leggett, 2006), and Halberstam (2015) examined how play-by-play announcers can promote themselves. Scholars and professionals have written about the do's and don'ts of play-by-play—do offer the time and score frequently; do your homework, including knowing the rules of the game, the rosters, and the statistics; do develop chemistry with your broadcast partner; don't use clichés or unnecessary jargon, don't be a "homer" (Clavio, 2011; Gisondi, 2018; Hedrick, 2000; Owens, 2007; Schultz, 2002; Zumoff & Negin, 2015).

But while these studies tell us a great deal about calling the action, they don't tell us anything about the development or make up of play-by-play announcers or how technology and social media has impacted their job. Further, there is no qualitative analysis directly from play-by-play announcers related to how they prepare, how they view themselves and others in the profession, or how they trained for the field. Given Halberstram's (2018a) assertion that more and more opportunities are arising for students, it seems prudent to understand from professionals how aspiring play-by-play announcers should prepare for the future of sportscasting in the digital age.

Methodology

A phenomenological approach was taken in conducting the research. A phenomenological study "describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or phenomenon" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, pg. 75) and is common in education. In the phenomenological approach, the researcher collects data from the subjects involved in the phenomenon and creates a composite description of what the individuals experienced and how they experienced it. Thus, this approach is fitting as we seek to learn from professionals about their experiences in an effort to train the next generation of play-by-play announcers.

Sample

For this study, in-depth interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of 15 professional play-by-play across Missouri. These sportscasters represent all five professional sports teams in the state, the play-by-play announcers for the three largest universities in Missouri and the five regional universities (one of whom owns the local radio station), three high school play-by-play announcers with at least 10 years of professional experience, and one sportscaster who created his own online broadcasting company to cover area high school and college sports. The sportscasters represented two members of the Missouri Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame, two members of the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame and one member of the Kansas Broadcasting Hall of Fame, and three individuals who had been honored with the Missouri State High School Activities Association Distinguished Service Award. The professional announcers had collectively called the action for teams that won six league championships, two of the college announcers had broadcast for teams that won a total of 13 NCAA titles, and two of the high school announcers had been on the call for teams that won 24 state titles. Several subjects had been honored by the Missouri Broadcasters Association, the subjects won a total of seven Emmys in sportscasting, and as a group they won a total of 12 state Sportscaster of the Year awards. This approach allowed the author to gain perspective from professionals with more than 400 years of combined experience at all levels of sportscasting (professional, college and high school).

Research Design

In phenomenological research, the researcher attempts to "suspend all judgments about what is real--the 'natural attitude'--until they are founded on a more certain basis" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, pg. 76). This allows the researcher to approach the subject with a sense of "newness" in order to remain unbiased and to evoke rich and descriptive data. The researcher also brackets his or her own experiences, meaning he or she considers personal experiences in the field and then sets those reflections aside in an effort to gain a fresh perspective. As the researcher spent 15 years in a college athletic setting working very closely with play-by-play announcers and also had nine-years of experience as a color commentator, followed by 15-years of experience training students in sports broadcasting and journalism, it was important to consider his own background with the field. In so doing, he could form questions and set aside personal biases in an effort to gain new knowledge.

Creswell and Poth (2018) also stressed that it is important that phenomenological research questions are designed to emphasize lived experiences rather than theoretical experiences. They further emphasized questions should move from "narrow units of analysis (e.g., significant statements), and on to broader units (e.g., meaning units) … that summarize two elements: 'what' the individuals experienced and 'how' they experienced it (pg. 77). In so doing, themes could emerge that would help describe the phenomenon.

Procedure

After receiving approval from the university's Institutional Review Board, persons who met the criteria were contacted and asked to participate. Interviews were conducted and recorded over a five-month period. The interviewer traveled to and visited with all but four of the sportscasters; these four interviews were conducted by telephone. Interviews lasted between one hour and 90 minutes.

After receiving informed consent, each participant was asked 15 questions related to their personal experiences in the field of play-by-play. Background information was obtained by an Internet search of each professional in order to learn more about their training, awards, and employment and educational histories.

Data Analysis

Interviews were recorded and loaded onto the author's YouTube account (under the "private" setting), where the closed captioning feature was utilized to aid in transcription. Because the feature does not take into account verbal idiosyncrasies ("ums", "uhs", "you-knows"), punctuation or capitalization, the researcher listened to each interview while polishing transcriptions in order to reflect the actual conversation. These transcriptions were then read several times in order to obtain an overall feel for the comments. From each transcript, significant statements and phrases were identified and highlighted. These were then clustered into meaning units, which formed the basis of themes common to all of the participants' interview transcripts.

Rigor was insured by applying verification, "the process of checking, confirming, making sure, and being certain" (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson & Spiers, 2002, para. 17). It refers to the processes throughout the study that ensure reliability and validity. Through literature searches and study of textbooks related to sports broadcasting, closely adhering to the phenomenological method, bracketing past experiences, keeping in-depth field notes and recordings, utilizing an adequate sample of experienced and highly regarded professionals, and interviewing until saturation of data was achieved, verification and rigor were achieved. Validation was accomplished through the use of interviews, observations, and evaluation of broadcasts; coding by a trained researcher; and by member checks by participants and key informants.

Results

Eight questions were asked of each of the play-by-play announcers in the study. From the 15 verbatim transcripts, which were examined individually and comparatively, themes emerged. Multiple themes emerged from three questions, but generally one point was made clear for the other questions in the interviews.

Question one addressed how the profession has changed since each of the interview subjects entered the field. Questions two through four were concerned with preparation and the pros and cons of the profession, and questions five through eight focused on training for the field.

(**Author's note:** For variance, in the write up of the results, the terms "play-by-play announcer", "announcer", "sportscaster", and "participant" are utilized synonymously).

Question 1: How has the play-by-play profession changed since you entered the field?

As each professional interviewed had been in the field for at least a decade (some for as many as four), it was appropriate to consider the changes they had witnessed. Three themes emerged, two of which centered on the internet: (1) the internet has provided more ways to connect to the audience, (2) the internet has made it easier to find information, and (3) cell phones have provided access to broadcast in more venues.

Theme #1: Internet has provided more ways to connect with the audience.

Whether it is through streaming services, email exchanges, or social media, the interview subjects said the Internet has provided more ways to reach and communicate with their audiences. "The ability to have the games on your website and have people all over the place listening to the game … that's not something that happened several years ago," said one of the high school announcers. Two of the college play-by-play announcers gave examples of how fans' ability to listen or watch games wherever they are on the globe has turned play-by-play from one-way to two-way communication. One announcer said, "We take emails for all of our broadcasts, so I keep an eye on emails. And then we keep an eye on Twitter as well if somebody is gonna post a notification." Another college announcer added, "We've gotten emails from people from Germany to, one time, somebody was on a ship just off the China coast. One game last year … we were getting messages from Australia, England, different places around the states."

Not only has the internet afforded more ways for announcers to connect with audiences; it has also provided more *announcers* to make those connections. One of the college participants echoed Halberstam's (2018a) claim that because of the internet and streaming services, young sportscasters have greater opportunities to break into the field. "I mean, every high school in the country just about streams their games," he said. "If you can get involved with that then you don't necessarily have to get on with the hometown radio station and get out over the air." These increased opportunities further support the notion that aspiring play-by-play announcers need to learn how to perform the duties properly.

Theme #2: The internet has made it easier to find information.

Whereas broadcasters used to have to cull through newspaper articles and call coaches and administrators, the internet (specifically school and conference websites, sports sites such as MaxPreps and Hudl, and media outlets outside the announcer's coverage area) have also made it easier to perform research and gather information for broadcasts. "There's so much online, especially in college," said one sportscaster. "You can get everything you need at a click of a button." Another noted that, "the fact that there's access to stories and things now that you can research that you just didn't have back then" has changed how he prepares. Asked if this makes it more difficult to sift through his research, he quickly said, "No, I think the more information you can get the better."

Another announcer did caution that with the advantages of technology, particularly the internet, there are also disadvantages. "You now have way more information than people had five to seven years ago (but) everyone now is a critic," he said. "In the digital world, this can bring out the worst in mankind because they can do it anonymously."

Theme #3: Cell phones have provided access to broadcast in more venues.

Cellular phones not only allow broadcasters to communicate with their families and friends, they also make it easier to broadcast games. One of the high school announcers shared how cell phones have changed the face of play-by-play. "When we first started doing games, all road games were done by ordering a telephone line. Now we do our games on a cell phone and the equipment with that is a lot different." Another, who has broadcast more than 5,000 high school sporting events said, "The biggest reason I've been able to do as many broadcasts as I do in a given year is the advent of cell phones." This, according to one sportscaster, has made their efforts global, even if the fan is not at a computer. "We now have phone apps where if people just download our app and they have their smartphone, they can listen to the game anywhere they go," he said.

It was interesting that, given the influx of social media into the world or sports reporting and broadcasting, few of sportscasters interviewed mentioned Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or the like, and fewer still put any emphasis on the tool at all.

Question 2: How do you prepare for a game?

To a man, the sportscasters said game preparation is a week-long job and that there are no shortcuts. This included researching the participants; studying their names, stories and statistics; preparing notes; and taking on the role of a coach to analyze film.

Half of the participants went into detail about making a spotting board so all the names and statistics for each team are readily available. One said, "I have a full board of information, but I'll probably only use a third of it, if that, during the broadcast. It's good to have it all, even though you might not use it." Another supported the notion that it is important to have more information than might be needed. "I live by the motto 'failing to prepare is preparing to fail'," he said. "A real pet peeve of mine is to listen to broadcasters who clearly did not do any homework before the game." A key part of the information gathering is the pronunciation of names. Several participants stressed this point. "You have to know the guys; you have to know how to say their names," one college announcer said. "It just drives me nuts when people can't say the names right."

A surprising number mentioned watching video, whether that be from watching broadcasts or using services such as Hudl to learn more about the opponent. One high school announcer said he believes watching video is one of the most critical tasks for a play-by-play announcer. "Especially during football season," he said. "Basketball, you see so much action throughout the week, but for football it helps if you sit down and watch film."

Several sportscasters likened calling the game to taking the final exam after a week of studying (preparing) for the test. One professional play-by-play announcer said, "You have covered all this material, now we're going to get eight questions or whatever. You have no idea which parts of the semester's worth of material you're going to get, but you have to know all the material."

Question 3: What is the most difficult aspect of the job?

Time was the universal response when asked about the greatest challenges of being a play-by-play announcer, whether that be the time involved to prepare for the event or time (and travel) away from family. "You can't play every game at home," one participant said. "There is a lot of travel." Another added, "I think a lot of people think you just show up and turn on the mic and you go. To do it right, it takes a lot of time in the game prep; it's like doing homework for classes."

One professional announcer was reticent about sharing the struggles of the profession because, in his words, "It's the job we signed up for. I don't think (fans) should care whether or not we're tired or we got off on a road trip at 5 in the morning or that we've been on the road for two weeks. No fan cares about that, nor should they."

Question 4: What is the best part of the job?

Professionals in sportscasting often quip that they get paid to watch sporting events, so it was a little surprising to hear a more serious response when asked about the best aspect of being a play-by-play announcer. The impact they have on the lives of their listeners resonated with most. One college announcer said, "I have families come up to me and they can only make it to one or two games in a season, and I'm their picture and their voice for their kid or cousin or nephew. That's very satisfying." Another shared the story of a woman who came to every high school and college game, but when she was diagnosed with cancer and had to stop attending games, he became her eyes.

"She said that the thing that helped her get through chemotherapy was knowing that she was going to be able to turn on the radio and listen to the games. That's how you can make a difference in this business."

Back to how the job has changed, one participant who has been in the profession for more than three decades said the internet allowed him to reach someone halfway around the world. A woman came to him during a high school game and asked him to say hello over the air to her daughter's stepfather because he could not attend the game.

"I said, 'Oh, is he working?' She said, 'Yeah, he's in Afghanistan.' I mean my jaw just dropped."

Yet another high school announcer wanted to stress to aspiring play-by-play announcers that more than broadcasting sporting events, he is offering something more. "I think the station, in providing the coverage, in covering the games, is a community service," he said.

Question 5: What is your number one job as a play-by-play announcer?

Texts related to sports broadcasting address how the play-by-play announcer should perform the job, using phrases such as "be the eyes" and "paint a picture". When the question was put to the participants, they came up with two primary functions: journalist and entertainer.

<u>*Theme #1: Play-by-play as a journalist.*</u>

One college announcer stressed that it is important to "be a storyteller. The whole broadcast you're telling the story." An announcer from one of the professional teams said, "I think a journalist is someone who catalogs something that happened. And if that's what a journalist is, then I think that is one of the first jobs of being a broadcaster." Another shared the example of the 1989 World Series broadcast between the San

Francisco Giants and the Oakland A's, the series that was interrupted by a major earthquake. "Who had the best live coverage, the best live description of what was taking place? Jack Buck on radio and Al Michaels on TV because they were used to describing for their audience what they were seeing. Other newspaper or other television journalists didn't have that ability."

Theme #2: Play-by-play as entertainer.

One of the college announcers said entertaining the audience is as important as informing. "That doesn't mean you go into fake announcer voice, all these different cliches," he said. "But … with your inflection and with the amount of research or stories that you're able to get into a game. I would say you have to try to be entertaining, even when the game isn't entertaining."

Some thought their role as entertainer was to provide a way for audiences to forget about their troubles and concerns. "My job is entertaining them so they can enjoy the next two hours," he said. "That way they get their escape."

Question 6: What are the four or five attributes you believe set the great sportscasters apart from the good ones?

If a sportscaster does not understand the game, does not love being on the sideline or in the press box, and cannot present the message in a manner that is pleasing to the audience, he or she is not long for the profession. Those were the three themes that emerged from question six.

Theme #1: Knowledge of the game and teams.

It would seem a given that all play-by-play announcers have knowledge of the teams and the sport they are calling. But according to the participants, that is not always the case. One college announcer singled out his favorite professional. "Take a look at (Kansas City Chiefs announcer) Mitch Holthus. Man, you know he knows every single thing about every single guy on the team and the opposing team. That comes from preparation and the amount he pours into it."

Theme #2: Passion and enthusiasm for the job.

Many participants said it is their love of the job that leads them to work so hard, and that shines through for the great ones. One said, "To me, the guys who are great, you can just tell how much preparation has gone in, how passionate they are about their job." Conversely, another sportscaster cautioned that without enthusiasm, the play-by-play announcer may lose credibility. "You have to really love what you're doing," he said. "If you don't love what you're doing, people are going to be able to pick it up."

Theme #3: Voice and delivery.

According to the participants interviewed for this study, all the knowledge and enthusiasm is for naught if audiences don't like to listen to the play-by-play announcer. Many, they said, are just blessed. "Some of the great ones are natural," one sportscaster said. "They're naturally gifted speakers." Another said, "Some just have 'it', and when I say 'it', I mean they have the voice made for radio or the voice made for TV.

Question 7: What classes are most important for aspiring play-by-play announcers?

To a man, the professionals interviewed in this study were eager to share what they had learned through the years. One of the pro sports announcers said, "I'm not in a role in education where I have 50 students in a class, but there are some that I have taken as a mentor. I try to challenge them as much as I can." Another announcer from the college ranks added, "Anybody that wants to get into this business, anything I can do to help, I'm glad to do that." It was not a surprise, then when they were eager to share what coursework they believed would be most beneficial. What *was* a surprise is when they overwhelmingly stressed writing classes, whether they be English or journalism courses. After all, play-by-play happens live and in real time. It is not scripted or rehearsed. But while courses such as public speaking, sports broadcasting and television and radio were mentioned, they were only addressed after writing had been stressed. One college announcer was especially adamant about the value of the written word. "I can't emphasize enough the importance of writing," he said. "People might say, 'Well, you're talking; you don't need to write well.' I think it's important to be able to express your thoughts on paper in that way."

One of the high school announcers had similar feelings. "Even though you're doing voice play-by-play, I think (writing and reporting) helps. I write every day, and I think to have that kind of background helps." A professional announcer put it simply: "Learn to write the King's English. The ability to communicate, written and verbally, is a commodity that you can't put a price on."

Question 8: What activities are most important?

Universally the participants said aspiring play-by-play announcers have to get in the field and practice the craft. Internships were stressed, and taking a recording device to the bleachers at the hometown football game or turning off the volume and commentating while watching the NBA (a common practice, according to several of the participants) was suggested. But by any means necessary, the professionals interviewed for the study all agreed students have to do it.

"I don't know how to teach play-by-play," one of the college announcers said. "I can give you tips, but it's just something you have to do, and you have to find your style." One of the professionals added, "If you want to be a play-by-play person, you have to find opportunities to call games, whether that is sitting in the stands at a high school game with a microphone or sitting at Kauffman Stadium or Busch Stadium or inside Mizzou Arena or Allen Fieldhouse."

Another professional announcer stressed the "do or die" nature of play-by-play training. "You're not going to find it in a book," he said. "You either do it and go practice your craft and you work and work and work, or it's just not going to happen."

Discussion

Individuals interested in entering the play-by-play field should be aware that it is a rigorous occupation that requires a great deal of time, late nights and weekends, and travel. But it is also highly rewarding, considering the impact sportscasters have on their listeners' and viewers' lives. According to the 15 play-by-play announcers interviewed for this project, technology has made preparation easier because information is more readily available through internet searches and through viewing video of the opposing teams. In addition, technology has created streaming audio and video opportunities so fans outside the market area can listen to and view broadcasts of their favorite teams. Those streaming services have also provided another avenue by which aspiring play-by-play announcers may enter the field. And the internet and social media have added another layer to the job as fans want to be connected even while the play-by-play announcer is calling the game.

According to the participants, though, while technology has evolved and social media has entered the picture, the basics are still critical, just as the textbooks related to sportscasting imply. Play-by-play announcers must do their homework, they must know how to pronounce names, and they must share relevant storylines that will enhance the viewers' or listeners' experience. It is an arduous endeavor that takes a great deal of research, preparation and study. The professionals interviewed also said that writing classes are essential, as these help announcers organize their thoughts in a concise manner. More than any class, however, the play-by-play announcers stressed that experience is the key, as only by doing will fledgling sportscasters understand the real-time demands of the job and why preparation is so critical. They are storytellers and entertainers, but above all, the play-by-play announcers agreed they are journalists who provide the facts to their listening and viewing audiences.

Limitations

While the research does offer new contributions to the sports broadcasting literature, it cannot necessarily be generalized to all professionals who work in play-by-play. The informants do have considerable experience and many awards demonstrating their effectiveness and their respect among peers. But the results were based only on 15 interviews with play-by-play announcers from the professional, college and high school ranks. Still this mix helps to triangulate the findings.

Additionally, all of the announcers were male. That was not by design, but rather when determining which teams and schools to include in the research (in order to have the levels of experience desired), it just happened that all the play-by-play announcers were male. While very few women participate in play-by-play at this time, it would be useful to broaden this research to seek women in the profession to determine if their experiences and recommendations align with the men.

Future Research

As this is the first research that has considered how play-by-play announcers prepare, what training they believe is necessary, and how technology has changed the profession, there is certainly more research to be considered. For one, this study focused on 15 play-by-play announcers in one Midwestern state. It could be replicated across the nation to see if other professionals have similar responses. As social media becomes more prevalent, a content analysis of calls made during key points in a game would also be interesting to determine if announcers are attempting to provide information that is being requested in real time. Finally, a survey to determine whom sports fans consider the best play-by-play announcer, followed by a narrative analysis that chronicles that announcer’s career could provide an interesting mixed method.

By continuing to study the field of play-by-play, and by appropriately utilizing technology while focusing on the traditional skills, the aspiring sportscasters of the future may continue to effectively provide play-by-play in the digital age.

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This data is also included in the author's self-published book, "Show-Me Sportscasters" as a narrative chapter titled "Tips and Strategies from the Pros".

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Reagan's Second Inaugural: Balancing the Genre

Eric Morris

Abstract

One method of inquiry into presidential inaugurals is the use of past inaugurals as a template for future ones. This essay, written prior to Biden's 2021 inaugural, draws from the experience of Reagan's 1985 inaugural to explore how Biden should adapt to the unique rhetorical situation presented by the contested 2020 election, including the January 6, 2021 insurrection.

Reagan's 1984 re-election was among the largest landslides in the history of the United States, with Reagan winning 535 of 538 electoral votes and 59% of the popular vote. The magnitude of the victory reflected his strength among blue collar Democratic voters, who credited him with a strong economy, improved national security, and movement of middle class and religions voters toward Reagan (Prendergast, 1999). Reagan held a considerable lead in polls throughout 1984, exceeding 55% in most polls (Lewis-Beck, 195). He did, however, experience negative polling movement after the first debate against Democratic Nominee and former Vice-President Walter Mondale (Schrott & Lanoue, 1992). In that debate, he relied heavily on precise data instead of narrative, and appeared disoriented after Mondale's response to his attempt to recycle the successful "There you go again" line from the 1980 debate. Speculation about whether Reagan was too old for another term grew, but was finally put to rest for many with his clever "youth and inexperience" comeback in the next debate. Certainly, managing perceptions about his vitality was an important factor in every appearance during Reagan's second term, and particularly for his second inaugural.

Reagan also faced daunting cold-war challenges coming into his second term. His proposals to develop intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Western Europe were received with suspicion on both sides of the Iron Curtain, and led to development of a significant movement favoring a unilateral freeze on nuclear development. Relations with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had reached their lowest point under

General Secretary Yuri Andropov, with nearly no high-level dialogue to manage crises related to the downing of the KAL-007 airline (including the death of U.S. Congressman) by a Soviet fighter, the invasion of Grenada by the U.S. military, the deaths of 241 U.S. peacekeepers in an attack in Lebanon, and then-unreported military reactions to Operation Able Archer. Relations improved only slightly with General Secretary Konstantin Chernenko, who boycotted the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary a couple of months into Reagan's second term, setting the trajectory for events that eventually ended the Cold war.

Finally, Reagan's entire agenda faced some unique challenges. First, Reagan's popularity was due primarily to personal factors (Ladd, 1985) – he has seen as a likeable grandfather, presiding over a time of national optimism. However, Reagan's personal support often did not translate into public support for particular policy proposals. Thus, while Reagan kept to the tradition of introducing policy details in the State of the Union address, his inaugural was more detailed in political philosophy than some. Second, Reagan had to contend with social divisions. His strength in the traditionally Democratic south was reflected primarily among white voters, suggesting increased racial division between the parties which was grown in the decades since Reagan. The Reagan elections also marked the appearance of the gender gap, which has also been a consistent pattern in politics since then. These undoubtedly influenced how the Reagan Administration understood itself, and surely impacted the choices made in his second inaugural.

Reagan's Second Inaugural

The coldest forecast for a presidential inauguration was forecast for January 21, 1985. Wind chills were expected to reach 22 degrees below zero, creating considerable health and safety risks for thousands of attendees (Skelton, 1985). On advice from military and medical authorities, and perhaps with memory of President Harrison who died from illness due to exposure during his inaugural, the ceremony was moved into the Rotunda of Capitol. Most of the 25,000 people with tickets were forced to watch from their hotel televisions, as the Rotunda held only hundreds. The acoustics were poor inside the venue (Rose, 1985), so the televised audience may have had a more complete first impression. Over 2,546 words, Reagan placed his first term in the context of American history, with significant attention to taxation, regulation, brotherhood, and national defense. At times, the address clearly articulated policy principles – including a reference to "the unborn," the proposal for a Constitutional Amendment requiring a balanced budget, and the claim that "there are no limits to growth." The discussion of nuclear weapons was also unusual for an inaugural, with several sentences devoted to developing Reagan's controversial Strategic Defense Initiative (missile defense) and to the eventual goal of completely eliminating nuclear weapons.

Although Reagan's first inaugural makes some lists of the "best inaugurals" (Good, 2013), his second does not. No single line has risen to stature comparable to "ask not what your country can do for you," "nothing to fear but fear itself," or "malice toward none, with charity for all." Each of those lines spoke with timeless eloquence to the urgency of the situation, but Reagan's timeless appeals were in a different section than his words on the Cold War. Although the era was menacing in a sense, Reagan's speech also happened against a backdrop of optimism. It thus sought to press the country in a particular direction more than to unify across divisions. The speech was well-received, even by Reagan's political opponents (Rose, 1985). If not exemplary, it was certainly effective in defining the moment and trajectory of the 2nd Reagan Administration.

Evaluation

One approach to evaluating any inaugural is to compare is to the larger genre. Campbell & Jamieson (1990) argue that inaugurals are a form of epideictic rhetoric (celebratory rhetoric defining the present), as opposed to deliberative (evaluating the future consequences of policy choices) or forensic (offering praise and blame on past actions and choices). Within an epideictic frame, they find inaugurals function to achieve four purposes: symbolic unification of the country, appeal to widely shared values and historical principles, articulate the political philosophy of the administration, and enact the responsible use of executive power. Each of these purposes can be identified in Reagan's second inaugural, but asking how effectively is one method to reveal its strengths and weaknesses.

Most of Reagan's address was traditionally epideictic. His attention to nuclear weapons spoke to the nuclear freeze movement's underlying objective of disarmament, even if there would not be an agreement on the means to achieve it. There were several references to economic strength, in contrast with earlier unemployment and inflation, reinforcing the primary reason for his landslide re-election. Perhaps the central element of epideictic is the invitation to the audience not to judge or act, but instead to VIEW the world from the speaker's perspective. Although Reagan did so repeatedly, there were two important deviations. First, his evaluation of the trajectory of the country since FDR's New Deal (not mentioned by name) seems fundamentally forensic:

> That system has never failed us, but, for a time, we failed the system. We asked things of government that government was not equipped to give. We yielded authority to the National Government that properly belonged to States or to local governments or to the people themselves. We allowed taxes and inflation to rob us of our earnings and savings and watched the great industrial machine that had made us the most productive people on Earth slow down and the number of unemployed increase.

Second, his defense of the Strategic Defense Initiative (again, not mentioned by name) strays into the realm of deliberation, including refutation of the primary objection:

> I have approved a research program to find, if we can, a security shield that would destroy nuclear missiles before they reach their target. It wouldn't kill people, it would destroy weapons. It wouldn't militarize space, it would help demilitarize the arsenals of Earth. It would render nuclear weapons obsolete. We will meet with the Soviets, hoping that we can agree on a way to rid the world of the threat of nuclear destruction.

Both of these deviations are easy to understand – Reagan sought to define his re-election as a public endorsement both of his general view of government and of his particular promotion of missile defense, and was willing to deviate from inaugural norms to advance these goals. But each weakens the speech *as an inaugural*, trading the celebration of national unity in favor of seizing the political opportunity of the moment.

Despite these deviations, Reagan's inaugural is largely effective in promoting national unity. Some inaugurals make direct mention of the opponent or campaign, but winning in a landslide enabled Reagan to speak in broader terms:

> And there is another area where the Federal Government can play a part. As an older American, I remember a time when people of different race, creed, or ethnic origin in our land found hatred and prejudice installed in social custom and, yes, in law. There is no story more heartening in our history than the progress that we have made toward the "brotherhood of man" that God intended for us. Let us resolve there will be no turning back or hesitation on the road to an America rich in dignity and abundant with opportunity for all our citizens.

Reagan also re-told the story of how Presidents Jefferson and Adams, once bitterly divided by partisan difference, found common ground in their later years before passing on same day that the Declaration of Independence celebrated its 50th anniversary. This symbolic enactment of unity was effectively addressed every function of an inaugural (except political philosophy) in a few short sentences!

Reagan's appeal to historical principles and shared values is consistent in nearly every paragraph of his inaugural, but perhaps the most effective framing places the Cold War in the broader context of American purpose:

> We strive for peace and security, heartened by the changes all around us. Since the turn of the century, the number of democracies in the world has grown fourfold. Human freedom is on the march, and nowhere more so than our own hemisphere. Freedom is one of the deepest and noblest aspirations of the human spirit. People, worldwide, hunger for the right of self-determination, for those inalienable rights that make for human dignity and progress.

By closely linking the struggle for freedom against repressive regimes with American history, Reagan made two compelling arguments: that the United States was winning the Cold War, and that American aspirations were universal aspirations. Although Reagan could not have known the precise manner in which the

U.S.S.R. would soon unravel, his words in hindsight seem an accurate prediction of events in the near future.

Of course, not all historical reference points were as compelling. Near the end, Reagan claims that history is a journey and makes reference to Valley Forge, Lincoln, the Alamo, and western expansion in a single sentence. The potential power of each reference is lost because the relevant historical lesson of each is left to the listener to decipher. If anything, the (correct) decision to move the inaugural indoors in an inelegant juxtaposition to the Valley Forge reference. This part of the inaugural is the element with the greatest aspiration for timelessness, but falls short by trying to do too much without thematic clarity. All are intended to set up a final unifying concept – an American “song” (or “sound”), but the song does not resonate throughout the entire inaugural and is thus less effective as a conclusion.

Reagan’s inaugural is effective in articulating a political philosophy. His view of government roles divided between federal and state governments, with the former working to improve national defense, the economy, and civil rights while the latter works to solve daily concerns comes through clearly. Reagan remains highly respected by those who share this perspective, although it existed before and after. In most instances, presidents who give a second inaugural find their first one is the best recalled, but Reagan effectively avoids personalizing his re-election and instead elevates his political philosophy.

Finally, since the president has potentially extensive power, and since our entire system of government is based in part on suspicion of the dangers of executive power, Campbell and Jamieson (1990) note that most presidents find ways to re-assure the public that they will exercise authority responsibly. Although many do so by emphasizing their subordination to the Constitution, Reagan’s only direct mention of the Constitution is his support of a balanced budget amendment to it. However, presidents have also enacted the role of responsible executive by professing humility and subordinately themselves to God as a form of higher power. Reagan does this at five distinct parts of his inaugural. Further, since many of the concerns about Reagan’s use of executive power were related to nuclear weapons, his extensive treatment of that subject may have achieved the same ends. Reagan’s opponents also feared covert action and support of undemocratic cold war allies, but none of those concerns were addressed directly in the inaugural.

Overall, Reagan's second inaugural was effective in pursuing each of the functions of a traditional inaugural. It was weakest when it deviated from those norms with policy prescriptions, indirectly judged the policies of political opponents, or sacrificed clarity to refer to multiple historical events instead of interpreting them. It could have been stronger in providing reassurances about executive branch overreach, although that function may be more important in the first inaugural than in a second one. Undoubtedly, Reagan's second inaugural is a useful touchstone for future presidents.

Implications for Biden

President-Elect Joseph Biden faces a challenging rhetorical situation (Bitzer, 1968). A central theme of his campaign was to save the nation's soul from Trumpism, and the post-election fights over every stage of the certification process have been unprecedented because in the most contested prior elections, the defeated incumbent did not have the power of the presidency to aid their fight. The inaugural will also be unusual because, similar to Biden's convention acceptance and victory speeches, there will not be a huge crowd assembled due to concerns about spreading the Covid-19 virus. As 1985 demonstrates, that situation does have precedents.

Perhaps the most difficult challenge for Biden will be the ***symbolic unification*** of the country. With tens of millions of Americans committed to the belief that Biden's victory was not legitimate, and with little reason to believe any sort of evidence will change their opinions about it, there are no words which can credibly unify the country in the near term. The most realistic path toward greater unification over the middle term, apart from denying President Trump the bully pulpit to amplify his worldview, comes from productive action to address the concerns of ordinary Americans. Whether Biden's agenda can achieve that outcome is beyond the scope of this essay, but during the transition some Congressional Republicans have risked backlash from pro-Trump elements in their base by acknowledging the Biden's victory. Those individuals may benefit from a successful beginning to a Biden presidency, just as those seeking deny Biden legitimacy may benefit from the opposite. While avoiding accusing the latter of sedition, Biden's vision of unity should elevate the former, appealing to themes which construct a unified moderate front against radicalism, similar to the vision of the “Vital Center” articulated by Schlesinger (1948) and reaffirmed in President Clinton’s 1997 State of the Union during divided government.

Traditionally, inaugurals avoid laying out a detailed policy agenda. This one should as well, because policy divisions undermine the rhetorical construction of unity. Such items are more appropriate in State of the Union Address, and depend on the outcome of runoff elections which will determine Senate control. However, the appeals to ***values and historical principles*** should be strategically chosen to both support specific agenda items and to align the weight of the political tradition against those contesting the election’s legitimacy. This should include not only references to distant presidents whose electoral college votes were more mixed than in recent years, but also who would argue for representative government to rise above populist passions. James Madison’s writings in Federalist No 10 & 37, as explained by Rowland (2004), would be particularly appropriate points of reference about how to protect a democratic system from factionalism, irrationality, and possible tyranny of the majority. The long term rhetorical challenge is to reconstruct the loyalty of his opposition, and the short term challenge will be to articulate a governing coalition with those who do not contest the legitimacy of his administration.

Biden’s entire campaign was unusually focused on ***political philosophy*** more than current events. Although he weighed in on Covid strategy and the events of the day, there appeared to be a conscious decision to make the election a referendum on the direction Trump was taking the country. Obviously, Biden will re-affirm his political philosophy during the inaugural, attempting to emphasize the importance of finding common ground with at least a significant number of people in the other party. Since Biden’s approach netted over 81 million votes, it is likely the element of Campbell & Jamieson’s criteria where he will be the strongest.

Perhaps the hardest section of the speech to write, however, will be enacting a rhetorical vision of the ***responsible use of executive power***. Biden played a significant role in the Obama Administration, which was criticized from both the right and left for excessive executive unilateralism. The Trump administration dramatically accelerated the trend, so it is possible to draw distinctions, but if the Biden administration does not experience a renaissance of bipartisan legislative cooperation, it is important not say things which will be used against a future Biden (or Harris) Administration attempting to govern despite gridlock. The best approach here would be to locate a few specific examples of Trump overreach that Biden would not replicate, and attempt to articulate those as general principles. This element of the speech need not be an attack on the prior administration, and Biden's rebuke of Trumpism will be more effective when it is made through action, not mere words. Biden's decision to minimize his own personality in his campaign is a good example, and a promise to lay the groundwork for a smooth transition to the 47th president, regardless of the particulars, would be particularly well received.

By the time Biden takes the oath, most of the country will want to put the contentious post-election transition fights behind them. The celebration of having survived disputed transition intact will loom large, and the entire speech should be written with an epideictic frame seeking to end the transition era in January 2021. The disputes from the transition will not themselves go away, so Biden must re-frame them as historical questions, and refer them to bi-partisan fact finding questions similar to the Warren Report, the 9/11 Commission, or the Senate Report on the Wilson/Plame allegations during the 2004 campaign. There are plenty of such issues to discuss, and plenty of high-profile Republicans to appoint to keep such inquiries bi-partisan without extending the transition controversies. Although the details of such arrangements are better addressed in a State of the Union Address, the inaugural can emphasize that our values and historical precedent favor coming to a common factual agreement on recent events, and had a similar project been undertaken after the 1918 influenza pandemic, it might have served us well at the outset of Covid-19.

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A Comparison of Instructors' and Students' Perceptions of Effective Teaching Behaviors

Scott A. Myers, James P. Baker, Stephen M. Kromka, & Sara Pitts

Abstract

This study examined whether instructors and students differ in their perceptions of how effective teaching behaviors contribute to student learning. Participants (N = 356) included 130 college instructors and 226 college students who indicated the extent to which they believed 30 effective instructional communication behaviors contribute to student learning. Instructors and students differed in their assessment of 18 behaviors. Instructors rated a lack of verbal aggressiveness, nonverbal immediacy, rapport, expert power, clarity, communication competence, utility feedback, a lack of misbehaviors, procedural justice, confirmation, a lack of coercive power, interactional justice, and verbal immediacy as contributing more to student learning than students. Students rated referent power, legitimate power, argumentativeness, and retention feedback as contributing more to student learning than instructors. Future research might consider identifying the reasons or explanations both instructors and students offer for why they believe these behaviors contribute to student learning.

According to Myers et al. (2016), instructional communication scholars historically have studied the relationship between perceived instructor use of instructional and interpersonal communication behaviors and the effect that these behaviors have on their students. Beginning with the field's inception in 1972 and continuing into the early 1980s, instructional communication researchers first focused their efforts on how instructor immediacy, self-disclosure, communicator style, and solidarity were linked to student evaluations of the course and the instructor as well as student affective, behavioral, and cognitive learning (Andersen, 1979; Andersen et al., 1981; Nussbaum & Scott, 1979; Scott & Nussbaum, 1981). As the field evolved, instructional communication researchers began to recognize other effective instructor communication behaviors (e.g., power, behavioral alteration techniques, humor, clarity, affinity seeking, aggressive communication, classroom justice, and misbehaviors), and studied how these behaviors [see Houser and Hosek (2018); Mottet, Richmond et al. (2006); or Witt (2016) for a review] influenced student learning outcomes, in-class involvement, out-of-class communication with instructors, and perceptions of the learning environment.

To examine effective teaching, instructional communication researchers typically ask undergraduate college students to complete a survey instrument about their instructors' use of communication behaviors and traits, classroom management policies and procedures, or pedagogical techniques (Conley & Ah Yun, 2017; Myers et al., 2016). In many of these studies, students are instructed to reference the instructor of the course they attended immediately prior to completing the survey instrument (Plax et al., 1986) and focus on instructor use of either a single behavior or a cluster of behaviors (e.g., rhetorical and relational behaviors; see Myers, Baker et al., 2018; Myers et al., 2014) rather than a large(r) group of behaviors.

While the findings obtained in these studies are informative and contribute to the body of literature gathered on effective instructional teaching behaviors, none of these studies takes a comparative stance in asking students to discern the extent to which a multitude of effective instructional communication behaviors contribute to their learning. Furthermore, utilizing the aforementioned procedures limits what the instructional communication discipline can offer about effective teaching beyond the student perspective. As Waldeck and LaBelle (2016) noted, "it is imperative that [researchers] extend the study of communication, teaching, and learning to address instructors' own perceptions and reports of their experiences" (p. 81). One way to do so is to examine not only whether instructors' perceptions of their use of effective teaching behaviors—conceptualized by Nussbaum (1992) as "those in-class behaviors of the teacher that are related directly either to positive student outcomes or positive evaluations of teaching" (p. 167)—contribute to student learning, but also whether instructors and students are in agreement as to which effective teaching behaviors best contribute to student learning. To examine this idea, the following research question is posed:

RQ1: Do instructors and college students differ in their perceptions of how effective instructional communication behaviors contribute to student learning?

Method

Participants

Sample 1. Participants were 130 college instructors (30 male, 97 female, 1 nonbinary, 1 who preferred not to disclose his or her sex, and 1 who indicated "other") whose ages ranged from 25 to 66 years (M = 45.7, SD = 10.5; Mdn = 46; Mo = 35). The majority of participants (n = 120) reported their race/ethnicity as White/Caucasian, with other participants reporting their race/ethnicity as Asian/Asian-American (n = 2), Hispanic (n = 4), Native American (n = 1), and "other" (n = 3). Together, the participants indicated they had 17 years of teaching experience (M = 17.4, SD = 9.56; Mdn = 16; Mo = 12; range = 3-44 years), with the majority (n = 115) teaching in the Communication Studies discipline. Other disciplines included English (n = 5); Theatre, Nursing, Speech Pathology/Audiology, and Education (n = 2 each); and "other" (n = 8). No other demographic data were collected.

Sample 2. Participants were 226 undergraduate college students (82 male, 140 female, 1 female to male transgender, 1 nonbinary, 1 other; 1 participant preferred not to identify their sex) enrolled in a variety of introductory communication courses at a large Mid-Atlantic university whose ages ranged from 18 to 25 years (M = 19.9, SD = 1.5; Mdn = 20; Mo = 19). One hundred and forty-two participants (n = 142) reported their race/ethnicity as White/Caucasian, with other participants reporting their race/ethnicity as Middle Eastern (n = 30), Black/African-American (n = 26), Hispanic (n = 14), Asian/Asian-American (n = 8), Native American (n = 2), and "other" (n = 4). Fifty-six (n = 56) participants were first year students, 78 participants were sophomores, 51 participants were juniors, 40 participants were seniors, and 1 participant was "other." No other demographic data were collected.

Procedures and Instrumentation

Following approval from the university's Institutional Review Board, instructors were solicited for participation in this study in one of two ways: either through a message posted by the researchers on their social media accounts or through a posting submitted to CRNET, both of which contained a link to a cover letter and a survey. Students were recruited for participation in this study though a research advertisement posted on a departmental research bulletin board that informed potential participants about the study. Participants were directed to attend one of two data-gathering sessions. Upon arrival at the data-gathering session, participants were provided with a cover letter, a survey, and an envelope. They were instructed to read (and keep) the cover letter, complete the survey, place the completed survey in an envelope and seal it, and deposit the sealed envelope in a box located in the front of the room in which the session occurred. They then were thanked for their participation by one of the researchers and exited the room. All participants received a minimal amount of course extra credit for their participation from their respective course instructor.

Both instructors and students completed the *Measure of Effective Instructional Communication Behaviors*. This measure consists of 30 communication behaviors previously identified by instructional communication researchers as effective teaching behaviors. To arrive at a list of these behaviors, graduate students enrolled in an introductory doctoral-level instructional communication course at a large Mid-Atlantic university reviewed empirical studies[1] published from 1995–2015 in *Communication Education*, *Communication Quarterly*, and *Communication Research Reports* to identify relevant effective instructional communication behaviors. The review of empirical studies was limited to these three journals because these journals historically have been the most receptive to publishing instructional communication research (McCroskey et al., 2006; Waldeck et al., 2001).

Together, the students created a list of 50 behaviors that met Nussbaum's (1992) criteria for effective teaching behaviors, which then was whittled to 30 behaviors based on the frequency in which these behaviors appeared in the empirical studies across the three journals. For each of the 30 behaviors, a one sentence description was created (based on its respective literature) by either the course instructor or one of the graduate students enrolled in the course.

For the instructor sample, participants were provided with the following prompt:

> Listed below are 30 behaviors that college instructors are known to use with their undergraduate students in the classroom. We are interested in your perceptions of how your use of these behaviors generally contributes to your students' learning, which is conceptualized as student comprehension and retention of knowledge. Please read each

> behavior and indicate the extent to which you believe this behavior contributes to your students' learning; that is, how students comprehend and retain the content taught in the courses you teach. Do not reference a specific student or set of students when completing this survey; rather, think about your undergraduate students generally from the most recent semester or term in which you taught.

Participants then read each behavior (which was preceded by the word "Behavior" and began with the word "I;" for example: **Behavior #2:** I communicate with my students to either manage or influence their behavior in ways that are valued by me) and rated the extent to which they believed their use of the behavior contributed to their students' learning using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*to no extent*) to 5 (*to a very great extent*).

For the student sample, participants were provided with the following prompt:

> Listed below are 30 behaviors that college instructors are known to use with their students in the classroom. We are interested in your perceptions of how these behaviors generally contributes to college students and their learning, which is conceptualized as student comprehension and retention of knowledge. Please read each behavior and indicate the extent to which you believe this instructor behavior contributes to your learning; that is, how you comprehend and retain the content taught in the courses you have taken. Do not reference a specific instructor when completing this survey; rather, think about college instructors in general.

Similar to the instructor sample, students then read each behavior and rated the extent to which they believed their instructors' use of the behavior contributed to their learning using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*to no extent*) to 5 (*to a very great extent*).

Results

The research question inquired about whether instructors and college students differ in their perceptions of how effective instructional communication behaviors contribute to student learning. A series of t-tests revealed significant differences for 18 of the 30 behaviors (see

Table 1). Instructors considered 14 behaviors to contribute more to student learning than students did, whereas students considered four behaviors to contribute more to their learning than instructors did. For instructors, these behaviors were a lack of verbal aggressiveness, nonverbal immediacy, rapport, expert power, clarity, communication competence, utility feedback, a lack of misbehaviors, procedural justice, confirmation, a lack of coercive power, interactional justice, and verbal immediacy. For students, these behaviors were referent power, legitimate power, argumentativeness, and retention feedback. No differences emerged for the remaining 12 behaviors.

The results of a post-hoc two-tailed Spearman rho coefficient revealed a moderate relationship in the rankings (by mean scores) of the 30 behaviors between instructors and students, $r_s(28) = .66$, $p <.001$. Instructors considered 16 behaviors to contribute a great extent (i.e., *M* score above 4.0) to perceived student learning, whereas students considered 8 behaviors to contribute a great extent to learning. Instructors and students both agreed that being fair, clear, and communicatively competent; providing useful feedback; and possessing expert power contributed a great extent to student learning. Instructors also considered 12 behaviors to contribute a moderate extent (i.e., *M* score between 3.0 and 3.99) to perceived student learning and 2 behaviors to contribute a small extent (i.e., *M* score below 3.0) to perceived student learning. For students, 21 behaviors contributed a moderate extent to their reports of learning and 1 behavior contributed a small extent to their learning. Five behaviors--the authority dimension of communicator style, behavioral alteration techniques, self-disclosure, argumentativeness, and the legitimate power base--were rated by both instructors and students as contributing the least to student learning.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine whether instructors and students differ in their perceptions of how effective teaching behaviors contribute to student learning. Based on a set of 30 in-class instructional communication behaviors that are related directly (as determined by previous research studies) to either positive student outcomes or positive evaluations of teaching (Nussbaum, 1992), instructors and students differed in their assessment of 18 of the 30 behaviors, with instructors rating the majority of these behaviors (i.e., 14 of the 18 behaviors) as contributing more to student learning than students.

These findings raise two implications regarding the role that effective teaching behaviors play in the college classroom. The first implication is that instructors may recognize that in order to contribute to student learning, they must utilize specific communication behaviors that they believe are necessary to meet the rhetorical, relational, and pedagogical needs that students bring with them to the classroom. According to Mottet, Frymier et al., (2006), students arrive at the classroom with both academic and relational needs that they hope to have fulfilled by their instructors. Instructors who engage in rhetorical behaviors (i.e., behaviors centered on message design and delivery) and relational behaviors (i.e., behaviors focused on establishing a communication relationship with students)—along with pedagogical behaviors (i.e., behaviors centered on classroom management practices)—should have students who report not only an enjoyable and satisfying classroom experience, but also self-perceived gains in their learning (Myers, Garlitz et al., 2018). As such, instructors who purposely engage in these 14 specific rhetorical (i.e., clarity, procedural and interactional justice), relational (i.e., lack of verbal aggressiveness, nonverbal immediacy, rapport, expert power, confirmation, a lack of coercive power, verbal immediacy), and pedagogical (i.e., communication competence, utility feedback, a lack of misbehaviors) behaviors may believe that not only are they contributing to their students' learning, but also that they consider these specific behaviors to be more instrumental in doing so, at least when compared to students.

The second implication centers on the finding that neither instructors nor students differed in their assessment of the extent to which instructors' use of the remaining 12 behaviors contribute to student learning, despite the documentation of these effective teaching behaviors in prior research studies. While these 12 behaviors, too, can be classified as rhetorical, relational, or pedagogical behaviors, it is possible that a tier system exists for effective teaching behaviors among both instructors and students. Both Goldman et al. (2017) and Knoster et al. (2021), for instance, found that of 10 effective teaching behaviors and characteristics, undergraduate students (Goldman et al.) and medical students (Knoster et al.) prioritized instructor clarity over instructor assertiveness and self-disclosure, whereas Myers and Stratton (in press) found that when it comes to online learning, undergraduate students prioritized instructor clarity, feedback, and responsiveness over instructor nonverbal immediacy and self-disclosure. Myers, Garlitz et al. (2018) further discovered that Millennial students rated instructor clarity, humor, and feedback as being the behaviors most important to fulfilling their academic needs. As such, while instructor use of all 30 behaviors should not be discounted in terms of their effectiveness with, or even appeal to, student learning, it is wholly possible that when it comes to contributing to student learning, both instructors and students are able to discern among the behaviors that they believe are more fundamental or essential to the learning process. While speculative, future research might consider examining whether such a tier system exists among effective teaching behaviors by both instructors and students.

Although this study contributes to the literature written about effective teaching from both the instructor and the student perspective, it is not without its limitations. One limitation is the cross-sectional design of this study. Future research on this topics would benefit from a longitudinal design (Myers, 2017) that examines how perceptions of effective teaching and student learning fluctuate as a semester progresses. It also might be beneficial to manipulate the most frequently used instructor behaviors (identified by both sets of participants in this study) to assess simulated learning in order to offer a comparison between actual learning and self-reports of perceived learning via these effective teaching behaviors. A second limitation of this study is that the majority of the instructor participants (n = 115, or 83%) were instructors in the Communication Studies disciplines, which limits the generalizability of the results. Future researchers should take care to solicit instructors from outside the communication discipline and perhaps consider different or additional learning contexts (e.g., K-12, community college, vocational schools).

Furthermore, although the participants rated the extent to which they considered each behavior to contribute to student learning, they were not asked to provide the reason(s) behind their ratings. Future research might consider extending this study using focus groups or interviews as a way to identify the reasons or explanations both instructors and students offer for why they believe particular instructional communication behaviors contribute to student learning. As a way to enhance instructional pedagogy, another direction for future research would be to sample intact courses (i.e., an instructor and all the students enrolled in a course) in order to directly assess the extent to which these behaviors contribute to student learning in a specific course. Doing so could influence the manner not only in which teaching effectiveness is studied, but also further extend the literature examining the link between teaching effectiveness and student learning.

Notes

1. Only articles that could be categorized as an empirical study were used to identify effective teaching behaviors. Using the coding scheme developed by Myers et al. (2016) for their content analysis of the research articles appearing in *Communication Education* from 1976–2014, the label *empirical studies* "refer[s] to research articles that examine a communication construct using some type of research methodology. These studies could be research reports, scale development pieces, or assessment articles" (p. 30).

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Instructional Communication Behaviors

	Instructor[a]		Student[b]			
Behavior	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*d*
1/Affinity seeking	3.93	0.86	3.76	0.93	1.75	.19
2/Behavioral alteration techniques	3.44	0.93	3.48	0.93	-0.43	.04
3/Verbal aggressiveness (lack of)	4.47	0.78	3.88	1.14	5.72^	.60
4/Nonverbal immediacy	4.45	0.84	3.81	1.02	6.44^	.68
5/Rapport	4.20	0.86	3.88	0.94	3.22^	.36
6/Expert power	4.45	0.70	4.15	0.86	3.57^	.38
7/Clarity	4.28	0.67	4.10	0.85	2.15*	.24
8/Humor	3.80	1.03	3.85	1.03	-0.40	.05
9/Assertiveness	4.02	0.79	3.92	0.88	1.00	.12
10/Communication competence	4.35	0.68	4.16	0.83	2.30*	.25
11/Referent power	3.55	0.78	3.92	0.93	-4.02^	.43
12/Utility feedback	4.37	0.67	4.05	0.94	3.73^	.39
13/Actor communicator style	3.74	0.98	3.77	1.00	-0.25	.03
14/Sensitivity feedback	3.52	1.04	3.50	1.12	0.16	.02
15/Misbehaviors (lack of)	4.34	0.88	3.81	1.07	5.08^	.54
16/Self-disclosure	3.23	1.06	3.11	1.09	1.02	.11
17/Procedural justice	4.38	0.78	4.09	0.92	3.17**	.34
18/Authority communicator style	3.46	1.03	3.48	1.03	-0.15	.02
19/Legitimate power	2.12	1.14	2.54	1.15	-3.31^	.37
20/Responsiveness	4.10	0.83	3.89	0.98	2.15*	.23
21/Confidentiality feedback	3.55	1.00	3.64	1.06	-0.74	.09
22/Human communicator style	3.95	0.79	3.90	0.98	0.54	.06
23/Distributive justice	4.30	0.89	4.23	0.84	0.73	.08
24/Confirmation	4.56	0.69	3.96	0.94	6.84^	.72
25/Coercive power (lack of)	4.46	0.84	3.96	1.07	4.85^	.50
26/Argumentativeness	2.43	1.03	3.18	1.07	-6.50^	.71
27/Retention feedback	3.85	0.82	4.09	0.92	-2.53*	.28
28/Interactional justice	4.54	0.73	4.23	0.88	2.57*	.38
29/Verbal immediacy	4.55	0.96	3.96	1.00	6.40^	.61
30/Reward power	3.77	0.96	3.97	1.04	-1.83	.20

[a] = 130 participants. [b] = 226 participants.

* *p* < .05. ** *p* < .01. ^ *p* < .001.

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Reprinted from Missouri Speech Journal
Volume 1, 1970

Some Aspects of Audience Participation in Early Ozark Entertainments or We had right good order until it broke and then there was a right smart of shooting took place.

Robert K. Gilmore

A great variety of folk entertainments took place in the Missouri Ozarks around the turn of the century. The relative isolation of most communities (caused by the difficult terrain, scarcity of good roads, and limited railroad accommodations) pre- vented traveling troupes, circuses, and other professional entertainers from visiting the Ozarks in numbers sufficient to provide the inhabitants with regular professional entertainment. The few professional entertainments that did visit the more accessible communities were not well patronized, moreover, because of economic factors and because of a peculiar ethical judgment which condemned both stage plays and actors (particularly actresses) as immoral and attendance at plays as tantamount to eternal damnation.

The Ozarker, therefore, leaned heavily upon his own resources and those of his community in developing entertainments which provided him with diversion from the difficult and often lonely business of everyday living. The desire of Ozarkers to be entertained caused them to congregate as audiences on many occasions. Their appreciative responses to the different types of performances which they witnessed surely encouraged those who were the performers and helped to assure the continuing popularity of these theatrical folk entertainments.

The Ozarks audience was not a passive one. It assumed an active and vocal participation in the entertainments which it witnessed, and its enjoyment of an affair was thereby greatly enhanced. Performers expected this manifestation of interest and welcomed and encouraged its expression.

Therefore, the Ozarks orator who could not raise his audience to shouts of approval and encouragement might well consider his speech unsuccessful. The preacher who failed to compel his congregation to shouts of “amen!” might declare that "the spirit is not among us”. The pie supper that was not marked by good-natured wrangling and joshing might be thought a social failure.

Political and religious meetings seemed to call forth particular enthusiasm from their audiences. The correspondent from the community of Seligman reported that “Peace and the very best of order prevailed...” at a Republican rally held there in 1896, and then proceeded to describe the behavior of the crowd:

> The bursts of applause were frequent and long, and the echo of one prolonged cheer would scarcely cease to reverberate through the room before the pent-up enthusiasm of some other old gray-haired voter would give way in a general foot-stamping and handclapping which everyone present seemed to want to indulge, and you could easily tell from the way that their feet went down on the floor and the glitter in their eyes that they felt just what they were manifesting. When Will E. Wallen, the Republican nominee for Recorder, appeared on the floor, their zealous fervor seemed to be completely enkindled and everybody went wild in a rapturous and ecstatic "Hurrah for Wallen.”

There was, however, a group which participated in entertainments in a manner which pleased neither the performers nor the majority of the audience. This element, although decidedly in the minority, managed to impose themselves upon a sufficiently large number of Ozarks gatherings as to cause respectable citizens much concern, ranging from mere annoyance to actual physical danger.

There were many aspects of the frontier way of life evident in the Ozarks of the 1880’s and 1890's. Men and boys carried pistols, and “blind tigers” (illicit stills) did a boom business. Tempers flared quickly are real or imagined offenses, and were settled promptly, usually without recourse to law. "Spring fights opened with a four cornered jolly at Livingston’s yesterday” wrote a Cassville correspondent, as if pleased that the annual sporting season had at last arrived. A young man in Ash Grove, in town with a visiting theatrical troupe, was so ill advised as to “insult two ladies of that town:

> He was promptly chastised for the same shortly afterward in front of the post office bookstore by Joe Sisk. He received several thumps that was a reminder to him never to do the 1ike in Ash Grove again.

A writer from Vera Cruz in 1887 blamed much of Douglas County's troubles on “too much gun, cards, horse racing, whiskey drinking, etc. along with frequent violations of law caused principally by the non-enforcement of the same against law breakers...”

Contributing further to the rough and tumble frontier image was the presence of undisciplined "toughs" who roamed many Ozarks communities. Harold Bell Wright recognized the type and created the character of Wash Gibbs as an antagonist in his novel, The Shepherd of the Hills. The real-life counterpart of Wash Gibbs has been described by many country newspaper correspondents, of which this account Is typical:

> The order on the occasion of a singing school was very good except on the part of four or five rough characters headed by Bart White who came loaded with bust head whiskey and forced their way over the door keeper who was only a boy and entered the room without paying the admission fee. After accomplishing this wonderful feat, they seemed not to be satisfied and so on the following Sunday evening to further distinguish them- selves they went to Scott schoolhouse where a prayer meeting was in progress and the boss of this brave little band Jumped on the boy who was door keeper at the concert to eat him up but un- fortunately for him he soon discovered that he had bit off a little more than he could chew.

It was in this climate then, that the attempts of many Ozarks communities to meet in peaceful assembly were frustrated.

A Texas County resident had been to a box supper at Grogan when he wrote:

> I don't see why those who have to drink can't stay at home and not come to the church house to drink and yell. Try to do better next time boys and wait till you get home to drink your whiskey.

The reason so many men and boys came drunk to such meetings were that there was. very often, no "proper place” for them to go. Local option had closed most of the taverns in the Ozarks. Bootleg whiskey was easily available, and those who drank it went where the crowd was--school, church or dance. The result was often like that at the Brailey School House in Douglas County:

> Whiskey and blood flowed freely for several hours to the entire disgust of the respectable citizens of that part of the county… Last Saturday night a crowd of young bloods came to the meeting with plenty of fighting whiskey both outside and in. It was not long until the fight and the whiskey began to work and the boys went at it fist and skull.

Trouble was averted at the New Site literary when a young man, 11having imbibed too much whiskey and being rather noisy,11 was taken outside by his friends and tied to a fence by a halter rein until after the people had left for home.7 That community was not soon freed from its disturbances, for almost 19 years later a very thoughtful and concerned 1 letter to the Commonwealth began, “We have talked the matter over and came to the conclusion that an article on the misconduct caused by drunkenness at our pie supper at New Site last Saturday ought to be published.” The writer describes some of the conduct: Horses turned loose, saddles hid, school books carried away and scattered along the road, and boisterous and unbecoming language.”

By this time perhaps New Site felt that it had had more than its share of difficulties. In 1906 a disturbed correspondent had cried emotionally, “Shame! O shame! Then let us pray for the heathen nearer at home!" He was referring to the contemptable, cowardly, thieving wretch and lower than the most loathsome reptile that crawl s on the earth: who would:

> ...sneak out in the dark and rob a stranger's buggy of a whip, lap robe, and not satisfied with that deface the vehicles in other ways; and cut and destroy the rubber tires, destroy or steal hitch reins, and turn horses loose with the vehicles yet hitched to them...

Religious services were not immune to drunken disorders. A Sunday School convention in Taney County was disturbed by a lot of young men? who made themselves hideous by getting drunk, using obscene language, discharging pistols and disregard- Ing the law in general.”10 Too much whiskey caused the Christmas Eve festivities at the Clinkingbeard schoolhouse in Douglas County to be “almost too lively to be entertaining to the respectable portion of the audience”11 and the Rev. H. Pinkston was forced to abandon his sermon at mid-point:

> …on account of a mob of drunken hoodlums who "we're creating a racket outside, near the church. A continual fire of pistols and shot guns near a while at a church on Sunday. In this age of our Christian era seems strange"

The literary society at the Jameson School Houston Webster County saw a shooting when a patron acting as sergeant-at-arms asked another man not to sit on the back of a desk. The sergeant-at-arms was shot in the neck,11 the ball barely missing the main Juglar vain (slc)." One can imagine the re- action in that crowded school room:

> For a time, pandemonium reigned supreme. At the time the house was filled to Its full capacity and it is stated on good authority that those inside went through the windows like a wild flock of sheep.

The drinking of whiskey and the carrying of weapons are not to be blamed for all the disturbances of Ozarks entertainments. There were those young men and boys who chose as recreation the deliberate and intentional disrupting of entertainments. These individuals anticipated community entertainments with quite as much enthusiasm as did the most respectable of the community, but for quite a different reason. Their whole delight was to mock and disrupt, and in their purposes, they often succeeded to a degree that was maddening to the remainder of the community. "If you can't act respectable, for God's sake, stay at home until you can," 14 suggested an exasperated correspondent, and no doubt an annoyed community sighed, "Amen!"

A political speaker at Pleasant Hill, near Everton, was booed and "otherwise disturbed" by a group of hoodlums and had to stop before he had talked ten minutes. When he started to walk away they threw rocks at him.15 At Seligman a literary was organized to meet "with closed doors on account of school with open doors"16 vice in Stone County a lady was so frightened when a group of boys rocked the church house that she was prostrated and had to be taken home in a buggy.17 At Forest Grove, "someone threw an empty bottle into the tabernacle meeting Saturday night causing quite a disturbance.

Religious services were the special targets of these rowdies, and while their methods varied, most were crude. One of the most common and unimaginative was to create such a racket outside the church that the preacher would be compelled to stop speaking. Guns, black powder, rocks, and noise- makers were all employed in this endeavor. At Raymondville, after continued tapping on the window disturbed the services, the minister asked someone to go out and stop the racket. Several from the congregation did so, and a free-for-all resulted. Fortunately, it was reported, no one was seriously hurt.

Mormons and members of the Holiness sect were particularly persecuted. Two Mormon preachers, holding a meeting on the streets of Licking, were assaulted by "unknown persons" throwing eggs,20 and another Mormon minister was struck in the face with a rock while preaching at Cross Hollows School House in Barry County.21 Earlier in the same year an evangelist and his helpers, holding a series of meetings at Buzzard Roost, were not only driven out by rocks, but the “young toughs” wou1d not a1low them to come back.”

Several years ago, I had the privilege of interviewing and recording an old reprobate who first extracted from me a promise of anonymity, and who then proceeded to pour forth a series of alleged youthful exploits, some of which went so far beyond the pale of decency that they could not even bear transcription. Completely toothless, but swallowing a wad of tobacco around in his mouth, and wearing nothing but a pair of filthy overalls, he leaned forward in a rickety chair in his front yard, his eyes gleaming, as he recalled the delight of the entertainments of his youth--and the great fun he had in breaking them up:

> I went up there one day on a Sunday. I’d had some of that old mountain dew. I'd take a little whiff of it. I threw a saddle on my horse and I thought, "Well, I’ll have some fun today." I went up to the church and I shot that dad burned pistol until it was red hot. I shot it empty and I took out.
>
> We'd go to meetin', a bunch of us boys down there and we[1]d get outside the house and make a racket, anything we could you know. One time we made us a gumball. Made it of old cans, boy you could hear it from here to Kansas. We'd go up there to meetin' and pull it slow you know. And oh! that preacher'd just look and stop and says, "Welt, the Lord may be here from the racket they’re makin’ outta doors.
>
> Well, they got up the Holiness Church. Well, when they got that up it just suited me. I'd go up to the mourner’s bench at night you know, and I'd get down and have a big time, and them old girls’d get down and have a big time… Them

> girls'd git down on their knees around me, and I'd forget and let my hand slide down that a way and they'd put it back. One night while church was a-goin' on the old preacher he got down a-prayin' with a bunch of young girls, men, and women. And there was a nice young girl there, about eighteen-year-old and that old preacher he ran his hand up that girl's old Santa Claus, and she just slapped him plum back on his toes. I hollered and I howled. That old preacher got up and he said, "I was just a-doin' that to try your faith. Oh, glory hallelujah!"

The experience gained by Squig Hensley (as I have come to call him) during the time he spent in religious places was later utilized by him as he conducted church services in the county jail for fellow inmates and admiring townspeople who gathered on the sidewalk outside.

The throwing of rotten eggs at an unpopular performer is a time-honored tradition of wide acceptance and certainly ls not peculiar to the Missouri Ozarks. The little town of Ash Grove, however, seemed to attract an unusually large amount of this type of activity. By 1889 the local editor was roved to muse that, "This Ash Grove egg throwing is as mysterious as the London White Chapel Fiend," and deplored the rain of eggs that had de- scended upon the sleight of hand performer, and his audience, as they were gathered in the street in front of Chandler's store.23 Some three years earlier this same editor had been less tolerant and had been aroused to wrathful denunciation of the parties who tossed the "volley of ancient eggs" at the medicine show entertainers as they performed on their wagon. "This business has went to an entire extreme in Ash Grove," he thundered, "and this extravagant use of them should be suppressed. 24 The years of continuing mystery took their toll, however, and by 1893, it is sad to note, no fiery editorial voice was raised at a recurrence of the offense. Only a short, factual note reported, "At the entertainment give n Monday night by the Kickapoo Medicine Company some of the young boys indulged in throwing eggs in the crowd."

Most Ozarks communities, even those which were not plagued by chronic troublemakers or by drunken- ness, were embarrassed and harassed at their public gatherings by a class of young men who behaved in what may charitably be described as an unrefined manner. The older members of the community deplored their conduct, but felt that it was not motivated by maliciousness or a willful desire to disturb, but rather by ignorance of the basic social graces. Misconduct of this sort was embarrassing and distressing to those who cherished as a norm of behavior and breeding, respect for religion, for parents, and for community.

Boorish behavior was most often characterized by boisterous and inconsiderate conduct, and especially by the indiscriminate distribution of tobacco Juice. The Ash Grove College requested that those attending the literary exercises, "refrain from using tobacco in the building and spitting on the floor." At Washburn:

> Some vandals so far forgot their early training (if they ever had any) as to besmirch the walls and floor of our school building by spitting tobacco over them until it formed in pools on the floor during the literary exercises last Friday night. Vigorous application of a bogardus kicker would be of a lasting benefit to such people.

A Douglas County correspondent condemned the practice of making "a spittoon of the floor of the house of worship." Of all the revolting sounds he had ever heard, "the limpid 'splatter of a mouthful of tobacco in the back part of the house of God is the worst." Four young men who congregated in the northwest corner of the schoolhouse at Protem disturbed an otherwise orderly and excellent literary program by:

> . . . talking, laughing and dancing, spitting tobacco juice, and in other ways making them- selves ridiculous in the extreme . . . We are inclined to believe that ignorance more than a desire to disturb actuated these fellows and therefore hope that our grand jurors and prose-cutting attorney will take no note of it.

Young men often brought their young ladies to church, but remained outside during the services, meeting the girls after dismissal and escorting them home. At one church at least, such separation was no barrier to sociability. A correspondent complained:

> The thoughtless boys who slip around the outside of the windows and talk to the girls on the inside of the Baptist Church are disturbing those who assemble there for worship.

Even so, those who remained outside were usually considerably less of a nuisance than many who came inside. The Ash Grove Commonwealth vividly described a situation common in the Ozarks:

> The habit of leaving the room by our young men and boys during Sunday School and church service is a lamentable fact. Young men will take their seats with their sweethearts and once or twice during the services they will singly and in pairs leave the room, walking heavily, loudly shutting the doors, creating a racket which is not only unbecoming to themselves but disrespectful to the minister and congregation. Besides it sets a bad example for the younger boys. Young men, what would you think of your best girl 1s getting up and going out from one to three times during services, and while passing from the room walking heavily and loudly, and while out hang around the door, talk loudly and boisterously, smoke, chew, and spit, and come lumbering back and seat themselves beside you? Some of you do this way. Too many of you. Shame!

Much to the disgust and distress of the good people of the community, Community Christmas Trees seemed to attract an element who were intent on creating their own brand of Christmas cheer:

> We understand there was a very lively time at the Christmas Tree at Henry schoolhouse. A few fights, several eyes in mourning, and lots of tanglefoot.
>
> We had right good order until it broke and then there was a right smart of shooting took place.33
>
> One man present said that he was going to kiss every lady present but was promptly knocked out by one of the ladics.34
>
> An old quarrel was the trouble which was renewed when they met at the Christmas Tree, and Levi shot at Elmer but missed him, no damage done.35
>
> The confusion of swearing, hollowing, dancing, whistling, drunkenness, etc. right in the church house.36

The peace of community entertainments was disturbed in many ways, some commonplace, some strange. “A little fistic encounter" during religious services at the Coffey School House in Ozark County was attributed to differences of opinion between the Christians and Baptists of that community, although the correspondent assured his readers that "The boys were 'scrapping’ just for the fun of it.” 37 Early

McCollum used some “bad grammar" at the New Salem literary, and apologized publicly for it at the next weekly gathering.37 Emulus Grantham was arrested for disturbing the peace at a literary at Scott School House. His offence was “building a fire in the stove and making the room too hot to be comfortable, and by loud and unusual noise.”38 Perhaps the most entertaining diversion of all was reserved for a Sunday School convention, meeting in Barry County. The Dog Hollow reporter relates the incident in splendid allegorical style:

> After the interesting exercises of the convention, it was learned to the amazement and regret of all good people that a so called "soiled dove” claiming to have flown in from Springfield had lit in the brush near the schoolhouse and by her cooing was attracting the attention of a certain uncertain class of young men. But no such conduct could last long in this community, for upon the proper complaint being filed before Squire Patton, the soiled dove was soon coyed out of the bush by Constable Amos and soon escorted to the pigeonhole in Cassville, there to mourn while waiting for further developments.

It is easy to accuse Ozarks audiences of being rude, crude, and boisterous, and there is no doubt that by more sophisticated standards than were common in that area, such terms would often not be incorrect. But a more tolerant and objective view would hold that the great majority of the audiences were well behaved, highly interested, and very proud of their local performers. The norm of *ac*ceptable behavior called for active and vocal participation, and this the audiences gave, while any disturbances or trouble at entertainments was caused by individuals who, in relation to the total audience, were very few in number. Thus, the Gainesville editor was moved to compliment “the largest and most cultured and best-behaved audience we have seen in a large time”40 and the Everton correspondent to note that, in spite of the over-crowded house, “not a thing occurred to mar the pleasures of the evening.” 41 And a Christian County correspondent wrote a glowing epilogue to a Christmas Tree with the words:

> After all the presents had been distributed, the people started for their homes feeling life is not made up altogether of trials and troubles, and with a hope that they might be permitted to meet together on many more similar occasions.

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Reprinted from Speech & Theatre Association of Missouri Journal
Volume 25, 1995

Competitive Readers Theatre in Southwest Missouri

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Abstract

Recognized authorities 'in the field of Readers Theatre admit that the original definition of the genre has evolved and expanded, and while they recognize three essential elements of Readers Theatre, they insist there is no one correct method of its presentation of literature. Six southwest Missouri high school speech coaches contend that the current Readers Theatre rules outlined in the MSHSAA Speech Manual are restrictive, ambiguous and vague. Because every competition requires a set of fair, updated, clear and non-ambiguous rules, current MSHSAA Speech Manual Readers Theatre rules seem to require revision.

Introduction

Conversations with a sampling of southwest Missouri high school speech coaches seem to indicate that there exists considerable discontent with and confusion over Readers Theatre, one of the competitive events outlined in the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) Speech Manual. The six coaches interviewed were chosen because of their involvement in high school Readers Theatre competitions. While this group is not presented as a representative sampling, the uniformity of their comments suggests that perhaps problems warranting investigation do exist.

The most common concerns expressed cover the restrictive, ambiguous and vague nature of the rules; the lack of a clear definition of the event; the blurred distinction between Readers Theatre and One-Act Plays; and the varied interpretations of the rules by judges, leading to inconsistent opinions and scoring at contests. Analyzing the interviews with these coaches and reporting on how forerunners in the field of Readers Theatre currently define and discuss the genre, would seem in order to help determine unnecessary restrictions, ambiguity and vagueness to develop a better definition of the term; to clarify the distinction between Readers Theatre and One-Act Plays; and to promote fair and consistent judging.

Coger and White's Handbook

Dr. Leslie Irene Coger, a recognized authority in the field of Readers Theatre, offered the following explanation of die event in a 1963 collection of essays entitled *Studies in Readers Theatre,* selected and edited by Coger and Melvin R. White:

> [Readers Theatre] differs from a play primarily in the type of participation demanded of the audience... the audience must mentally furnish the scenery, the costumes, the action, the make-up and the physical appearance of the characters... the action... does not occur "on-stage" but rather it happens in the minds of the audience. The interpreters see the scene in their minds also, and for this reason they do not look at each other on stage. (p. 1)

Coger's introduction to that book, however, indicated no set rules had been formulated for Readers Theatre, and that she hoped none would be. Nineteen years later, the third edition of Coger and White's *Readers Theatre Handbook* (described by the authors as "a guide to how Readers Theatre is practiced today, during a period of great expansion and wide variation in performance styles) maintain that even though the definition of Readers Theatre has expanded over the years, allowing interpreters to explore this genre to its fullest potential, far beyond merely the sharing of literature-Coger and White (1982) point out that performances have been given in hospitals, churches, prisons, nursing homes, and elementary classrooms – the authors' key premise remains the same: "There is no one way to present literature in Readers Theatre" (p. 5).

This handbook, first published in 1967 and most recently revised in 1982, gives a less-restrictive explanation of Readers Theatre than Coger offered in 1963. The main distinction between Readers Theatre and plays the current handbook offers is that while Readers Theatre has a presentational nature, conventional theatre is delivered in a representational manner. Presentational theatre makes no attempt to fool the audience members into thinking they are looking at real life, while in representational theatre, the illusion of life is so real that the spectators are expected to forget they are in a theatre (Coger, 1982, p. 11).

This third edition text goes on to identify two separate categories of Readers Theatre, conventional and free. In conventional Readers Theatre (restricted and unrestricted) characters use little if any movement, and either stand or sit. Scripts are always present, whether memorized or not, and offstage focus is U1ili7.ed most, wi1h occasional on-stage focus for special effects. Performers do not wear costumes, but rather wear regular clothing with attention to appropriateness in style and color. Materials suitable for Conventional Readers Theatre include plays, poems, narrative fiction and non-dramatic literature (Coger, 1982, p. 10).

Free (unrestricted) Readers Theatre, on the other band, allows much movement for psychological relationships with pictorial compositions. These productions may be done with or without and performers may wear either regular clothing or suggested or full costumes. Any combination of offstage or on-stage focus is permitted. Free Readers Theatre permits the same forms of literature as the conventional form does, with the exclusion of plays. For both forms, furniture allowable includes stools, boxes, chairs, benches, ladders, steps and platforms (Coger, 1982, p. 10). Free Readers Theatre is what the sampling of speech teachers seems to be moving toward. Dr. Coger (1982} confirms, that while originally the word "readers" was emphasized:

> With the introduction of Readers Theatre as a competitive event in various forensics organizations, more and more the word "theatre" has been noted. Productions have become more theatrical. The use of theatrical equipment and techniques has increased these more elaborate presentations are becoming closer and closer to traditional theatre. (p. 5)

Coaches' Comments

Gary Roney, speech coach at Joplin High School, points out that in this event's title, the word "theatre" denotes a certain amount of freedom. He wants no restrictions on movement as well as a combination of offstage and on-stage focus to allow for more creativity. Roney (1994) insists that there must be a difference between Readers Theatre and One

Act Plays, and consequently is not in favor of costuming, props, or excessive direct physical contact.

This particular Readers Theatre coach has been frustrated by inconsistencies in judging on the district and state levels, and declares that the rules are confusing, open to interpretation, and in need of being relaxed. Roney admits that he has deliberately stretched the rules since he doesn't agree with them. Never disqualified for his loose interpretations, he did receive complaints when he dressed an entire cast in army fatigues, pointing out that the rule did say "students may dress in a uniform manner. Roney (1994) admits he knew that in this instance the word "uniform" meant "similar, but claims he "wanted to prove a point" about the ambiguity of the rule. Additionally, Karen Malone, speech coach at Parkview High School in Springfield, wrote an article published in the Fall 1990 *STAM Journal* which indicated:

> MSHSAA guidelines governing the Readers Theatre activity leave much to be inferred by those involved in the activity and should be examined in correlation to current trends and contemporary definition... Informal discussions with Missouri coaches show that an examination and possible revision of the rules/criteria would be welcomed. (p. 68)

According to Malone (1994), although her article seemed to increase awareness of and discussion on the issue, no action was taken.

A student of Dr. Coger's in 1973, Malone insists that until a clear definition of Readers Theatre exists, adjudicators will have no framework from which to judge. In fact, two out of the last three times Malone's students have advanced Readers Theatre performances to the state level, what district judges bad approved and even praised, at state was questioned as to whether or not it was representative of the genre. Unfortunately, claims Malone (1994), "How Readers Theatre is defined in Missouri depends on what area of the state you are in." Ms. Malone stayed out of competition this year, taking her students mostly to invitationals. While she admits she could have come up with a Readers Theatre that conformed to the rules, she decided not to because she wanted her students to have a different experience and more freedom than the rules allowed. Moreover, she didn't want her performers to go to contests only to be "swatted down because they didn't fit the rules" (Malone, 1994).

Sandy Davis, a speech, drama and debate teacher at Nevada High School, and one of Dr. Coger's original students, also directed the first full-length Readers Theatre production on-stage at SMSU. Back into high school teaching in just the last few years, she insists:

> Readers Theatre was devised so we would have a new theatrical format in which the imagination could freely be used. Too many rules and regulations stifle that and binder the original purpose. Readers Theatre is a wonderful form where actor, director and script writer can explore the imagination to its fullest. (1994)

Davis feels that movement should be unrestricted and the only set rules should be that the readers must carry scripts, which should be "basically all but memorized" (1994). Only suggestion of costumes, giving hints of character, should be allowed, she explain, to aid the viewer to start visualizing the story "within the mind's eye" (Davis, 1994).

Karen Colton (1994), speech coach at Aurora High School, reports:

> Most directors I know in the field are not happy with the current rules. What wins in each individual district varies because of how different judges from each area interpret the rules. The district where state competition is held is more restrictive than the southwest district, so unfortunately what wins in our district may be disqualified or reduced in rank at state… but if it <u>enhances</u> the literature, we should be allowed to do it.

Colton feels that the only time rules change is when someone tries something unique at contests. Then, a change of the rules the next year will either allow or prevent that action from occurring again. Although Colton does agree "we must work within the guidelines MSHSAA gives," she feels that "no one seems to be able 10 justify the presence of certain rules" (1994). For example, Colton (1994) questions the idea that students cannot participate in both a One Act Play and Readers Theatre at1be same contest. This limitation prohibits small schools and teams from being able to compete in both categories at the same time, even if student interest exists.

Bob Bilyeu, a former high school speech coach, now teaches forensics at SMSU. He concurs that the rules, though <u>necessary</u>, are currently too restrictive and ambiguous, and explain:

> I can work with anything as long as I have clear-cut rules. Whatever the game is, I can play it; but how it is now, you can't win. It's frustrating when Readers Theatre means one thing to one judge and something else to another. At contests one judge will count against us for something another judge allows and even applauds. (1994)

Kayla Beatty started working with Missouri high school Readers Theatre productions in 1982. Currently working toward her Ph.D. in Performance Studies after completing her Master's Thesis on Readers Theatre, last year she assisted Nixa High School coaches with a Readers Theatre contest piece. Beatty doesn't understand the necessity for performers to carry scripts or the indication that scripts may not be used as props. Though Beatty reports that some coaches say the script reminds the audience that what's being performed is a published text, she does not feel the script needs to be present for audience members to remember that the readers are performing a text

Beatty tells of a coach who created hand-held masks and placed the scripts inside those masks. "She was disqualified for her creativity," Beatty (1994) maintains, and further explains:

> I think that a director ought to be able to use anything that enhances the literature. If what we're trying to do is perform this literature in the very best way that we can, and attempt to bring it to life for the audience, then we ought to be able to use whatever means we have in order to do that

Beatty (1994) finds problems with other MSHSAA rules, as well, and believes that no matter how well worded the rules are, different interpretations will always exist She offers the following alternative (Beatty, 1994):

> I don't see why we have to have rules. I see why we have to have a time limit, but why the rest? Shouldn't the most engaging production be the one that receives the highest rating? Coaches have even talked about changing the rules in such a way that competition would be more like music contests where there can be any number of I's, II's and IIIs but then there might be a "best of show;" one production that really stands out

Beatty insists that the only ways current rules are going to be changed is if the people involved in Missouri Readers Theatre organize themselves and come up with proposed changes and present them, as a "united front," to the Speech Advisory Board (1994).

Essential Elements For Readers' Theatre

The coaches queried are in consensus that the root of the problem lies with the rules themselves; it would seem to follow that these guidelines require updating, to allow for more creative productions. At the same time, it is necessary they be fair to all schools, regardless of size and budget A look at Coger and White's three essential elements of Readers Theatre might help further clarify the definition of 1he term in question and might also give guidance as to how the rules might most effectively· be amended. Coger and White identify three essential elements of Readers Theatre: appropriate literature, an effective performance and audience participation (1982, p. 12).

Dramatic literature, plays written for the theatre, dramatic poems, and certain narrative prose fiction are all considered suitable materials because they all have "delineated characters in a plotted dramatic action• (Coger, 1982, p. 12), a <u>necessary</u> ingredient for theatre. The authors are careful to point out that this list is not meant to exclude the use of other types of literature, but that other forms "must be adapted to fulfill the expectations of an audience that comes to see theatre" (Coger, 1982, p. 12) Programs that do not offer interaction of characters should not be called Readers Theatre.

An equally important second element is an effective performance. Coger and White (1982) explain:

> No theatre will be present until the literature is brought alive through the vocal intonations and bodily tensions of the readers who evoke the characters... and attitudes expressed in the literature.... In Readers Theatre, the presentation uses techniques unique to the oral interpreter by creating the world of the literature in the minds of readers and of audience members. (p. 12)

A third ingredient Coger and White (1982) identify for effective Readers Theatre is an audience who must "supply a portion of the performance in their imaginations, which must complete the suggestions of characterization, action and setting" (p. 13). The authors further clarify: "Stimulated by the descriptions in the text as read by the interpreters, the audience members evoke in their minds the characters in action... they see the interpreters on stage before them, but superimposed over them they view the characters interacting in the world of literature (Coger, 1982, p. 13).

These three essential elements of Readers Theatre can work as a definition on which to base further discussion and proposed rule changes. What's more, even though recent practice has been to add more physical action, Coger and White (1982) point out that most authorities still agree on the main purpose of Readers Theatre: "to illuminate literature through creative oral reading that calls forth mental images of characters performing an action that exists primarily only in the readers' and the audiences' minds" (p. 13). While Coger and White (1982) continually reemphasize that there is no one way to present Readers' Theatre, they do make another comment which might also be kept in mind during additional discourse:

> Directors who are tending toward complete staging, complete costuming, and literal action on stage weaken the uniqueness of Readers Theatre as a theatre of the mind, a theatre of the imagination. This is, however, the trend today. More and more productions employ complete memorization, increased action and movement, more elaborate staging, lighting and costuming. (p. 13)

The authors go on to say that while some scripts and audiences do justify and benefit from this tendency, others do not require "theatrical embellishment" (Coger, 1982, p. 13). In other words, the different forms of Readers Theatre can be more or less effective, depending upon the nature of the literature itself.

Conclusion

Readers Theatre was not created for the purpose of competition; however, in 1980 the event became a category in the MSHSAA Speech Manual, and rules for competition were established. Unquestionably, every competition situation requires a set of fair, updated, clear, non-ambiguous rules against which each competitor or group of competitors may be judged the preceding discussion of two Readers Theatre forerunners' opinions and explanations, along with 1he experiences and concerns of the six Readers Theatre coaches, perhaps gives further direction as to how current MSHSAA rules might be amended. Since this study admittedly reports only on the information found in one textbook, Coger and White's *Readers Theatre Handbook,* a next logical step for the study might be to poll all Readers Theatre coaches in Missouri as to whether or not they have read the third edition of this handbook. Those coaches who are not familiar with the text might be afforded the opportunity to become so before their opinions are sought.

Additional research in this area is certainly necessary and might address the following questions: How do the remainder of Missouri's high school speech coaches feel about the current MSHSAA Readers Theatre rules? What might be the best way to approach the MSHSAA Speech Advisory Board with proposed rule amendments? Could judging inconsistencies be lessened if certain changes were implemented? Could Missouri coaches agree on a set of changes to be implemented fur one year, followed by a survey to determine reactions? Do the majority of Missouri coaches want to continue moving away from Conventional Readers Theatre? Furthermore, do the benefits of Free Readers Theatre, which allow literature to most vividly and creatively be brought to life and promote evolution of the arts, outweigh the benefits of Conventional Readers Theatre, where the audience is required to use its imagination to a greater extent and readers are more responsible for creating images? Finally, in our increasingly visual and media-oriented society, has Readers Theatre strayed from its original purpose of calling forth mental images of costumes, physical appearances of characters, action and scenery that exist primarily only in the readers' and audiences' minds?

For the current discontent and confusion to lessen, those involved in Readers Theatre need to continue communicating and to realize that any resolution will neither be quick nor final. Since all art forms evolve, the way we discuss and evaluate them must evolve as well. Consequently, as the genre of Readers Theatre changes, so must the rules.

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Embracing Difference and Empowering Voice: Examining Privilege and Finding Equity in Communication and Performance Learning Spaces

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Abstract

This paper addresses the realities of privilege and how it impacts members of our teaching and learning spaces. Along with a brief discussion of what privilege looks like, the paper makes the argument that communication and performance learning spaces are ideally suited to address issues of privilege in ways that empower students' voices and promote greater understanding of how our communication experiences and social realities are impacted by privilege, and can be made better through integrating privilege into our teaching and learning.

Privilege has become a critical issue in our society, with increased attention being paid to the influence afforded by gender and sex, income, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and a number of other demographics and life experiences. This paper, a written account of our fall 2019 program, frames a discussion of how privilege impacts those touched by communication and performance learning spaces, ranging from the classroom, to the stage, to the forensic tournament round of competition. Perhaps the most dangerous impact of privilege is the perpetuation of realities that silences disenfranchised voices and experiences. This is the framework for a difficult discussion about the degrees to which privilege is a part of our own teaching and learning contexts, and an optimistic sharing of ways communication and performance disciplines are uniquely situated to celebrate difference and frame contexts of equality.

An Overview of Privilege

We use the term *privilege* with more frequency as the concept has become commonplace in our discussions of social and political realities. The notion of privilege is interesting in that it is largely held by people who are oblivious to having it. The National Conference for

Community and Justice website explains that privilege is unearned access to resources that are only readily available to some people because of their social group membership. They describe it as a type of social power in the form of an advantage, or immunity granted to or enjoyed by one societal group above and beyond the common advantage of all other groups. Social groups that are positively valued, considered superior, are independent, or even *normal* have access to resources and power that privilege them.

Media Smarts has valuable information on their website that helps define and illustrate privilege. In their suggestions for recognizing where we often find privilege, they list nine areas:

- Ability (without any physical or mental disability),
- Class (one's socio-economic standing),
- Education (both degrees and the degree-granting institutions),
- Gender (males and masculine individuals are often preferenced),
- Gender identity (having identity consistent with that which was assigned at birth),
- Passing (being able to appear with a preferenced group with little question),
- Racial (often associated with white privilege),
- Religion (belonging to a group's dominant faith community or practice);
- Sexuality (being viewed as heterosexual).

Each of these areas is a place from which people either experience privilege (whether knowingly or unconsciously), or are disenfranchised to some degree because they lack privilege.

Why Consider Privilege in Communication and Performance Learning Spaces

The question we seek to answer is how to best combat privilege in our teaching and learning spaces. An important beginning to answering that question is "How is privilege 'seen' where we teach?" There is no shortage of communication and performance learning contexts in which privilege is present. We must understand how privilege manifests itself in the examples areas listed by Media Smarts. Once we have that understanding, we must be intentional in our search for privilege in our professional world. We can consider, for example, our student population, our curriculum, our school policies, the management of our co-curricular activities, the resources used in our spaces, and the community relationships that become part of our interactions as teachers and school families.

Some of what we see as teachers is beyond our control, while we have some influence over other examples of privilege. As a social reality, we are not able to erase privilege for our students—or even ourselves. The way most schools are funded reflects the privilege of more affluent tax bases or schools that struggle to provide resources to their students. This results in schools with elaborate teaching and learning spaces for performance…or a gym and black plywood as flats for theatre productions. There are socio-economic considerations that largely shape how we are able to teach. Similarly, these socio-economic factors are privilege that can be empowering or limiting for students who experience learning largely through their socio-economic conditions. At the same time, teachers do have some control over other ways that privilege can be an influence in our teaching and learning. These choices will be considered later in this paper.

While privilege is present and looks very different in any one of a variety of teaching and learning spaces, there is good reason to center this discussion in communication and performance spaces. For reasons we have already noted, privilege is a critical issue in today's educational settings. Our spaces are ideally suited to dealing with this critical issue. Consider how important narratives are to what we teach. We direct plays and coach interpretative performances of literature. We ask our students to speak and perform and reflect on experiences and content important to them—all inherently reflective of their unique experiences. Our disciplines celebrate the value of voice and experience, regardless of the traits, life-experiences, and identities that shape privilege. Teachers in our spaces empower students with the opportunities to reflect on who they are and advocate their reflections. Not only are our teaching and learning spaces well-suited for dealing with privilege, but it is essential that this happens. For our pre-high school graduates, we are able to seamlessly integrate privilege into our teaching and learning through debate topics, textual analysis, and other assignments. This instruction helps equip our students for post-high school realities. In collegiate teaching and learning spaces students are able to talk openly about privilege within theoretical frameworks and candid dialogues and experiential opportunities.

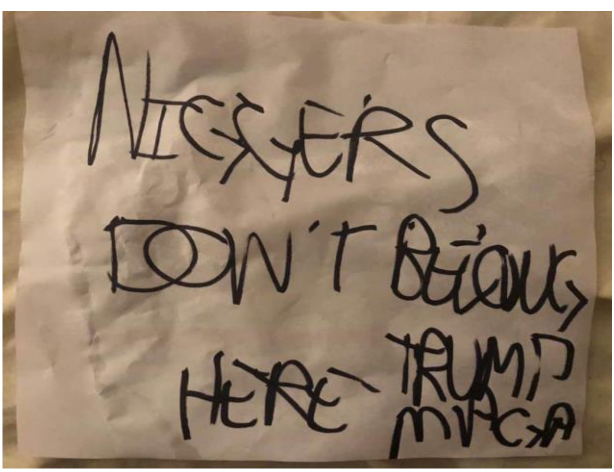
Privilege as Seen in Our Learning Spaces

Rothman (2014), in his reflection on privilege, writes:

> "In order to understand the way privilege works, you have to be able to see patterns and systems in social life, but you also have to care about individual experiences. I think one's own individual experience is sacred. Testifying to it is very important—but so is seeing that is it is set within a framework outside of one's personal experience that is much bigger, and has repetitive patterns in it" (on-line).

Communication and performance pedagogy, as already noted, centers on the value of individual experience, and even provides opportunity to learn about it through dialogue, critical analysis, and reflection. As Rothman notes, understanding privilege begins with seeing beyond ourselves and acknowledging it does not simply exist in isolation. One student at one Missouri high school received a note that, on face, depicts violent racism. (See figure one.) At a deeper level, it reflects the privilege we see in our speech and theatre learning spaces.

Figure One



Our speech and theatre students see their lack of privilege—or the presence of it—in a number of aspects of our teaching and learning. In many of our spaces, political ideology is preferenced as a result of the makeup of our communities. This may manifest itself in both right-leaning and left-leaning biases. In either case, respectful political expression should be valued and encouraged, but is often instead chilled by a hegemonic influence of a dominant political worldview. Race and ethnicity is often a part of performance. It may be challenging to find compelling literature to perform in competition, classrooms, or on stage that reflect some of our students' worlds. Similarly, fewer students from non-majority cultures may result in an entrenchment of privileged experiences because of not having performers to bring more diverse literature to life.

The breadth and systemic nature of privilege can be addressed through the unique pedagogy within our discipline. At the same time, these efforts can be challenging because of that very privilege. A 2018 example from Shorewood High School in Wisconsin illustrates this point. *To Kill a Mockingbird* was going to be performed, with no retraction of language from the original script. The cast, crew, and teaching staff made the choice as a way of promoting awareness of the privilege addressed in the play. In response to public concern, the performance was cancelled. Snyder (2018) noted that while a special performance for family of the cast and crew, those involved in the play refused the opportunity. A letter from Superintendent Bryan Davis reads, "*Overall, the consensus among the students was that they felt if they moved forward with the dress rehearsal, they would lose the original message they wanted to convey by performing the play and would be performing it for the wrong reasons. Therefore, the dress rehearsal for tonight will not take place"* (Snyder, 2018, on-line).

Examples like Shorewood High School's experience depict the challenge of intentionally addressing privilege in the face of the influence that defines that very preference. Case (2017) notes three myths of privilege and education, prompted by a white male student's discomfort with an assignment asking students to mark a checklist of white privilege as part of an activity in a Houston-area college classroom. These myths are:

> "White privilege checklists are controversial to teach or discuss. Discussing uncomfortable subjects is bad for

> students and the classroom experience. Discussing or challenging issues of privilege risks job security" (on-line).

Even when uncomfortable—and discussing privilege will often be uncomfortable—opportunities for discussing privilege must be created. When challenged, the reasons for addressing privilege should be explained. That meta-communication is essential when we bring controversy into our learning spaces. What is also important is for us to reflect on how we may or may not embody these myths as professionals. Are these myths a consideration in our teaching? Are these myths a part of our learning spaces?

Addressing Privilege in Communication and Performance Teaching and Learning

There are a number of strategies for intentionally addressing privilege in our disciplines' pedagogy. The very nature of advocacy, a critical part of our teaching, necessitates that we challenge ideas. When we give students debate topics or encourage content for analysis and performance, we create a forum for questioning assumptions that we accept and reject, or have never fully considered. In the same context, forensic and debate teams and theatre productions afford students opportunities to analyze and share ideas that are prominent in the world outside our students' schools. Programs like Urban Debate Leagues, and summer programs and camps extend these co-curricular opportunities to students whose lack of privilege may otherwise prevent them from having the experiences our teaching spaces offer. Within performance spaces, diversifying opportunities is valuable for students and communities. Encouraging students to explore their own experiences and identities through performance choices is empowering. Selecting compelling stories for our communities to watch can motivate reflection and dialogue, both important pre-requisites for change to occur.

Self-reflections prompted by our teaching are not always comfortable. At the same time, living with feelings of privilege that students do not understand, or that create pain for them should never be an option that we accept. The expression and reflection that is inherent in what we teach are powerful vehicles for changing students' lives. Consider these narratives shared by students as part of exercises in a high school performance learning space:

> Narrative #1…
> I will not begin this letter with ¨Dear StepFather¨. If you knew what I have not told you, you would no longer be stepdad that I know and love. You would become a man who thinks they did something wrong. A man who thinks that my love is an abomination. A man who would no longer believe they married a beautiful woman and also got a beautiful step-son in the transaction. You would become a person who thinks they married a beautiful woman who doesn't know how to raise a boy right, and got a sinful faggot of a step-son. You would no longer be the man who taught me how to drive. You would ¨have¨ to become the man to save me. The man who has to force-feed me Bible scriptures until the gay is forced out of me.
>
> Narrative #2…
> My mother tells me that it pains her to hold my secret. It hurts to not be able to be truthful with you. I tell her to give me more time. I'm just not ready yet. This raises the question; Is it my fault for my mother's pain because I am too afraid to tell you, or is it your fault for giving me a reason to be afraid in the first place? I did not begin this letter with ¨Dear¨ because you would change into just another bigot. I will not end with ¨Sincerely¨ because I would change into just another sinner.

Giving our students a voice to safely express themselves in any form allows them to deliberately face challenges with expression that may have always been inaccessible to them.

Theatre is an ideal context for directly addressing privilege. Stories that we put on stage are culminations of analysis, reflections and integrations of students' experiences, interpretations of how performance choices create realities for audiences, ultimately performers' voices. There are countless opportunities for challenging privilege with plays such at *Othello, Oklahoma*, or *Macbeth*. Beyond the stage, our students can reflect on privilege as part of watching films like *The Great Debaters,* or through original writing such as the previously shared student narratives.

Powell (2018) reports on the play *White Privilege*, an original work by Marquette University student Malaina Moore. Her script is inspired by a Facebook post from a white man asking his black colleagues to explain what white privilege was. The discussion thread that followed inspired Moore's development of the characters and scenes and experiences in her play. Absent the unique opportunities communication and performance teaching and learning spaces provide, this thread may have never become the catalyst for the performance it became. As we have argued—and as it intuitive in our world—attitudes and norms do not change without the reflection and discussion that motivate that change. Such provocations are at the heart of what happens in our teaching and learning worlds.

The Takeaway

Most communication and performance colleagues we know value their teaching because of what it does for our students—and for us. Safe expressions of identities and the ideas, experiences, and feelings that are at the heart of those identities makes our teaching fulfilling beyond description. To find that fulfillment, we must acknowledge that privilege is part of what our students bring to our teaching and learning spaces. We must work to identify privilege where we see it, and be willing to accept risks that equalize the empowerment of voices in ways that celebrates all identities and experiences.

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Beyond "Once Upon a Time": The Power of Narratives and Converging Experience for Teaching and Learning in Communication and Performance Spaces

Scott Jensen

Abstract

This paper is an overview of the power of narratives as tools for teaching and learning. The nature of stories to enhance understanding is noted, along with suggested way of integrating narratives into teaching and learning within communication and performance learning spaces. The suggestions of narratives as teaching tools are grounded in the theories of the narrative paradigm and symbolic convergence theory, each explained and integrated into the applications of narrative to teaching.

It's hard to identify *the* formula for a perfect narrative. There are myriad factors that contribute to a powerful story, but one that stands out as an almost inherent characteristic of that memorable story is a compelling experience. What constitutes the experience that is powerful enough to shape the perfect narrative is subjective—but understanding and being able to express *why* that experience is special is critical for the perfect story to take shape. Collins and Cooper (1997) write, "Every story is told to say something about what life means. Stories help us make sense of our experiences and understand the experiences of others. How wonderful it is when we connect through story, when we can say, "That reminds me of the time I…" or "I've had that same feeling…"" (p. 17). Connecting the personal dimension of experiences to narratives lends the voice to the story that makes it memorable. Our communication and performance learning spaces are the perfect laboratories for this coming together of experience and narrative. This paper looks at the power of stories, the potential for the narrative paradigm and symbolic convergence as vehicles for teaching, and suggestions for integrating narratives and compelling experiences into our classrooms and learning spaces.

The Power of Stories

We all have a story to tell, which means we all have a story that has the potential to impact others around us. Much of our learning is through the illustrations in narratives. Understanding concepts, ideas, and processes through their role is stories can simplify and clarify ideas that may otherwise be overly complex or abstract. Not only do stories have the ability to illustrate what we are communicating, but they do so while engaging audiences. From bedtime stories as a child to documentaries and feature films as adults, we learn to both enjoy a good story and connect meanings that help inform other ideas. Last year's Academy Award Winning Film *Green Book* not only entertained audiences, but provided historical insights into the challenges faced by Black Americans in the 1960s. The power of the story was in its inclusion of critical elements to any powerful narrative—characters, language, organization of events, and a subject that was made to feel important through how it was shared.

While stories have impact on their own, more of their power is in their heuristic potential. They create immediacy with audiences who identity with characters, experiences, and subject matter being told to them. That immediacy is motivating. Audiences may embrace the content of stories through further research, seeking out similar narratives, and sharing the story with others. Ideas and causes, when shared narratively, are personified, making them more visual and immediate. Using statistics and facts to explain the potential challenges faced when contracting COVID-19 can be effective, but combining that information with experiences of families who have experienced suffering can be more compelling. Those stories broaden the influence and lifespan of ideas.

This broadening of influence is no clearer than in the examples of individuals who have become the faces of social causes. Stories have the potential to frame policymaking. As Curcio (2020) explains, "By memorializing the victims into a law, a universal system of intangible rules that govern a country, it creates an eternal and untouchable space within the public sphere that effects our lives" (on-line). When individuals in a Black Lives Matter march shout "Say her name," "Brionna Taylor" is the predicted response. The rape and murder of Megan Kanka led to Megan's Law—a sweeping policy regulating how our nation deals with sexual assault. The Brady Law was passed in the

1990s as an effort to exert some control over gun ownership; its impetus was the assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan that injured Press Secretary James Brady. Characters and experiences have the potential to become "a permanent sense of remembrance" (Curcio, 2020) through laws, monuments, and social movements.

Narratives and Symbolic Convergence as Vehicles for Teaching

As I have already suggested, it is hard to overstate the illustrative power of a good story. West and Turner (2018), in their discussion of the narrative paradigm, write "…the idea of people as storytellers has proved captivating and heuristic. Storytelling seems an apt metaphor for understanding how humans use communication to make sense of the world" (p. 351). Given this potential for stories to shed light on how humans interact with one another, it seems logical that narratives are used effectively as tools in teaching and learning spaces.

Narrative Paradigm

Walter Fisher theorized that we often process information and communicate with others with the intent to teach lessons, and through stories as opposed to rational, logical messaging. A face or a compelling experience can often illustrate an idea that might otherwise be complex. Further, powerful stories are able to elevate the importance and immediacy of ideas that otherwise remain conceptual and faceless in our sharing. Fisher (1987) developed the narrative paradigm, a theory grounded in "symbolic actions—words and/or deeds—that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them" (p. 58). Note the sequence and meaning in narratives are not exclusive to the storyteller—anyone interpreting stories find the meaning that makes them impactful for us to better understand and feel ideas.

Stories have greater potential to be impactful when they are rationale. Fisher (1987), and more recently Sellnow (2018) note that we accept "good reasons" that are offered to persuade us to believe and accept the "moral" about what to believe and how to process and react to that message. This notion is what Fisher calls "narrative rationality" and is determined by two characteristics—coherence and fidelity. *Coherence* is how well the elements of a story fit together in a manner that makes the story realistic. *Fidelity* is how consistent the story is within what we know to be both true and moral. Sellnow (2018) suggests we ask if "the story strikes a chord." (p. 56). When events organized in a manner that makes sense and characters are believable, it is easier to connect with a story. When the narrative reinforces the realities we accept as true or reasonable, it is easier to believe—or at least consider—the story. Having rationality equips a narrative to be rhetorical vehicle that helps a person communicate a message.

When considering narratives, it is hard to ignore another concept known as convergence. In reviewing the research that helped shape what we know as *symbolic convergence theory*, Endres (2018) notes that stories are found to be ways to reduce tensions in groups, and the types of stories told help shape identity within those groups, building rhetorical communities. Stories are essential to the building of communities. They introduce us to characters who become the faces of ideas. They become the experiences that we interpret to better understand the meanings behind messages. We not only process these elements of narratives on an individual level, but more importantly we share our interpretations in ways that make them collectively impactful.

Understanding Symbolic Convergence

Narratives take on a greater impact when they are shared. Cultures and groups of people characteristically use stories as the motivations for embracing ideas, causes, and other meanings. The process is incremental in that we connect with messages and symbols individually, and share that connection with others. The explanation for this process is what we know as *symbolic convergence theory (SCT)*. Endres (2018) describes the theory as "the larger theoretical notion that like-minded individuals accept, reject, or are neutral to certain symbolic narratives and that those symbols converge to create a common consciousness" (p. 110). Endres identifies the five key elements of SCT as fantasy theme, dramatis personae, plotline, scene, and sanctioning agent. *Fantasy theme* refers to the central point in a message that is mutually understood to be important by others with whom the message is shared. Endres explains it as, "The more people who buy into and add to the narrative, the further the fantasy chains out and takes root" (p. 111). *Dramatis Personae*, otherwise known as characters, are the individuals who play discernable roles in the narrative, including the protagonists and antagonists. *Plotline* is the action or sequence of events that unfold within the narrative. *Scene* is the context in which the story unfolds, including but not limited to the social, temporal, cultural, and physical context. *Sanctioning Agent* is what Endres describes as "the legitimizing force that guides the narrative" (p. 111). In other words, the sanctioning agent is whatever motivates characters and the plotline.

These elements come together as what we understand as the necessary ingredients of a powerful story. Within SCT, these elements converge to create what we know as a *rhetorical vision*, or the reality shared by a community of people who may be united only by the narrative, or by other factors beyond the narrative. Regardless of what brings the group together, the rhetorical vision is one of these factors. As Endres (2018) explains, "All these labels simply refer to a rhetorical community of people who, even though they might not live in the same geographical vicinity, share a common reality based on their mutual reality based on their mutual heroes, villains, and story lines" (p. 112). There are countless labels of groups that have come together around rhetorical visions, such as Trekkies, Cheeseheads, Bleacher Bums, Parrotheads, and Beliebers. Each exists as its own rhetorical community, defined by the rhetorical vision and the manifestations of that vision that are shared by members of that group.

Narratives and Rhetorical Visions as Vehicles for Teaching

I have already made the case for stories as compelling illustrations of ideas. More specific to teaching, the potential for stories—and especially those shared and mutually understood by groups of students and other individuals—makes them ideally suited as teaching tools. Sharing stories helps bring teaching and learning spaces together, allowing all members of that space to learn about one another. Howard and Ticknor (2019) write, "As teacher educators, we believe **stories** [emphasis in original] provide an opportunity to engage in learning about our students" (p. 31). The power of stories for students to learn in enduring and more personal ways is important as well. March and Nelms (2020) write, "These theories suggest a recentering of pedagogy and curricula around youth—their histories, cultural competencies, and interests—as a socially just, equitable approach to learning" (p. 61). Narratives also helps us to extend teaching and learning to spaces that are more engaged with society. Khan (2019) explains, "As schools shift from a climate of accountability to one of responsibility, space is opened for authentic and meaningful relationships and conversations" (p. 2019).

A number of outcomes can be seen as a direct effect of using stories as teaching tools. Diverse experiences and difference can be taught and understood when shared in a story. Concepts that may otherwise be difficult to discuss and process can be shared in more relatable ways. The relatability of stories also makes them ideal prompts for discussions. Students can easily use characters, experiences, or contexts as clearer illustrations of ideas that might be harder to process and "see" when shared as concepts or theories. This use of stories to introduce ideas, including sensitive social realities, in teaching and learning spaces can also result in learning that is more enduring. Stories last. Issues of diversity in baseball continue to circle back to story of Jackie Robinson, nearly 75 years after he played in his first game with the Brooklyn Dodgers. Our students often debate ideas with the pathos of powerful narratives that represent broader ideas.

What is emerging as one of the most significant reasons for employing narratives in our teaching and learning is their power to reveal and process experiences that are realities for our students that may not otherwise be part of a safe, dialogic classroom. Students have stories to tell, realities to understand, a right to share, and an obligation to listen. Narratives are tools that bring teaching, learning, and social realities together in a space that allows for that integration to be constructive. Khan (2019) explains this well:

> "…as a society, the educators, teachers, parents, and community members have an obligation to humanity to ensure that everyone is heard and respected. Regarding education, this means that teachers have an obligation to educational institutions to push them to work against exclusionary and discriminatory policies and practices. This involves an obligation to the education profession to disrupt the canonization and re-inscription of curricula that do not offer safe space for differing views and controversial discussions" (p. 39).

Integrating Narratives into Communication and Performance Spaces

There are countless ways narratives can be integrated into our communication and performance teaching and learning spaces. Our students perform stories at forensic tournaments and on stages. We talk about society through reflections and critical analyses of stories. We encourage our students to understand communication concepts through reflective applications in their own lives. There is no shortage of how rhetorical visions and narratives find their way to our students. It is worthwhile to note suggestions for maximizing the impact of narratives as teaching tools.

The stories we select may be best when they conform to the standards of narrative rationality. There is greater applicability to broader ideas when stories are both coherent and have fidelity. Diversity is also an important consideration, particularly given the range of fields of experiences our students bring to our spaces. Sharing narratives and encouraging a cross-section of students to share their own experiences helps create a pluralistic learning experience that is not grounded in more fixed perspectives. Stories can sometimes be effective starting points for deeper discussions and reflections when they are deliberately integrated into curricula. Reading or viewing narratives and then responding to specific prompts directs students to consider the elements of the story. A compelling story that is intended to transition into significant teaching and learning can work well with this intentional activity. Regardless of how stories are integrated into teaching and learning, it is essential that a safe place exists for any sharing regarding stories, especially personal experiences. With these suggestions in mind, a few examples of how to integrate stories into our teaching and learning are shared, with the important qualifier that these can and should be adapted to best fit unique contexts.

Idea 1 Teachers and Students Asking Questions and Sharing Stories

Howard and Ticknor (2019) write about preservice teachers and mentor teachers exploring how reading can be taught. Reflections on experience were primary strategies through questions such as “What are some of my most memorable experiences with reading? Where do I enjoy reading? What motivates me to read? What do I read other than books? What does literacy mean to me?" (p. 35). This same exercise can be adapted to speaking, debating, or performing. Immediacy is a compelling way for teachers to connect with students—finding ways to make themselves more approachable to students. Students may also find comfort in sharing, knowing their experiences may be similar to their teachers'.

Idea 2 Devising Theatre

Goble (2020) writes about the strategy of *devising* theatre, an activity in which theatre troupes are organized and charged with creating a theatre production—from the design of the script to the performance. The activity is launched from a prompt given by the teacher, the perfect way of assigning a storytelling experience with the potential of resulting in a rhetorical vision. He explains, "The members of the theater[re] troupe bring their own understandings of the prompt, their cultural background, and their social identity to the process of theater[re] devising" (p. 152). There are a number of values in this activity. Students, and perhaps even community members beyond the classroom, are audiences for the performance. Narratives are shared. The range of how narratives are created is also important, including the necessary considerations of how to best frame experiences and characters, and how a particular story may most effectively "speak" to an audience.

Idea 3 Oral History and Tradition as the Framework for Team Culture

Derryberry (2005) writes about intentionally integrating traditions and memories into the management of forensic teams. He includes examples such as banquets, alumni, networking, and rituals that endure. These traditions and memories, when made part of a group's culture, become fantasy themes that help reinforce identity. This management strategy works for any co-curricular activity, from a theatre troupe to a forensic team. In the end, students assimilate into a rhetorical vision they understand through narratives, and help share their own stories. The transition for new students into these existing cultures is also made easier because of the community that endures through their sharing of individual narratives. Connection becomes non-time bound and more valued because of a legacy that the rhetorical vision helps communicate.

Idea 4 Converging Personal and Public Narratives

A long-held strategy for teaching is the use of texts—literary, film, dramatic, biographical, etc. A very easy way of employing narratives to illustrate concepts and ideas is to ask students to not only critically analyze texts, but also critically reflect with personal integrations. The selected text will inherently guide the direction of the reflection in ways that can contribute to intended learning outcomes and experiences. Reflections can even be personal stories that mirror elements the students find most immediate from the assigned narrative. A circle of stories inspired by stories is a powerful way for experiences to become heuristic.

Summary

Activities that employ narratives to build rhetorical visions can bring our world into our learning spaces in ways that are safe, heuristic, and constructive. Woodmore (2020) shared an African proverb as part of his keynote address to the Speech and Theatre Association of Missouri—"I am because we are." As these activities encourage and shape both voice and empathy, they do so within a community that the stories create. They are strategies that reinforce how our communication and performance spaces are where students become equipped to change the world—as individuals and as communities.

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Let's Talk About Authenticity: Promoting Conversations about Identity Within Communication Classrooms

Tomeka M. Robinson and Brandon Jo'el

Abstract

The goal of this activity is to promote conversations around identity, power, privilege, and difference within the communication classroom. Also, students' understandings and critical thinking skills surrounding social justice issues will be improved.

Courses: *Public speaking; Introduction to Communication; Intercultural Communication*

Rationale:

The recent mass shift to online education due to the COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally reshaped how educators must approach in-class engagement. During face-to-face instruction, educators rely on traditionally established teaching methods to activate student learning and engagement. While some teaching practices can be seamlessly converted, not all pedagogical practices can be easily translated online. More specifically, one of the practices that must be adapted is how students engage or exist in the classroom as individuals. Students' performed identity serve as the basis for educators to recognize the learning needs of each student. Often as educators establish classroom culture, they try to create a space that is inclusive of all student identities. With the shift online, however, educators have to find new ways to encourage and maintain engagement. Typically, students have the ability to pick and choose what parts of their identity they would like to showcase, but with students learning from their homes, it can be hard to separate the performance of identity from reality. This blurring of spaces complicates identity expression for both educators and students.

The activity described below offers new ways for educators to connect with students and construct learning environments that adapts to individual learning and facilities the need for identity expression. A part of the learning experience is providing a space for students to find the value of their voice and others. Therefore, this is an exercise for both the educator and student to learn about how to understand and engage with each other as individuals in these new learning spaces. Additionally, it will enable students to expand their view of themselves and each other, all while learning more about what influences how they engage in shared spaces. Moreover, this activity allows students to grasp how people may perceive their identity, and how they can potentially influence how people confront it. In revealing meaning behind identity, it will expose how social structures influence how students view and represent themselves.

During the process, there should be an unveiling of how social structures persuade some to perform their identity in a particular way. Throughout the activity, students learn how to use the various components of communication to influence outcomes, or in this case create a better understanding of their identity(ies). Students will be led through dialogue with their classmates to learn about how to find ways their individual narratives relate to each other. The activity uses lived experiences as the vehicle for (re)shaping how students view themselves, and perceive others. This is significant because as the spiral of silence theory posits individuals avoid expressing ideas that they think are marginalized, which often includes people's identities. Movements towards silencing minority opinions and voices occurs because of fear of social isolation by both the individuals and other actions (Ho, Chen, & Sim, 2013). However, there is an inherent danger in the suppression of these voices especially within the communication classroom, because the "longer members of a minority fails to express their views, the more unstoppable the spiral of silence becomes" (Clemente & Roulet, 2015; p. 97). Therefore, when it comes to engaging students in conversations about identity, the responsibility falls into the hands of the professors. When faced with the discussion of marginalized identities, professors are confronted with the challenge of engaging students without silencing them because as Taylor, Gillian, and Sullivan (1995) note:

> [for minority students] there is a constant feeling of being caught between voice and silence…[because] if [they] continue to speak from their experience, they may find that their voice is out of relationship, too loud, off key. If they remain silent, they are in immediate danger of disappearing (p. 202).

Moreover, as Robinson and Allen (2018) argue:

> we have the power to open ourselves and our students to the possibility of becoming more conscious, aware, and socially responsible individuals. Our actions can challenge stereotypes, prejudice, and systemic inequities to generate alternative solutions to create a more socially just, equitable, and peaceful world. But we cannot accomplish our mission through continued suppression of voices and perspectives (p. 205).

Therefore, utilizing the spiral of silence theory to undergird our discussions, we will explore an activity that explores identity and opens space for authentic engagement within the communication classroom. We will frame our discussion in four ways: (1) intervention – ways we can encourage recognition of the consequences of silencing without privileging dominant discourses and opinions; (2) inclusion – ideas for the celebration of minority voices and make privilege visible without simultaneously reinforcing stereotypes; (3) deconstruction – the work we can do to keep minority perspectives from disappearing; and (4) transformation – ways that conversations and lessons within all communication classes can evolve to provide true inclusion.

Description

At the beginning of the activity, students are given various categories of identity to consider: race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, primary language, social class, and physical/mental ability status. Students must decide which of these are their primary identifier(s), allowing students to understand the intersections that often occur between these various categories and how that impacts their communication. To aid the students in processing the activity, a few guiding questions are provided:

1) How does your social identity affect the way you communicate with people with similar identities?
2) How does your communication change when you talk to people who do not share your identities?
3) How does learning about your social identity affect your understanding of human?

4) How does your current space influence how you express your identity?
5) What is one thing you wish people understood differently about your identity?

It might be helpful to encourage students to use the people in their physical spaces to try and understand which factors of their lives are most important to their identity. The end goal is that students not only gain self-awareness and empathy towards others, but they can learn to navigate their identity in any space they enter.

As an instructor, it is important to preface that your communication classroom is a safe space, this way students will feel more comfortable sharing their identities and that they do not need to share any identity marker that they are uncomfortable with disclosing. A conversation about self-disclosure, while not required, may assist with helping to prepare students for this assignment. The instructor should pay close attention to how they present the various identity markers as to not influence how students perceive and interpret the categories because while this may be the creation of a rhetorical space for students to explore themselves as individuals, for many, this may be the first time they have even considered their identity(ies).

Debriefing

Before leading the discussion, instructors should acknowledge how sharing may be difficult for some. Students will look at the educator as the model for how to engage with shared narratives. While we want students to engage in dialogue surrounding student presentations, it is important to note to the class that the narratives presented aren't just stories; they are people's lived experiences. While dialogue aimed at understanding identity is welcomed, reducing experiences to just dialogue should be discouraged. The point is to eliminate the barriers that prevent students from authentically expressing themselves. The educator should acknowledge everyone's collective participation in engaging in individual lived experiences.

During the assigned time, discussions in the classroom should center around how students internalize and perform their various identities. The conversation should focus on how the understanding or misunderstanding of identity can lead to marginalization. For educators, this can allow the fostering of more inclusive spaces for students to discuss marginalization beyond classroom environments. With communication theory as guiding principles to foster understanding, this activity presents an opportunity for educators to stress the importance that context can play on our understanding of other's identities. The following questions might be helpful in debriefing the activity:

1) Were there any assumptions you made about a certain identity that was disproven?
2) What are some suggestions you would offer people to understand you better?

Appraisal

This assignment meets the tenants outlined by the Spiral of Silence Theory because it provides moments for clear intervention, inclusion, deconstruction, and transformation within a communication classroom. Because of the online nature of this assignment, students will get the unique opportunity to not only engage in another's experience, they get to contextualize how the presenter's physical environment shaped the formation of the narrative being shared. Additionally, students will be able to identity how context and circumstance can influence how others present themselves, which could empower them to create spaces for people in their own communities to be more comfortable with sharing their narratives. This new framework for utilizing context to foster empathy, could reframe how some students engage in narratives that previously may have been too far removed from their lived experience to establish relevance. However, if students can start to connect the narratives of their classmates to some larger social justice issues, then it might create tool for much broader change.

For educators, this activity can present some new insights into how students are adjusting in this new learning landscape, while also simulating social spaces for students to explore and form their identity(ies). Instructors of this activity must create space for everyone to be uncomfortable at all times, however. Normalizing shared discomfort could invite students to be vulnerable and foster community in the classroom. Some students from marginalized identity groups often don't have spaces to process or express how marginality impacts how they exist in spaces. But this activity offers them a chance to break beyond the spiral of silence, and to help them show their classmates the part of them of which they feel the proudest.

As educators build online curriculum to fit students' needs, they should consider how students might react to these new learning spaces, and identify ways to recreate organic moments of development. Both the educator and student must learn how to reconcile an introduction between what once was invisible or separate parts of their identity to a public. Online learning offers educators an opportunity to co-construct new learning environments and practices to promote both learning and personal development. As educators there should be an awareness of how the change in space can influence how students see themselves and how to engage with others.

All classrooms and disciplines are grappling with how to make room for both learning and personal development, especially in this new environment. Communication classrooms may serve as a model for how to isolate parts of the classroom experience that influence how students express themselves. This discipline is uniquely situated to help students identify how a myriad of factors surrounding identity can influence how people decode understanding. In this process, communication classrooms can create a space for students to process identity formation and development opportunities. It also offers a more equitable space for all students to engage. Not all students will feel comfortable revealing parts of their identity(ies) normally to the classroom. However, with students learning from home, it can be hard for them to exclude parts of their identity. For example, online education has revealed growing digital inequity between students and a lack of access to proper technological equipment. Students who may not have reliable WIFI or technological equipment run the risk of creating assumptions about their socio-economic background. These assumptions could be the bases for some students forming false narratives about what they are perceiving on the screen. With classrooms entering people's home, it will inherently shape how people perceive them. This activity can empower these students to correct or share how some factors that influence identity disproportionately impacts some more than others. As students learn about what inspires each other's individual identity, they can foster more authentic engagement in learning spaces and beyond. It also allows students who may not have been exposed to narratives surrounding marginalized identities to gain new perspective and empathy as to what classmates have had to endure.

While this assignment was created for online spaces, it is can be modified for in-person classrooms as well. This exercise, whether in person or online, offers students the opportunity to identity variables in their lives that might influence people's behavior toward them and how these variables constrain or enable their voice and agency.

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Public Address in the Public Speaking Class

Susan P. Millsap

Abstract

Communication departments have to make choices when developing a curriculum. The study and development of oral messages is essential and offered in the Public Speaking course. But the importance of the study of Public Address has gotten less attention. The Public Speaking course is used to not only develop oral communication skills but the development of the student as critic of oral messages. The study of Public Address addresses the development of the critic and exposes the student to important speeches of the past. This exercise works the study of Public Address into the Public Speaking class in an effort to develop the students' skills in speaking, in being a critic, as well as developing their appreciation for great speeches of the past.

Most Communication departments identify the development, interpretation, and presentation of messages to be an essential competence that students should be able to meet by graduation. The public speaking course assists in meeting this competence with learning outcomes specific to the development of oral skills as well as the development of the student's ability to critically evaluate the messages of others. Implicit in these objectives is a respect for the importance of the spoken word and its effects on self and others. We hope that, throughout the students' college experience, they gain an appreciation of the importance of public communication in a variety of forums and contexts. Along with these field specific goals there is also the awareness that students need to be exposed to culturally diverse presentations. Speech, by its nature, is a social act. The critic ought to be able to evaluate not only the speaking techniques of the speaker, but the effects of speech on society as well. Current events have shown us the importance of the evaluation of the effect of the spoken word. Freedom to speak and your responsibility as a speaker are determined by society. The values of that society fix standards by which speech is judged. It is therefore essential that we expose our students to past speaking events so that they can learn to become effective critics of the speeches they hear.

One way to address this need is to work public address into the introductory public speaking class. Frequently students are asked to develop an informative speech as one of their early assignments. In order to give this speech some focus and to begin to develop in the student the skills necessary to become an effective critic, the student would choose a speech that has historic significance to evaluate. The choice of the speech is up to them. This gives students the opportunity to choose speeches on topics or issues or from cultures that are important to them. The only stipulation is that these must be real speeches that were given in front of a real audience. So movie speeches are prohibited. The student must also be able to find the full text of the speech, and preferably either the audio or video of the presentation. There are multiple on-line sources that provide this.

Class time must be spent on explaining the role of the critic and how to critically evaluate these speeches. Students should begin with context. Who is the speaker and why are they speaking? What was the occasion? Why were they asked to speak on the topic? The answers to these questions lead to an investigation of the relevant issue of the speech. What was happening that made this significant? For an example, if the student chooses to speak on the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.'s I Have A Dream speech the student would need to do some historical research on the March on Washington and why it was happening. They would also need to know King's role in that movement. With that understanding of the context they can now look at the content of the speech.

When examining the content the student is looking at what topics are addressed. How did the speaker organize their points? How did they support their points? What literary devises do they use to get their point across to their audience? Why do you think they chose to do this? Using King's speech again as an example, students should notice that he uses a chronological organization, speaking about the past, the present, and the future. Since most students have only heard the last part of his speech they frequently find this discovery of the rest of speech fascinating. King's use of analogies should also be recognized as speaking devise frequently used by preachers.

After content the student should discuss delivery. How did the speaker engage the audience with his/her delivery style? Why did this style keep the audience's attention? King's use of repetition and inflection keep the speech moving forward in a way that reflects the movement itself could be an appropriate observation by the student.

Finally the student should look at effect. What was the impact of the speech on the immediate audience, on the target audience, or on other special audiences? For example, using King again, did the fact that he was speaking in Washington D.C. give direction to another audience that was not immediately in front of him? Did the message of this speech reach that audience? In other words, did Congress act to make change? Again, some historical research would be necessary to answer this question. And then, what about today's audience? Does this speech have the same impact as it did when it was delivered? How has time affected the issues and movement that King endorsed?

Once the students have finished their analysis of their chosen speech they need to prepare their speech on a speech. What did they find that they believe their class audience would be interested in? They need to focus their speech on that element. Based on the necessary time limits for in class speeches, the students will not be able to talk about everything they found. They will need to focus, organize and support those aspects that are most appropriate for their audience. You may want to have students write a critical evaluation report on their speaker and chosen speech. This can help the student focus their speech by seeing what they have found in front of them and thus assist in the development of their speech.

By combining the skills of the speech critic with the concepts of public address the student begins to develop the skills necessary to become a speech critic. They gain a deeper understanding of the speaker, audience, and context of a speech and a greater understanding of a social event or movement within its cultural context. This assignment has the possibility of increasing cultural diversity in the class and tolerance of social issue. Watching other speakers may also serve as a source of motivation for students to improve their own speaking skills.

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Audio Podcasting as a Content-Delivery and Student Engagement Strategy

Patricia English-Schneider & Phillip Anthony Voight

Abstract

The authors are enthusiastic advocates of audio podcasting as a content delivery and student engagement strategy. Audio podcasting is a simple, easy to implement, low-cost and low band-with solution to the pedagogical challenges presented by remote learning. Particularly for students in asynchronous courses who suffer from poor internet connectivity, audio podcasting may be the best means of delivering course content. In nearly every setting, however, instructional audio podcasts have the potential to heighten student engagement with course material. Moreover, when students are assigned to produce podcasts, they develop new ways of understanding and employing course content, resulting in finished assignments that display creativity, narrative development, and a strong mastery of underlying themes.

Lecture Podcasts and Digital Audio Learning Objects (DALO's)

In using the term "podcasting," the authors are referring to audio recordings that are produced, stored and syndicated for distribution – either locally via a website or e-mail distribution list, or professionally via an RSS feed housed within an application such as Anchor FM. The podcasts themselves can be of two types: Lecture podcasts, or Digital Audio Learning Objects (DALO's). Each type serves an important purpose.

Lecture podcasts – audio recordings of classroom lectures – are simply an alternative means of delivering course material. They provide teachers with the opportunity to address frequently asked questions, to respond to feedback provided by students, and to amplify themes presented in classroom readings. They also allow teachers to "flip the classroom" by distributing lectures prior to class so that in synchronous settings, more time can be devoted to classroom discussions, group activities and answering questions. In addition, lecture podcasts offer several strategic advantages when compared to traditional classroom lectures: First, teachers can divide them into smaller segments and add interesting audio interludes or external audio segments – such as fragments of speeches or expert interviews, or ambient sound from field recordings. A lecture about commodity trading, for example, might include a brief segment featuring the chaos on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, while a lecture about a form of poetry might include a professional reading of a poem representing that genre. These techniques may heighten listener interest when compared with a traditional lecture.

A second advantage is that the lecture is portable and can be re-played by the student when doing ordinary daily activities – such as commuting to class, walking or working out. As Jonathan Halls noted, "Audio is great for learners on the move. Learners can listen anytime they like – on an iPod or mobile device while commuting in traffic or sitting in an airline lounge" (p.92). Worries that students will not adopt the platform are also misplaced. Given the ubiquity of podcasting, its likely that they are already familiar with the format. The number of consumers accessing podcasts on smart-phones reached 69% in 2017, noted Lynn Harter, and "Consequently, podcast development has expanded to include an array of educational and research-based topics including health, science, leadership, personal development, and politics" (126).

In asynchronous courses, lecture podcasts are essential, but even in face-to-face or synchronous remote-learning settings, Digital Audio Learning Objects, or "DALO's" can enhance student learning and engagement with course materials. A DALO is simply an audio file that supplements the content of a course. DALO's can be instructor generated, or simply located by the instructor and then linked to the course website. (For example, an instructor might link an audio rendition of the Gettysburg Address to the class Moodle page so that students could listen to a reading of the address prior to discussing it in class.) Unlike lecture podcasts, DALO's do not correspond with the specific content of the course in a fixed way. They amplify the instructor's learning objectives by encouraging students to develop a deeper or more nuanced understanding of the assigned materials. A good DALO might provide historical context, offer an interview with a subject matter expert, present an example that amplifies course themes, or tell a story that helps make the course content more memorable for students. They are, therefore, more flexible, and once produced, they may be put to future use in other classroom settings.

In a political communication course, for instance, an instructor could include a brief DALO featuring the "Senator, you're no Jack Kennedy" interaction between Senators Lloyd Bentsen and Daniel Quayle in the 1988 Vice Presidential Debate as an audio supplement to a textbook reading about key moments in Presidential debate history. The same DALO, however, could also be used in an argumentation studies course, or in a course about public speaking. The DALO could include post-debate news commentary, reflections from the candidates after the debate and other interesting audio content. It could be "packaged" into a brief audio "story" that would be consumed by students in the course for which it was created, but that would also be available to the instructor for future use elsewhere. The chief advantages of DALO's are that they are simple to produce, immediate, educationally focused, re-usable and engaging. (Lee, et. al., 503-504).

Podcasting as a Student Engagement Strategy: A Case Study

In addition to the benefits of instructor-generated podcasts, assigning students to create podcasts is an excellent content mastery strategy. In January 2020, the authors traveled with seven students to Cambodia and Vietnam to teach a course entitled, Brother Enemy: Identity, Resistance and Liberation in Cambodia and Vietnam. The course focused on the history of French-colonial occupation of indo-China, the civil war and genocide conducted by the Khmer Rouge, the conflict between Cambodia and Vietnam as well as the American intervention in Vietnam and Laos. The objectives of the course included: (1) To examine the processes of consciousness-raising, identity formation, armed resistance, and political liberation in Cambodia and Vietnam since 1965; (2) To overview intercultural communication theory and provide students with adaptation skills; (3) To illustrate the rhetorical processes involved in the curation of collective memory; and finally, (4) To encourage observation, reflection, deliberation, and cultural adaptation through the use of guided writing exercises and student podcasts.

The instructors used the Anchor FM podcasting application to record and distribute several lecture podcasts that provided students with logistical information about the itinerary, that highlighted linkages between assigned readings and sites that they were visiting, and that elaborated classroom assignments. The Anchor FM application allowed the instructors to create field recordings and add ambient sound using just a cell phone plugged into a two-headed portable lavalier microphone. It was so simple to use and so portable that the instructors created podcasts in cafes, hotel rooms, at the mall, and even on the street in front of a temple. Thematic musical interludes – such as the Cambodian and Vietnamese national anthems and American protest music were added to make the podcasts more interesting and to punctuate the four or five segments that were each no more than five or six minutes in length. The authors developed a rough outline and loose script before each recording to ensure that key topics were covered and to focus the podcast on specific learning outcomes. With Anchor FM, the segments could easily be "trimmed" directly from the cellphone, organized and arranged to correspond to the appropriate audio interlude, indexed and numbered (so that students could see the content of each segment). With an internet connection, they could then be uploaded to the cloud for syndication and automatic distribution to students.

The podcast technology offered access to a form of sharing information that was easy and fun. Students were savvy with the technology and able to produce good podcasts with almost no preparation. (In fact, the instructors produced just a single "how to" podcast lesson.) The podcasting assignment sharpened the student's observational and reflective skills and helped them identify cultural differences. It also created a sort of "something for everyone" approach to the course, where individual students could frame cultural and historical observations through the prisms of their own interests and strengths. Communication Studies students, for example, might focus on the differential ways in which gender was displayed in military museums, while students interested in art or foreign policy might notice something entirely different.

Podcasting assignments can also help students frame their reactions to war and genocide-related sites. When visiting the Toul Sleng prison in Phnom Penh, for instance, students had the chance to meet with one of only a handful of living survivors who was rescued from the prison in 1979 by Vietnamese troops. The encounter, as well as the visit to the "Killing Fields" of Chong Ek, left students shaken, but they were able to process their reactions by assuming the personae of reporters and constructing a "story" about what they encountered in the form of the podcast. As a recent article in Peace Review has noted:

> …podcasting is particularly suited to the study of peace and war because it encourages students to relay facts and arguments, and to include the different sensibilities that render some arguments or narratives more believable and memorable than others. Podcasting encourages students to fine-tune their listening skills; to think about creative ways to voice difficult problems and conversations to a concerned audience; and to scrutinize the "scriptedness" behind existing stories on peace and war. (Bejullahu, p.2)

The instructors' experiences confirm the benefits of student-produced podcasts as vehicles to promote critical-thinking, creativity, reflection, and synthesis. The podcasts allowed students to relate their individual experiences in the form of intense, factually-based, personal narratives. As human beings, narrative shapes the way we view both the world and ourselves. The podcasts offered the students a way to make sense of their new and, sometimes, heartbreaking surroundings. Their learning influenced their perceptions as they navigated novel social interactions (Morgan & Dennehy, 2004). The stories students shared through the podcasts offered the instructors a rich, immersive, interesting, and thoughtful description of their experiences that was vastly superior to the reflection-journal assignment that it replaced.

A Quick-Start Guide to Audio Podcasting:

Unlike video-streaming, which requires expensive, specialized, and often fragile equipment to produce, audio podcasting has very low entry barriers. Most teachers can create a simple podcast with just the tools that they already own. The essential equipment needed to produce an audio podcast includes:

- A recording device (computer and/or cell phone). The instructors used an iPhone and an iPad (when playing sound from one device to record on the other device as a musical interlude).
- Free software provided by Anchor FM (www.anchorfm.com)

Though not strictly necessary -- as the internal microphone on most cellphones can capture relatively high-quality sound -- the addition of an external "plug-in" microphone is a prudent investment:

- A two-headed lavalier microphone with an iPhone audio jack. The instructors used an inexpensive MAONO set – available on Amazon for $28.88.

Optional additional upgrades include:

- A USB-connected headset.
- A blue-tooth headset. (Top of the line versions such as the JBL Quantum 600 can cost as much as $300,00, but inexpensive models like the MPOW Bluetooth Headset can be purchased for under $50.00.
- Phone recording software -- so that telephone conversations with subject matter experts can be recorded, downloaded as audio files, edited and arranged within podcasts. (Tape-A-Call is an example of such software and it is available on the iPhone ap store for an annual subscription of $59.99).

Using just these tools, even the technically challenged should be able to produce their first podcast within hours. Anchor-FM offers a free application and editing software to both store and distribute podcasts. The application is designed to make it possible to produce and distribute a podcast entirely from a cellphone. When using Anchor FM, teachers can easily professionalize their podcasts by adding audio interludes to punctuate segments, recording ambient sound to create field productions, and, in addition to the dozens of interludes, sound effects and background alternatives that are built-in to the application, they can add up to thirty-seconds from any recording in the Spotify music catalog.

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Extemporaneous Speaking for Teachers

Melissa Joy Benton

Abstract

Extemporaneous Speaking for Teachers is an academic resource that promotes critical thinking, critical analyzing, active listening, research abilities, and public speaking skills in students, specifically future teachers. Through the model of Speech and Debate's limited preparation event called extemporaneous speaking this resource was born. Extemporaneous speaking event challenges students to connect to the world by understanding overarching thoughts, concerns, and ideas of citizens. The activity transcends beyond the academic setting to professional lives by promoting soft skills. Murphy Donohue (2016) addresses a U.S. employers concern of a significant gap in employee preparedness in foundational skills otherwise referred to as "soft" skills. He continues to inform readers that soft skills "account for approximately one-third of skills requested in all job postings"; additionally, "over a quarter of all requested skills are considered soft skills" (Donohue, 2016). Students develop interpersonal skills (a soft skill) that allow them to advocate for their own ideas in an effective and appropriate manner. Students become confident to apply their reasoning to issues and events that impact the world. This reasoning spawned a desire to become changemakers in their personal and professional lives. The assignment Extemporaneous Speaking for Teachers can be adopted in any classroom that is preparing future professionals to establish and improve their rhetoric and advocacy skills.

Motivation:

While judging extemporaneous speaking events for speech and debate tournaments, I began reflecting on how the event benefits students beyond the academic setting. Through reflection, research, and interpersonal conversations with speech and debate coaches, this is what I conclude. The activity helped students connect to the world by understanding overarching thoughts, concerns, and ideas of people in the world. Also, students developed critical thinking, critical analyzing, and active listening skills. Additionally, students developed interpersonal skills that allowed them to present their ideas in an effective and appropriate manner. They were then confident to apply their own reasoning to issues and events that impacted their world. This reasoning spawned a desire to become changemakers in their personal and professional lives. These benefits inspired me to promote extemporaneous speaking in the classroom.

I currently teach a course for future teachers called Communication in Education. One of the goals by the Teaching Department is to develop future teachers that could critically think, critically analyze, active listen, and communicate effectively and appropriately. To meet these objectives, I developed an extemporaneous speaking called Extemporaneous Speaking for Teachers.

Course Objective:

5. Present an introductory, demonstration/informative, persuasive, and oral interpretation speech.	SOE Goals 1.1, 2.3 SOE Dispositions: 1d, 2a, 3c MoSPE 6C1 GCP OC, SSHB

This course addresses the GCP learning outcomes for Oral Communications by preparing students to deliver compelling, well-organized, well-supported oral presentations using effective language choices.

Purpose:

The activity allows students to practice persuasion by taking a stance on the issues surrounding a topic in education. Through primary resources, the student will prepare an oral presentation that is compelling, well-organized, and well-supported to convince the audience of their position on the topic.

Description of the assignment:

The persuasive oral presentation will be delivered in the extemporaneous speaking style, which consists of delivering an oral presentation in a conversational fashion using notes. Students will be given a question or statement about a controversial issue or hot topic in education. Then the student will conduct research on the issue/topic and write a persuasive oral presentation.

The oral presentation should be within 6-9 minutes. Students should orally cite a minimum of 6 current sources. These sources can be journals, books, websites, or articles from the list provided, *(you can find a list of names of articles at the end of this assignment).*

- Sources should be within either 2020 or 2021. 2021 is preferred.
- The following are examples of how to orally cite a source in the body of the speech. *(Stating the author and date/year of source or the title of the source and date/year of the source)*

Please turn in a typed reference page with the sources used in APA format to the assignment on Canvas. Your presentation day for the assignment is on Canvas under the assignment tab named "*Extemporaneous Speaking for Teachers.*" Additionally, there are models and samples links on Canvas on the assignment, "*Extemporaneous Speaking for Teachers.*"

The assignment was designed using the following resources:

1. *"Extemp Structure."* (n.d.). Southwest Minnesota State University. www.smsu.edu.
2. *"Extemporaneous speaking: Engaging with current events." (2013). National Speech and Debate Association, p.10-14.*
3. *Nicholas Rossillo.* (n.d.) "*How to Write an Extemporaneous Speech" the classroom.com*
4. *"Standards and Polices." (2021). Webster University Speech and Debate.*

How to Complete the Assignment:

1. *Student should decide what their position is on the topic.* The degree to which the speaker is successful in accomplishing the goal of persuasion depends on having a clear understanding of their objective before they begin delivering the speech. Thus, spend some time brainstorming to think of everything you can about your position on the topic. For example, if you want to persuade your audience to recycle, write down as many reasons as you can think of to recycle. Jot down quick notes like "reduce pollution," "setting example for future generations," "conserve resources," "conserve land," and "create new jobs." Write everything that comes to mind; you may later decide to delete some ideas.
2. *Outline your speech*. Start with the attention getter, then write the thesis, what you are talking about. For example, write "This morning I had a soda, and I almost threw away the can. But then I thought I should recycle. "Everyone should recycle and today I'm going to tell you why." Use a highlighter to stress your main point, "everyone should recycle."
3. *Create the body of your speech*. Limit yourself to the most important points. There should be 3 main points. For example, write a paragraph about conserving land, another about reducing pollution and a third about creating new jobs.
4. *Expand your main points*. Take your 3 main points and list a few examples, quotes or statistics for each section. Provide 2 pieces of supportive information for each of the three sections that are legitimate and backed by a source. For example, "recycling reduces air pollution because the production of glass releases harmful gasses into the environment. According to Missouri Department of Natural Resources, they share waste harms the air, water, and land; and humans, plants, and animals rely on them." In other words, state the main point, explain the main point, and then support the main point with evidence.
5. *Write your conclusion*. Conclusions don't need to be long. Restate your main arguments. End with an anecdote, quote or call to action. For example, "I encourage you all to go home tonight and gather up your old bottles to take to the recycling center tomorrow."

Places on the web to research:

CURRENT IS THE KEY!

- ABCnews Online--A surprisingly good site. Comprehensive domestic and foreign coverage.
- Asiaweek--Fantastic for Asian economic issues. Especially useful considering recent events in the region.
- Boston Globe, The--A good source for foreign and domestic news.
- Business Week Magazine--Awesome magazine with focus on international economics.
- Center for Security Studies and Conflict Research--Opinions on security from all kinds of prestigious sources.
- Christian Science Monitor, The--This is truly an amazing service. The full contents of CSM, and you can search their archives going back to 1980.
- Electronic Newsstand, The--More than 2,000 magazines. It's great stuff.
- Electronic Telegraph, The--The On-line version of London's The Daily Telegraph.
- Far Eastern Economic Review, The--While not as useful as the print edition, this site still has lots of good material.
- Financial Times, The--A wonderful British newspaper.
- International Herald Tribune, The--it's mostly rehash from the New York Times and Washington Post, but it's a fancier citation
- Irish Times, The--Good coverage of British and Irish affairs.
- Jerusalem Post, The--Middle East news like nobody's business.
- London Times, The--Good British and foreign coverage.
- Los Angeles Times, The--Another great source for international and domestic affairs. Links to the Associated Press Newswire.
- New Republic, The--Great politics and surprisingly good foreign affairs coverage.
- New York Times, The--By far the best extemp tool on the web.
- Russia Today--Great English-language coverage of Russian affairs.
- South China Morning Post--A Hong Kong newspaper with excellent coverage of Asia.
- The Washington Post--One of our nation's best newspapers.

Evaluation:

Content being evaluated	Value	Received and comments
Must have an introduction with all elements of an introduction: 2pts each ○ Attention Getter. This can be an anecdote or a quotation. ○ Explained the link of your anecdote or quote to the topic. ○ Explain the significance of the topic. ○ Read the statement "word for word" as it was written. ○ Answered the question and stated your three arguments.	10 points	
Main Point: Argument- 4pts each ○ Documentation/evidence that support argument ○ Documentation/evidence that support argument ○ Documentation/evidence that support argument	12 points	
Main Point 2: Argument- 4pts each ○ Documentation/evidence that support argument ○ Documentation/evidence that support argument ○ Documentation/evidence that support argument	12 points	
Main Point 3: Argument- 4pts each ○ Documentation/evidence that support argument ○ Documentation/evidence that support argument ○ Documentation/evidence that support argument	12 points	
Must have all conclusion elements: ○ Repeat position summarize main points ○ Repeat the statement ○ Tie your ending into your conclusion	9 points	
Delivery ○ Eye contact—attention getter memorized (10 pts) ○ Confidence in verbal and nonverbal language (10 pts) ○ Vocal Variety (10 pts) ○ Enthusiasm (10 pts) ○ Spoke within 7-9 minutes (5 pts)	45 points	
Spoke within 7-9 minutes	10 points	
Total Points Awarded and feedback		

References

Donohue, M. (2016 July 29). *How you can prepare STEM students for employment*. Education Advisory Board. Retrieved https://www.eab.com/research-and-insights/continuing-and-online-education-forum/expert-insights/2016/soft-skills-gap.three-skills-essential-success-future-job-market-employment-promotion-a7492411.html.

Melissa Joy Benton, Ed.D. joined Webster University faculty in 2009 as a professor of Speech Communications. She later joined the Teaching Education faculty at Webster University in 2016. She also serves on the communications faculty at St. Charles Community College. In addition to teaching, she works as a Speech and Writing Specialist at St. Louis Community College. Her past teaching assignments have been with St. Louis Community College, Lindenwood University, Ranken Technical College, and Missouri Baptist University teaching subjects in Communications, Business, and English. Melissa obtained her doctorate in Education Practices with an emphasis on STEM education at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Her research interest has been in the following areas: nonverbal immediacy, coaching, student retention, improving self-efficacy in STEM subjects, and health communications. Melissa's work has been recognized by Webster University, St. Louis Community College, Universal Exchange, and LensCrafters. She was awarded with Best New Teacher in 2011 by Speech Theatre Association of Missouri. Melissa challenges and nurtures students by framing curriculum and the classroom experience to encourage a deeper understanding of communication principles and greater confidence in communication skills. Melissa believes that every student can succeed as effective communicators if they are equipped with the right knowledge, skills, and resources.