2013

Contents and Abstracts

Contents and Abstracts

Communication departments remain heavily reliant on the inclusion of an introductory communication course in their institution's general education program. For this reason it is essential for Basic Course Directors (BCDs) to educate themselves on general education. In doing so they will find a new iteration of change to general education where the required course and distribution model are disappearing in favor of an interdisciplinary outcomes-driven approach. Such a shift can have dramatic repercussions on the basic course and communication programs if the course is not further connected with other areas of general education. In this essay, I argue for Basic Course Directors to rethink how they design their respective courses so that they are better protected from the changes sweeping the landscape of general education. To do so, I provide a brief overview of the history of general education, detail the importance of the basic course to communication departments and external constituencies, and provide some suggestions for guiding a "reimagining" of the basic course.

viii

This interpretive study explored classroom power through the implementation of critical reflection exercises aimed at promoting student agency and learning in the basic course classroom. Data included over 400 critical reflection responses from 81 undergraduate students from four different basic course sections. Three emergent patterns revealed students' positive reaction to the critical reflection process, how students both embrace and reject power in the classroom, and connections between the critical reflection process and student learning. The findings offer teachers support for implementing critical reflection practices in the communication classroom.

This research offers an in-depth analysis of both static (cross-sectional) and dynamic (longitudinal) relations among communication apprehension, communicative self-efficacy, and willingness to communicate pertaining to the public speaking context. Using longitudinal data from undergraduate students enrolled in a semester-long basic communication course (BCC) focusing on public speaking, the study sheds light on the complex patterns of interrelationships among the three constructs and on the differences arising when regarding them from a static versus dynamic standpoint. The

research reveals important findings that have salient implications for instruction in the BCC and are informative for theory-development and general pedagogical practice in the communication field.

This study examined student usage of an e-textbook in a large multi-section basic pubic speaking course that fulfills the oral communication general education requirement at a large state university in the Midwest. The results collected from students surveys (n=598) indicated that they are not yet using e-textbooks across other university classes, they prefer printed textbooks to e-textbooks, they perceive advantages of e-textbooks to be cost, weight, ability to quickly find topics and conveniences, while they perceive advantages of printed textbooks to be the ability to highlight and take notes, ease of reading, and keeping the printed textbook for future reference. When it comes to e-textbook reading, they prefer computers to smaller computing devices like iPads, iPods, cellular phones or other electronic readers, and only 18% of the students at this public university reported access to an electronic tablet and only 16% had access to an e-reader. Students preferred using an e-textbook to a printed textbook when they had prior experience reading an e-book. In general, students report spending less than one hour per week reading the course e-textbook.

x

    Kristen LeBlanc Farris,
    Marian L. Houser, Crystal D. Wotipka

Public speaking remains one of the most sought-after skill sets by employers. However, a method to accurately assess these public speaking skills has long been debated by educators and scholars alike (Morreale, Hugenberg, & Worley, 2006). This study sought to examine the assessment tools used to demonstrate student learning of public speaking skills in the hybrid orientation of the basic communication course. Statistical analyses were conducted to determine the validity of two assessment instruments (Informative Presentation Assessment Form and Persuasive Presentation Assessment Form) measuring student public speaking competency. Results established concurrent validity of the two assessment instruments used to measure students' public speaking competency for the informative and persuasive presentations. Another goal of the current study was to assess the change in student public speaking behaviors after receiving public speaking training. A pre-post design was used to determine whether trained or untrained students would improve more throughout the course of the semester. Results revealed the trained group experienced a greater increase in competency than the untrained group. Discussion and implications for future research are included.

    Amy L. Housley Gaffney, Brandi N. Frisby

Using Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory, this study examined student perceptions of changes in efficacy

xi

and affect toward a variety of communication skills (e.g., interpersonal, writing, visual, public speaking, group collaboration) over a sequence of two hybrid basic course classes. As part of a larger assessment initiative, both quantitative and qualitative data from the first course (n = 793) and the second course (n = 273) were analyzed. Students reported greater affect and efficacy during the second course when compared to the first course. Specifically, students reported six affective changes including expanded knowledge, enhanced collaborative skills, increased openness and acceptance, heightened awareness, increased confidence, and the ability to critically examine. The students referenced observing these changes in academic and work life, but most frequently felt that these skills would impact their everyday life. The results have implications for assignment sequences, incorporating visual communication into the basic course, and requiring two basic courses to maximize affect and efficacy changes in students.

This paper presents our voices as international teaching assistants (ITAs) of public speaking courses at American universities and discusses how non-native English speaker identity, or non-nativeness is displayed, developed, and negotiated through our interactions with both native and other non-native speakers. Regarding our companionship as ITAs of public speaking as a subject of study, we engage in narrative co-construction about our survival in graduate programs. We argue that non-nativeness is

xii

not monolithic but is more relational and multilayered than it tends to be assumed. Obtaining a teaching position was an epiphany for our relationship, changing the perceptions about and attitude toward our own non-nativeness. Our narrative about the issue at hand speaks not only for other ITAs but also for all groups of people involved in basic communication education. Two practical implications are presented to better the entire basic communication situation. We suggest that holding "enacting voice sessions" provides all teaching assistants and a course director with opportunities to share their voices about teaching, and that the discussion about non-nativeness of ITAs needs to be incorporated into the public speaking classroom to cultivate students' understandings of cultural diversity in their everyday context.

This investigation examined how goal setting strategies and self-generated feedback from video affects student grade improvement on subsequent speaking occasions. Students (n =140) across ten course sections were conveniently assigned to experimental conditions manipulating video use and goal setting strategies. Significant and meaningful main effects of anticipatory goal setting combined with self-generated feedback from video were obtained when compared to unstructured video replay, only goal setting, and self-reactive goal setting with self-generated feedback from video. Implications for these findings are examined along with the potential of video as an instructional technological tool for student learning in the introductory course.

xiii

xiv