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RAISING THE STANDARD: AN ASSESSMENT OF PEER COLLABORATION AS AN ENHANCER OF SPEECH EVALUATION FIDELITY

T. Kody Frey

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This thesis explores the state of speech evaluation training in the basic communication course at Illinois State University. Specifically, a new type of pedagogy known as the "peer workshop" is integrated into the course as a potential supplement to speech evaluation training procedures. Quantitative and qualitative methods reveal how the course has become engrained into the academic expectations of the student body and identify written peer feedback as a necessary focus of future training in the classroom. Specific theoretical and pedagogical implications, as well as limitations and future directions, are discussed in detail.

RAISING THE STANDARD: AN ASSESSMENT OF PEER COLLABORATION AS AN ENHANCER OF SPEECH EVALUATION FIDELITY

T. KODY FREY

A Thesis Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment in the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

School of Communication

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

2015

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RAISING THE STANDARD: AN ASSESSMENT OF PEER COLLABORATION AS AN ENHANCER OF SPEECH EVALUATION FIDELITY

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"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail"

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

When my mother wrote this quote inside of a celebratory card for my high school graduation, I never imagined that the route with no path would lead me to Illinois State University. To be honest, my plans included graduating from Clemson, falling in love, and moving to a nice house in sunny South Carolina where I could drink sweet tea as often as I pleased. As I am about to graduate with my Master's degree in a field I learned to love by accident, I want to thank some of the individuals who have believed in me over the years and helped me to leave my own trail along the way.

First, I would like to thank my family. Over the years we have learned what it means to be loyal, brave, and steadfast in the midst of conflict. Even when I surprised you and said I wanted to move my life to Illinois, you found a way in your hearts to support me. I cannot promise that I will move back within driving distance in the near future, but I can promise that I will always love you and appreciate the support you have never stopped giving me.

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T.K.F.

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CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction to the Problem

Hunt, Simonds, and Cooper (2002) argue that teaching serves three major functions: enabling learning, making decisions, and managing the classroom. In order to expand knowledge and enhance instructor ability to perform these functions, assessment efforts must seek to evaluate aspects of communication theory expected to help students see, understand, and think about both the world and the course in different ways. Friedrich (2002) believes the basic communication classroom in particular represents a pedagogical platform from which researchers can measure, interpret, and assess theory as a means of progressing the actual teaching of communication principles. In light of this call to action, the present study seeks to assess the current state of speech evaluation training by analyzing students' speech scores across various rater levels, along with written feedback comments from peers as justifications for criterion-based appraisals of their classmates' oral speeches.

To succeed in classes that utilize criterion-based grading systems, students must develop extensive knowledge of the criteria used to evaluate assignments and improve their familiarity with their instructor's expectations. Dominowski (2002) claims that success in these systems comes from the elimination of student competition for grades, as well as the use of clearly described performance expectations that the instructor sets in

advance of an assignment. One process to introduce this method into the classroom, speech evaluation training (Simonds, Meyer, Hunt, & Simonds, 2009; Stitt, Simonds, & Hunt, 2003), creates similar assignment expectations for students and instructors across multiple course sections by training students to apply the criteria that will determine their speech grades. Students with prolonged exposure to evaluation criteria and training on how to implement them effectively will benefit through reduced levels of assignment uncertainty and increased levels of instructor-student evaluation fidelity (Stitt et al., 2003).

To test these claims, this study will apply theoretically based peer workshops to the basic communication course to assess how well students understand and apply the evaluation criteria that will determine their final grade. Although systems like speech evaluation training exist to reduce uncertainty about the instructor's expectations, problems may arise if students lack opportunities to have their knowledge of the criteria critiqued. To combat this issue, students will practice applying expected standards of performance on their peers' speeches before refining their own work. Instructors commonly use peer feedback to give students multiple perspectives of their work (Nilson, 2003; Topping, 1998). Further, peer interaction allows students to develop relevant course skills, along with interpersonal relationship competence, which are both essential to the general education curriculum (Allen, 2002). Students who participate in the peer workshops should see both increased scores and increased levels of evaluation fidelity with their respective instructors.

Next, this thesis addresses gaps in communication education literature by

examining written feedback comments provided by students to their peers. Researchers have frequently studied written speech feedback as an alternative assessment of the speech evaluation process (Mazer, Simonds, & Hunt, 2013; Reynolds, Hunt, Simonds, & Cutbirth, 2004; Simonds et al., 2009). However, these studies only examine the nature of written feedback as it occurs in instructor evaluations and student evaluations of their own work. Thus, the work will extend the existing literature by assessing the quality and content of written speech feedback from students to their peers.

In order to collect the required data, the study will implement a post-test only control group experimental design. The information collected should reveal important information about the nature of speech evaluation training in the basic communication course as it relates to student understanding of specific criteria. Ultimately, the thesis employs various analyses to assess criterion-based speech grading in the basic course and further develops the pedagogical content knowledge surrounding the teaching of communication principles.

General Literature Review

The Importance of Communication Education

In today's contemporary society, individuals must be conscious of the different ways of constructing meaning across various interconnected contexts, cultures, symbols, media, and texts (Morreale & Pearson, 2008). Additionally, with the growth and expansion of digital technologies connecting people from around the world, individuals are exposed to new ideas and perspectives that change the way they live (Morreale & Pearson, 2008). Resulting from this global revolution is a demand for individuals to learn

to construct and interpret messages in a culturally relative and socially conscious manner. This places the need for communication education directly at the heart of all levels of the American education system (Morreale & Pearson, 2008). In order to refine communication education to better suit the needs of today's society, Sprague (2002) argues that scholars must advance the discipline by incorporating theory and research into the communication classroom. Research must follow precedents set in fields such as science, math, and English, which have rich histories of building pedagogical content knowledge through the application of research in the classroom (Sprague, 2002). This will ultimately result in new perceptions that will shift the communication education paradigm by allowing it to become a testing ground for theory (Friedrich, 2002; Hunt, Novak, Semlak, & Meyer, 2005; Hunt, Wright, & Simonds, 2014; Sprague, 2002). Thus, these disciplines serve as reference points for generating new ideas about teaching and learning; however, communication education scholars should work towards translating research and theory into effective pedagogy for the basic communication course. For this reason, peer workshops as enhancers of speech evaluation training represent the ideal platform for testing and refining instructional theory in the communication classroom (Broeckelman, 2005).

In the communication discipline, there is sometimes a disconnect between conceptualizations of instructional communication and communication education. Essentially, instructional communication refers to research regarding the most effective forms of teaching, training, and managing as general practice. On the other hand, communication pedagogy research focuses on the study of ideas, theories, and

assessments related to teaching and learning communication principles. Simonds (2001) reflects on the relationship between the theoretical foundations of instructional communication and the application of those principles to teaching communication concepts. She argues for scholars to integrate various theoretical and methodological perspectives in order to expand knowledge of instructional constructs. Instructional communication scholars, particularly those conducting research within the communication classroom, should avoid "methnocentric" approaches to research that reflect singular theoretical paradigms (Simonds, 2001). As she also indicates, the paradigms that guide researchers' beliefs also play a role in the development of their respective teaching philosophies. Keeping with her view that the classroom is a secondary socialization process as well as a unique culture, clear expectations and the reduction of students' uncertainty gains extra significance in the development of communication pedagogy (Simonds, 2001). This thesis follows her framework by drawing on positivist theoretical tradition in the form of speech evaluation training and complementing it with student co-construction of knowledge through peer workshops.

By using research to improve learning in the communication classroom, scholars can contribute to a discipline that is viewed by many as essential to the goals of the education system (Morreale & Pearson, 2008). Finding ways to improve the teaching of communication should also help progress the field by building on previous research successes in the discipline (Friedrich, 2002). New pedagogical tools that improve the way we learn about communication in the general education classroom should be tested and developed to help facilitate the evolution of communication education into a specialized

field of study rather than a secondary area of focus (Sprague, 2002). In other words, communication educators must do more to build upon our discipline's pedagogical content knowledge by applying theory to new teaching strategies.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge

One of the main focuses of this study is to produce new ways of thinking about teaching that will develop the pedagogical content knowledge of instructors in the basic communication course. Shulman (1987), who first conceptualized pedagogical content knowledge, defines the concept as a "special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers" (p. 92). Pedagogical content knowledge in the communication discipline basically refers to the collective knowledge regarding the best ways to teach communication concepts (Hunt et al., 2014). Pedagogical content knowledge is a term that also refers to the blending of an individual's knowledge of general pedagogy and knowledge of subject matter (Segall, 2004). When these constructs are combined, they become reference points for teachers regarding how specific concepts should be prepared, structured, and represented through instruction to learners at different levels of mental ability (Shulman, 1987). With this conceptualization of the phrase, it is important to acknowledge pedagogical content knowledge as an invisible and inferred knowledge (Kind, 2009). Instead of a consciously used instrument, pedagogical content knowledge inherently guides the development of the teacher from a novice to an expert, while also helping to transfer knowledge to students (Kind, 2009).

In reference to the basic communication course, previous research included in journals such as the *Basic Communication Course Annual* and *Communication Education*

helps to develop pedagogical content knowledge "by evaluating the intersection of knowledge of the content of communication with pedagogical strategies that most effectively help students become better communicators" (Hunt et al., 2005, p. 25). For example, Hunt et al. (2014) identify speech evaluation assessment as an innovative pedagogical strategy that can help to promote the development of students' core communication competencies. The aim of this research is to rethink and advance this specific pedagogical strategy by incorporating the concept of peer learning into the pedagogical content knowledge surrounding the basic communication course. In doing this, future teachers will have access to a pedagogical strategy that can be blended with strong knowledge of speech assessment to increase learning in the basic course classroom.

Assessment in the Basic Course

As Valenzano (2013) points out, the structure of the basic communication course must adapt to reflect the changing, outcome-focused goals of general education curricula. For institutions with communication departments that contribute to these general education programs, assessment of student learning outcomes becomes a key concern (Allen, 2002). Classroom assessment not only communicates what the institution values, but it also reflects what institutional general education administrators and faculty feel is important for students to learn (Rich, Gayle, & Preiss, 2006).

With this in mind, administrators and instructors must respond to calls for comprehensive assessment (Simonds et al., 2009). These future assessments should be related to specific learning objectives and teaching strategies (Allen, 2002). As illustrated

in the purpose of this study, the introduction of peer workshops into the basic communication course should help students improve their oral communication skills by promoting stronger understanding of the established grading criteria on which performances will be evaluated. Topping (1998) supports this idea by arguing that the goal of assessment is to improve learning and maximize success simultaneously, rather than after the events have occurred. Assessment techniques ultimately provide instructors with feedback on how well students are learning material, while also giving students the opportunity to reflect on their own learning and take corrective action when necessary (Cross, 1998). The current assessment will help the basic communication course adapt to the changing needs of the general education curriculum by promoting a new, theoretically-based pedagogical strategy that should reduce uncertainty regarding what constitutes effective written and oral presentation skills, as well as how students can achieve good grades.

Uncertainty in the Classroom

One way to assess student learning in the classroom involves looking at ways in which students reduce their uncertainty regarding course material such as syllabi, policies, assignments, and grading criteria. Previous research argues that students reduce uncertainty through the interpersonal relationships they develop with their instructors (Frymier & Houser, 2000), as well as through high levels of teacher clarity (Simonds, 1997; 2001). Dominowski (2002) reasons that "when a student sits listening to lectures, asking or answering a question, or getting feedback from an instructor, an interpersonal exchange takes place" (p. 74). Accordingly, the quality of the relationship that an

instructor has with a student may be the most significant element in predicting instructor effectiveness (Hunt et al., 2002). Davis and Buddenhagen (2008) demonstrate that uncertainty regarding course content is often influenced by the structure of this interpersonal relationship in the classroom. Students and instructors have a constrained relationship in which power differences between individuals in high or low positions affect displays of uncertainty (Davis & Buddenhagen, 2008). These roles have implicit responsibilities that provide structure to shape the relationship (Davis & Buddenhagen, 2008). Thus, it may be beneficial to examine how free-form relationships between peers holding equal positions in the classroom affect the reduction of uncertainty.

Another widely studied communication construct related to the reduction of student uncertainty is teacher clarity. Simonds (1997) provides an extensive review of teacher clarity and defines the construct as "the teacher's ability to present knowledge in a way that students understand" (p. 279). Essentially, teachers who concentrate on clarity should reduce greater amounts of uncertainty for their students. Consequently, greater levels of instructor clarity should reduce assignment uncertainty and allow students working in peer workshops to demonstrate a similar understanding of the expected criteria.

Moving beyond interpersonal relationships and teacher clarity, research has examined the ways in which students manage speech anxiety by reducing uncertainty about the types of speech presentations required in their respective classes. Witt and Behnke (2006) argue that students often experience reciprocal causes of their own uncertainty. When students are uncertain about their speeches, they often increase levels

of uncertainty and anxiety by turning inward to their own perceptions of the situation. Rather than monitoring the environment, students create more discomfort for themselves by trying to cover up uncertainty about the speech. As a result, students may experience more uncertainty simply by recognizing they are uncertain or anxious. By working specifically with classmates in peer workshops, students should reduce initial anxiety and uncertainty through positive feedback and a demonstrated knowledge of the evaluation criteria. Despite this conclusion, it is still imperative that scholars work towards increasing student learning with reliable and valid speech rating criteria that students can apply outside the basic course classroom.

Reliability and Validity in Speech Rating

Two commonly experienced problems in regards to speech evaluation training come from assessing the reliability and validity of speech ratings. Speech evaluation reliability occurs when a variety of critics who have received similar training give a consistent pattern of ratings (Miller, 1964). In the basic communication course, research often associates reliability with the ability of instructors across multiple sections to provide similar ratings of the same speeches. In contrast to reliability, Miller (1964) defines speech evaluation validity as rating judgments made using sound criteria that reflect educationally significant speaking standards. These standards should come from rigorous communication research that produces and demonstrates universally desired speaking competencies. Instead of assessing whether or not students have an awareness of specific course requirements they will likely forget at the conclusion of a course, instructors must make efforts to evaluate students' knowledge and ability to use valid

criteria to obtain superior speaking skills (Miller, 1964). Written speech feedback provides one often-overlooked opening through which students demonstrate their aptitude for applying criteria to speech performances. Instructors and students should attempt to achieve high levels of both reliability and validity when assessing speeches, yet the fallible nature of human judgment means that any evaluation of speech performance will have certain errors associated with it (Bock & Bock, 1982).

Although evaluators share the potential of reaching a coherent agreement, reliable ratings do not always occur. Bohn and Bohn (1985) argue these defects and inconsistencies typically stem from speech evaluation raters themselves. In a test of evaluation forms commonly used in speech assessment, Carlson and Smith-Howell (1995) demonstrate total-score reliability across all forms studied. Thus, their findings support the claim by Bohn and Bohn (1985) by indicating that the individual evaluator impacts the overall speech rating instead of the evaluation form. In addition, research also supports the contention that reliability in the speech process depends on objectivity in grading (Bohn & Bohn, 1985). According to Kelley (1965), objectivity achieved through standardization helps students by: (a) increasing respect for the art of speaking, (b) providing students with greater knowledge and understanding of their performance, (c) providing instructions on how to positively improve skills, and (d) creating confidence in students. This need to overcome deficiencies in reliability through an increased focus on objectivity lends even more support to the claim that basic course instructors should rely on comprehensive speech evaluation training focused on criterion-based assessment (Stitt et al., 2003; Simonds et al., 2009).

Speech raters improve measures of validity by utilizing comprehensive criteria reflecting a wide range of commonly accepted skills and traits. The evaluation forms studied by Carlson and Smith-Howell (1995) all revealed predictive, content, and construct validity. First, rater observations of "A" speeches and "C" speeches fell within the expected ranges of each category. Next, raters from different backgrounds consistently detected the presence of objective criteria on the evaluation forms during speeches. Finally, evidence for construct validity came from each form evaluating aspects of both content and delivery of a speech. Instructors relying on any of the four forms should expect consistent criterion-based ratings that show high levels of validity. Consequently, communication educators should lend more focus towards improving measures of reliability.

Rater Training and Speech Evaluation Fidelity

As indicated, speech evaluation assessment efforts should seek to improve notions of reliability. In order to help instructors increase rating reliability and extend scholarly knowledge of the construct, instructors must focus on achieving high levels of evaluation fidelity, or "the degree of consistency in assessment between instructors and students" (Stitt et al., 2003, p. 346). Stitt et al. (2003) argue that increased levels of evaluation fidelity will lead to greater understanding between instructors and students regarding how a specific score was achieved on an assignment. Considering Simonds et al.'s (2009) conclusion that perceptions of "A" speeches and "C" speeches will vary for instructors and students who have not received training, evaluation fidelity becomes a very relevant construct. Instructors must provide exceptionally clear expectations for students when

training them on performance assessment. Mazer et al. (2013) argue that increased levels of clarity will help students reduce uncertainty regarding both the assignment and the assessment procedures. For students and instructors across multiple course sections, this allows the grading process to seem fair, routine, and standardized (Simonds et al., 2009). Topping (1998) supports this argument and offers other advantages of implementing speech evaluation training:

> When the criteria for assessment have been discussed, negotiated, used in practice, and clarified by all participants, greater clarity concerning what constitutes high-quality work is likely, which focuses assesse (and assessor) attention on crucial elements. Access to concrete examples of assessed work can also help students articulate the attributes of good and poor performance and promote the development of a vocabulary for thinking about and discussing quality. (p. 255)

Not only is it important for instructors to clearly train students on criterion-based evaluation systems, instructors themselves must be trained to assess student outcomes. According to Simonds et al. (2009), instructors play a critical role in the learning process and must be held accountable for their assessment of student outcomes. Hunt et al. (2002) stress the necessity of training communication instructors in general because "communication in the classroom is a complex process, requiring of the teacher a basic understanding of communication concepts and a repertoire of communication skills" (p. 91). It is reasonable to assume that this claim can be extended to instructor training in regards to evaluation criteria as well. Trained instructors typically feel that their grading

behaviors are similar to those of other instructors, with the perception increasing as time goes on (Lawton & Braz, 2011). Accordingly, training for both students and instructors should help to reduce uncertainty regarding assignments within the classroom. Since previous research has acknowledged high levels of evaluation fidelity between instructors and the students whom they have trained (Mazer et al., 2013; Stitt et al., 2003), research should extended the concept of evaluation fidelity in classroom speech assessment by examining the ways students demonstrate their knowledge of assessment criteria through interactions with peers. This idea is theoretically supported by previous research concerning Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the zone of proximal development and the implementation of dialogic teaching methods.

Vygotsky and the Zone of Proximal Development

Within a constructionist view of psychology and linguistics, scholars often recognize L. S. Vygotsky as a crucial figure in the development of the social foundations of thinking and learning (Renshaw, 2004). Vygotsky (1978) bases his theories primarily on the construction of knowledge through the interactions that occur between children and adults. Daniels (2001) argues that the implications of Vygotsky's ideas for pedagogy include a focus on the potential of the learner, as well as new teaching ideas that create possibilities for development. More simply, the theories focus largely on the ways in which learners make progress toward understanding through a culturally and socially constructed worldview (Daniels, 2001). In contrast to these ideas, Tudge (1990) reasons for the extension of these theories to interactions that occur between peers of equal and unequal mental capabilities. Key to this particular study and focus is Vygotsky's (1978)

construction of the zone of proximal development.

Vygotsky (1978) was essentially concerned with the ways in which children with similar individual mental capabilities learn differently under the guidance of a teacher or instructor. In forming an explanation for this phenomenon, he conceptualized what scholars now recognize as the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Vygotsky (1978) defines the ZPD as "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). To put more simply, children who learn under the guidance of a teacher or peer are more likely to reach advanced levels of knowledge compared to the mental capabilities that can be achieved on their own. Essentially, the retrospectively determined actual mental development, along with the region for potential new mental development, characterizes the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978). Through collaboration with others in the sociocultural construction of knowledge, individuals can reach much higher levels of mental development. As advanced by Vygotsky (1978):

> We propose that an essential feature of learning is that it creates the zone of proximal development; that is, learning awakens a variety of internal development processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become a part of the child's independent developmental achievement (p. 90)

Fundamentally, group learning will precede and nurture individual development. If these

theories translate into the basic course context, students who work together in peer workshops should activate higher-level knowledge functions that currently exist within the ZPD but have yet to mature into actual mental capacity. In contrast, students who attempt to understand material independently should develop but not to the same extent.

While working together will allow peers to collaborate and construct shared meaning of the evaluation criteria in question, much of the knowledge demonstrated will stem from the student's own understanding of the material. Gallimore and Tharp (1990) identify four stages through which progress may occur in the ZPD. Stage I occurs when performance is assisted by more capable others (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990). Before students in the basic course classroom can fully function as independent agents with extensive understanding of assessment criteria, they must rely on the more capable instructor to regulate task performance through speech evaluation training. In Stage II, the individual performs the content independently (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990). A student entering stage II attempts to carry out a task without assistance from anyone else. Control is passed from the instructor to the student, who then begins to guide his or her own behavior through "self-directed speech" (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990, p. 186). Stage III focuses on the actual development and preservation of task execution (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990). After demonstrating an understanding of the grading criteria by assessing the work of a peer, students should internalize the knowledge surrounding the implementation of the criteria by applying it to their own work. Thus, student performance will no longer be developing, but will be fully developed in the mental capacity of the student. This illustrates a distancing from the social forces of change

initially helping peers in the workshops reach shared meaning (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990). Finally, stage IV refers to when the "deautomatization of performance leads to recursion through the zone of proximal development" (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990, p. 186). Progression through the initial three stages of the ZPD allows students attempting to use their new knowledge to recreate the regulation of performance developed from both self and other directed behavior (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990). Therefore, students who participate in peer workshops should be able to apply the shared construction of meaning regarding criteria content when trying to recall information in the future.

The instructor also plays a very important role in facilitating understanding through the student's ZPD. Hedegaard (1990) argues that the "zone of proximal development connects a general psychological perspective on child development with a pedagogical perspective on instruction" (p. 349). Instruction must be planned around students' obtainment of theoretical knowledge, or socially oriented knowledge that is tied together with the acquisition of skills from cognitive activity (Hedegaard, 1990). In order to guide development through the ZPD, instructors and teachers must connect learned course concepts to applied everyday concepts through what Hedegaard calls a *double move*. In instruction, the teacher must direct training on the basis of very general laws. This becomes evident through speech evaluation training using valid and universally recognized criteria. Second, children and students must self-direct themselves to an understanding of these general laws through actual examination of their existence. Thus, peer workshops become a perfect platform for implementing the *double move* on the basis of developing theoretical knowledge within the ZPD. While this conclusion is

tempered by the fact that the development of children serves as the foundation for these theories, little to no research exists examining the influence of equally capable peers just after exiting the phase of adolescence. With an understanding of how knowledge is created and constructed through the ZPD, it is important to look at the ways in which dialogic pedagogical tools have been utilized within the classroom.

Dialogue in the Basic Communication Course

In an effort to support innovative pedagogical knowledge building, Broeckelman (2005) calls for the introduction of dialogic teaching methods in the basic communication course. In more general terms, this idea is represented through cooperative and collaborative teaching methods in the classroom (Broeckelman, 2005). Increased student-student dialogue has the potential for greater student learning outcomes. According to her study, increased instructor-student and student-student dialogue in the classroom will result from 1) standardized grading rubrics, 2) instructor feedback prior to performance, 3) in-class peer workshops, and 4) peer evaluations (Broeckelman, 2005).

As previously reviewed, standardized grading rubrics can lead to increased levels of reliability across multiple sections of the basic communication course when paired with proper instructor training. Rubrics also lead to increased instructor-student dialogue through the explanation and clarification of the grading criteria (Broeckelman, 2005). Theoretically, an explanation of how students can achieve certain grades should lead to a greater level of shared understanding between the instructor and the student. This opens up a constructive dialogue between the instructor and the student. Research fails to address exactly how students use and apply this knowledge of the criteria to their own

work. Therefore, scholars and instructors must find ways to connect the constructed knowledge gained through instructor-student dialogue with student-student dialogue. To do this, students must apply their own understanding of how speeches will be graded. In Vygotsky's terms, students will work together to co-construct an understanding of the material and activate mental capacity stored with the ZPD.

Broeckelman's (2005) research contends that students should work with instructors to help determine the criteria that will be used in speech evaluation; however, speech evaluation training relies on valid criteria widely recognized as effective. Instead of students determining what makes a good speech, valid criteria allow instructors to remain consistent across multiple sections. Thus, students will work together to reinforce these ideas with one another. Using the speech evaluation criteria also connects student learners to societal expectations of speaking performance, reinforcing the development of theoretically based knowledge through the *double move*. The expectations given to students by the instructor should be developed through a wide range of scholarly research that reflects desired speaking competencies. Students will work together to understand these competencies, and they should leave the basic course with a greater understanding of what constitutes effective speech performance in the real world.

While Broeckelman (2005) addresses the importance of instructor feedback prior to speech performance, the present study slightly distances the instructor from the speech construction process by giving students greater responsibility over their own work. In support of this methodology, Bennett, Foreman-Peck, and Higgins (1996) argue, "people need to accept responsibility for their own learning, just as much as they need to accept

responsibility for the decisions they make in life" (p. 36). As speech evaluation training demonstrates, students should already have a greater understanding of the expectations of the instructor. Therefore, students should have the ability to translate these expectations when evaluating the work of their peers. Ultimately, this allows the instructor to focus on more general speech performance questions from students. For example, graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) at Illinois State University typically have basic communication course classes consisting of 23 students. When giving individualized feedback on rough drafts of students' work, the GTAs have a limited amount of time available to dedicate towards feedback. This could lead instructors to provide quick and inadequate feedback, rather than taking time to genuinely evaluate students' work. By giving students the opportunity to evaluate their own work, the instructor can supervise the process and ensure that students have a proper understanding of the criteria. If there is a misunderstanding between students working together, the instructor can dedicate the time and effort necessary to clarify the criteria.

Peer Workshops

Collaborating in the classroom helps clarify students' responsive understanding of grading criteria, while also increasing dialogue between peers (Broeckelman, 2005). Essentially, students will have the opportunity to self-direct their understanding of the teacher's guidance before having that knowledge co-constructed through a peer's feedback. Since a large portion of research on peer workshops exists within the context of composition classes, and 85% of a student's final grade is determined through speech construction and composition, it is appropriate to incorporate peer workshops into the

basic communication course. Broeckelman-Post, Titsworth, and Brazeal (2011) define the peer workshop as a "form of in-class supportive instruction in which students are given an opportunity to share drafts of their speeches and solicit constructive feedback from one another during the speech development process" (p. 222). Students participating in this process need to be familiar with course standards for quality work (Nilson, 2003). Thus, by using speech evaluation training to increase evaluation fidelity (Stitt et al. 2003), students should develop similar expectations regarding assignment criteria, which can then be demonstrated through peer workshops.

Peer workshops help facilitate instructor-initiated discussion amongst students, who then refine their understanding by comparing it to the understanding of a peer. In order for the workshop to be successful, it must be structured and formalized in a way that directly relates to speech evaluation training. Van Boxtel (2004) concludes that peer interaction in the classroom can contribute to learning in a positive way when it is characterized by talk about the concepts to be learned, elaborative contributions from the participants, a continuous attempt to achieve a shared understanding of the concepts, and productive use of tools that are available. Accordingly, the workshops must also be concerned with the expected grading criteria. Students should evaluate the work of their peers correctly and similarly to evaluations performed by the instructor. Additionally, peer workshops allow students to analyze whether the audience will receive the message the way the speaker intends for it to be received (Broeckelman, 2005). If a student recognizes that certain information will resonate well with their audience, then they should be more likely to include that information in both their current and future speech

performances.

As Broeckelman (2005) shows, student-student dialogue is extended throughout the entire speech development process by allowing peers to evaluate one another's final speech performance. Students are able to put themselves in the position of the instructor in order to truly test their own knowledge and understanding of the grading criteria. Vickerman (2009) extends this notion by stating that this dialogue allows students to gain valuable insight regarding their own performances. Peer evaluation forces students to step outside of their subjective, peer-norming roles to objectively decide whether or not a certain criterion was met. When another student successfully meets that criterion, students will inherently reflect and learn from the example of how the criterion is incorporated effectively. Finally, specific attention should be given to research concerning the advantages and disadvantages of peer feedback in the classroom.

Peer Feedback

Peer interaction in the classroom has been studied extensively (Broeckelman, 2005; Broeckelman-Post et al., 2011; Kao, 2013; Liu & Carless, 2006; Mazer & Thompson, 2011; McGarr & Clifford, 2013; Nilson, 2003; Nulty, 2011; Opt, 2012; Persons, 1998; Thompson & Mazer, 2009; Semlak, 2008; Topping, 1998; Vickerman, 2009). Although peer feedback and peer assessment apply some of the same principles, it is important to first distinguish between them. According to Liu and Carless (2006), peer feedback is "a communication process through which learners enter into dialogues related to performance and standards" (p. 280). More simply, students critique and evaluate one another's work without applying a grade (Nilson, 2003). Students participating in peer

feedback are only asked to provide comments about the work of another student (Semlak, 2008).

Liu and Carless (2006) provide three reasons why using peer feedback helps students take an active role in the management of their own learning. First, students get to actively engage in their evolving understanding of subject matter. Thus, students have the opportunity to talk and discuss their understanding of the criteria in order to reach an agreement. Second, peer feedback allows students to receive information about their work more frequently and quickly. As illustrated, it is often difficult for instructors, especially GTAs, to provide in-depth feedback on an individual basis in large classes. Peer feedback can be used as a means of overcoming this lack of instructor availability. Finally, peer feedback extends learning from a private domain, such as the case with self-assessment, to a more public space. Students are able to increase their own understanding of the material by articulating to others what they have learned. In the end, students begin to work out their understanding of objective assessment criteria by practicing it for one another.

Categories of Written Speech Feedback

In light of the peer feedback process described by Liu and Carless (2006), research should apply previous knowledge of written speech feedback, a tool commonly employed by instructors to let students know what parts of their speech performance need improvement and what parts adequately resemble the expected criteria, in addition to peer workshops (Reynolds et al., 2004). Specifically, researchers must analyze the feedback given in the peer-peer context. Little to no research currently exists regarding

the nature and type of written peer feedback in the basic communication course; however, Simonds et al. (2009) identified four specific types of comments that instructors give to students: positive non-descriptive, positive descriptive, negative, and constructive.

According to Simonds et al. (2009), positive non-descriptive comments inform the speaker that he or she did a good job, but they do not describe exactly how they accomplished a task. Examples of this type of feedback comment include: *nice references, good eye contact,* or *plus marks* (+). In contrast, positive descriptive comments specifically detail what the speaker did well, what the assessor liked, or how the speaker accomplished a task. This type of feedback typically includes more detailed comments such as: *good job of engaging your audience through the use of facial expression and eye contact, your visual aids are very professionally produced and incorporated smoothly into the presentation,* or *nice job incorporating full source citations into the flow of your presentation* (Simonds et al., 2009).

Negative comments critique or criticize a speech without offering suggestions for improvement. Examples of negative comments include: *poor eye contact, weak sources,* or *minus marks* (-). Constructive comments also acknowledge a speaker's need for improvement and provide specific directions on how to achieve that improvement. Constructive comments include remarks such as: *you need more eye contact, try using fewer note cards and gaze more directly with more of your audience,* or *your visual aids need to be bigger and bolder*. To help speakers improve future speeches, both student evaluators and instructor evaluators should focus primarily on using positive descriptive and constructive comments, as those with detailed suggestions for enhancement should

guide individual development and progress (Simonds et al., 2009).

In addition to the construction of these feedback categories, Simonds et al. (2009) conclude that instructors rely more on descriptive than prescriptive comments. This emphasizes the use of comments reflecting active behaviors of the speaker instead of comments offering suggestions for future development (Simonds et al., 2009). This also aligns with the finding by Reynolds et al. (2004) that students desire more negative face-threatening comments suggesting specific methods of improvement, rather than simple descriptions of their behaviors. Mazer et al. (2013) extend these findings even further through an assessment of written speech feedback comments made by students on self-evaluations of their own speeches. Interestingly, this study reveals that instructors fail to effectively train students on how to use speech evaluation criteria as justification for given scores. Students and instructors must learn to provide similar written feedback in order to justify scores and take full advantage of opportunities for increased learning (Mazer et al., 2013). Consequently, the current research addresses additional gaps in literature by examining the ability of students to demonstrate their understanding of criteria through written peer feedback.

Peer Assessment

While peer feedback focuses on developing learning through an exchange of dialogue, the difference in peer assessment is that an evaluator assigns a grade or other form of judgment to a peer's work (Semlak, 2008). Topping (1998) defines peer assessment "as an arrangement in which individuals consider the amount, level, value, worth, quality, or success of the products or outcomes of learning of peers of similar

status" (p. 250). After surveying students about their experience with peer assessment when grading classmates' written annotated bibliographies, Vickerman (2009) says students reported greater development of deep learning through enhancement of their ability to write and analyze critically. Bourner (2003) describes deep learning as the product of students asking reflective questions of what they have learned and how they have learned it in order to internalize their new knowledge. Bennett et al. (1996) also conclude that collaborative learning methods should be adopted in the classroom because of their tendency to result in deep learning. If Bourner's conceptualization is accurate, then peer workshops should result in enhanced deep learning for students through reflection of their understanding of the grading criteria. Instead of taking feedback for granted, students will utilize the assessment as a means for gaining insight into their own performances (Vickerman, 2009). This should be especially true for students who work together to develop shared understanding of evaluation criteria, as they will use each other as resources for finding answers to criteria-related questions. In a meta-analysis of studies concerning classroom peer assessment, Falchikov and Goldfinch (2000) show a correlation of 0.69 between peer assessed grades and instructor assessed grades. This finding presents analytical evidence that peers and instructors have the potential to reach high levels of evaluation fidelity. To test this claim, the present study seeks to incorporate aspects of peer feedback and assessment simultaneously. When viewing peer feedback as the learning element of peer assessment, research puts emphasis on how peer interaction can lead to greater understanding and learning for students, whether grades are present or not (Liu & Carless, 2006). Consequently, students who learn how to utilize these

interventions effectively recognize the potential value they have in helping them to develop important lifelong skills (Nilson, 2003).

Consequences of Peer Interaction

Despite the obvious benefits of using peer assessment and feedback in the instructional context, there are some negative effects. Students often find peer feedback useless because of an assumption that the instructor is the only real audience (Nilson, 2003). Nilson also claims that the biggest drawback of peer feedback comes from the students themselves. Students may not be engaged to one another's work, focus primarily on trivial errors such as spelling and grammar rather than content, or provide inaccurate feedback based on the ambiguity of the evaluation criteria (Nilson, 2003). Instructors must also recognize the different learning styles of students (Vickerman, 2009). A standardized process such as speech evaluation training often does not account for individual student experiences, background knowledge, or mental development that may influence overall understanding. Broeckelman-Post et al. (2011) posit that the relationships that develop when students work together place additional pressure and build expectations for students who do not want to disappoint or embarrass themselves in front of their peers. Last, Bennett et al. (1996) argue that students who take responsibility for the management of their own learning have increased time and resource organization issues. Consequently, these students may react negatively to an instructor's dissemination of responsibility due to perceptions of the instructor as the expert on the content matter. Instructors want to avoid making students feel they have been abandoned and left to fend for themselves. The present study will alleviate this issue by introducing speech

evaluation training. Speech evaluation training will clarify and explicitly demonstrate the aims of the project and the assessment criteria. Despite the identification of these disadvantages, the benefits that come from giving students an opportunity to practice using the evaluation criteria and reflect upon their own level of learning make peer feedback an important tool for the growth of communication education.

Summary and Research Objectives

Through the incorporation of peer workshops and speech-evaluation training, the study seeks to refine methods of criterion-based instruction to better prepare students to meet course outcomes (Simonds et al., 2009). Simonds et al. (2009) also indicated, "expanding the present assessment effort to include the perspective of students would help to better understand learning in the basic course" (p. 90). Broeckelman's (2005) study opened the door for future research regarding dialogic teaching methods by indicating that peer workshops lead to an increase in cognitive learning. The present study expands and improves upon her ideas by incorporating standardized, valid, and formal measures for training students to effectively work together and evaluate speeches. With an indispensable goal of criterion-based assessment being to increase evaluation fidelity between instructors and students (Simonds et al., 2009), the current research strengthens knowledge of the three major functions of teaching in the classroom: enabling learning, making decisions, and managing the classroom (Hunt et al., 2002).

Research on peer assessment and peer feedback indicates that both interventions have the potential for showing positive effects on students' achievement and attitude (Semlak, 2008; Topping, 1998). Students in classrooms using these principles report

learning benefits and increased clarity of grading criteria (Topping, 1998). Consequently, both peer assessment and peer feedback are viable instruments for implementation into the classroom context. According to Semlak, efforts need to be made to boost the credibility of peer reviewers by helping students and instructors recognize similar methods of improvement when evaluating oral or written presentations. These methods of communication by students should not be thought of as simply means to impress instructors for a grade, but tools for learning what communication truly means (Nilson, 2003). Thus, the first two research questions will seek to address the issue of whether or not students perceived themselves to offer feedback to their peers, along with whether or not they perceived their peers to actually incorporate that feedback:

RQ_1: Do students across the independent conditions perceive themselves to offer different amounts of feedback to their peers?

RQ_2: Do students across the independent conditions have different perceptions regarding the amount of peer feedback actually incorporated into speeches?

Students should be able to critically reflect on their observations to learn from the mistakes and strengths of peers (Semlak, 2008). In addition, as students work together to evaluate and critique each other's speeches, they are likely to reduce their uncertainty about the type of work that differentiates "A," "B," and "C" evaluations. If students are given an entire class period to evaluate and assess peers' speeches, then it should allow for more concise, detailed, and accurate feedback than a GTA can offer to everyone. Consequently, the third research question will examine the relationship between amounts

of feedback perceived to occur through collaboration between peers and student speech scores:

RQ_3: Did students who experienced greater levels of peer feedback score higher on the final instructor evaluation of speech performance than students who perceived less peer feedback in class?

Topping (1998) argues that peer evaluation of writing has the potential to be "at least as good as teacher assessment and sometimes better" (p. 262). In order to explore claims such as this and determine whether or not peer evaluations should be utilized within the basic communication course, the current assessment looks to analyze the type and frequency of written feedback comments occurring in the context of students evaluating one another's speeches. At the same time, Mazer et al. (2013) highlight the lack of a relationship between the number of student comments provided and the score on student self-evaluated speeches. Thus, researchers must also examine whether the number of feedback comments made by peers relates to the assessment score given to a speaker. To address these issues, the following research questions are proposed:

RQ_4: What types of written feedback comments are used when students evaluate oral speech performances of their peers?

RQ_5: What type of written feedback comments are used most often when students evaluate oral speech performances of their peers?

RQ_6: What is the relationship between the number of student feedback comments and students' overall peer-assessed scores?

According to Mazer et al. (2013), evaluation fidelity is conceptualized as "a

shared understanding of meaning between those doing the evaluating and those being evaluated in terms of established performance criteria" (p. 344). When instructors teach standardized evaluation criteria and introduce it into the peer workshop context, students examine their own understanding of the assessment criteria by practicing it on the work of their peers. Although peer feedback does not always match the rating of a professional, Topping (1998) argued that higher levels of frequency, volume, and immediacy make up for this loss. It can reasonably be assumed that peer workshops will strengthen evaluation fidelity between instructors and students. Thus, the following hypotheses will be tested:

H_1: Instructors who incorporate peer workshops after providing students with speech evaluation training will achieve a higher level of evaluation fidelity (instructor-student-peer agreement) than instructors who only provide speech evaluation training and do not offer peer workshops.

H_2: Instructors who only provide speech evaluation training and not peer workshops will achieve a higher level of evaluation fidelity (instructor-student-peer agreement) than instructors who do not provide speech evaluation training or use peer workshops.

This chapter reviewed literature on assessment efforts in the basic communication course, uncertainty reduction in the classroom, speech rater training and errors, speech evaluation fidelity, Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the zone of proximal development, peer workshops, peer feedback, categories of written feedback, and peer assessment to provide a substantial rationale for this thesis. The next section presents both the quantitative and qualitative methodology for this thesis.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

This chapter describes the specific methodology behind the current research. The information is divided into several important sections outlining both the quantitative and qualitative procedures. The first section offers a detailed description of the participants. The next section distinguishes between the specific quantitative procedures and qualitative procedures followed in order to conduct the research. The remaining portion contains information related to measurement, quantitative data analysis, and qualitative data analysis.

Participants

A call to participate was put out to second-year graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) of the basic communication course at a large Midwestern university. Although this reduces the amount of randomness included in the study, the motivation behind the selection was that instructors with course experience and syllabus flexibility could easily incorporate the study design into their teaching schedules. Nine instructors voluntarily agreed to incorporate the study design into their classroom curriculum. In addition, a total of (N = 117) students enrolled in multiple sections of the basic communication course at the same university participated in the assessment.

For the qualitative portion of the study, the sample of participants included only those students receiving formalized speech evaluation training, or experimental group

one. Despite 69 potential evaluations across the three sections included in this group, peer evaluations for a total of 51 students enrolled the basic course were collected. Coders reduced the sample due to student absences during the speech period and uninterpretable feedback comments. The redaction of student names resulted in extra protection of participant confidentiality. No demographic information was directly collected for this study. Based on the information available, it could not be determined whether the sample consisted primarily of males or females. Additionally, the study allowed students from all years, including freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors to provide data. All students participating in the research through the collection of their speech evaluation forms provided informed consent to contribute information to the study.

Quantitative Procedures

Speech Evaluation Training

As part of their assistantship, all GTAs participated in an extensive two-week training program that included formal speech evaluation training. In a continuation of the literature on evaluation fidelity, this study utilized the same formal training program designed by Stitt et al. (2003). This training program (a) distinguishes and explains assessment criteria relating to each speech category; (b) illustrates effective instructor feedback; (c) instructs trainees on how to provide scores and give appropriate feedback; and (d) provides examples of performances, references, and outlines of two speeches presented by the same speaker on the same topic. All participating instructors then delivered the same training to their students during a designated class period. Thus, instructors across multiple sections should perceive themselves to have received the same

training (Lawton & Braz, 2011), while students should also develop similar expectations for what separates an "A" speech from a "C" speech using the "Criteria for Evaluating Speeches" form.

Experimental Design

Three of the instructors were randomly assigned to a control group, three instructors were randomly assigned to experimental group one, and three instructors were randomly assigned to experimental group two. The three instructors in the control group informed their students that speech evaluation materials are available for them to use; however, they did not provide formal training or implement peer workshops into the class structure. Instructors in experimental group one provided their students with formalized speech evaluation training, but they did not implement the peer workshop pedagogy into their respective lesson plans (see Appendix A). Lastly, instructors in experimental group two provided their students with formalized speech evaluation training while also implementing the peer workshops into the general class structure (see Appendix B). The assessment procedures were incorporated as part of the basic course curriculum, as previous research demonstrates increased levels of student performance when speech evaluation training materials are integrated into the basic course (Stitt et al., 2003). Therefore, all students benefitted in some manner through their participation.

Peer Workshops

In addition to speech evaluation training, instructors in experimental group two received instructions on how to conduct peer workshops in the classroom. For the peer workshops, instructors randomly assigned students into pairs. Following this

randomization, students formally assessed one another's written speech outlines by providing specific, criterion-based feedback and a tentative grade. In addition to knowledge of the criteria, speech evaluation training includes information on the proper methods of providing constructive feedback to speech outlines. For each portion of the instructor evaluation form, students assessed the outlines by providing a grade of "A," "B," "C," or "D." At the same time, students should have practiced identifying relevant pieces of one another's outlines that did not meet the "A" portion of the grading criteria. Thus, students should have provided each other with relevant feedback based on the evaluation criteria regarding how to improve their speeches. The students then applied the feedback to their outlines before their final presentations. For the control group, the respective instructor determined the structure of the individual speech workday. Student assignments for the individual workday included finding relevant sources, brief individual meetings with the instructor, and applying assessment criteria to their own speech outlines.

After the implementation of either the peer workshop or the individual workday, students applied changes to their outlines in order to prepare for final their presentations. Evaluation fidelity was measured for the control group, experimental group one, and experimental group two through three separate evaluations of the same speech from three different sources: the instructor, the peer, and the self (see Appendices C, D, and E). Instructors in all three groups assessed students' speeches using the "Criteria for Evaluating Speeches" instructor evaluation form. Instructors and partnered peers evaluated oral speech performances simultaneously, while the student responsible for the

speech provided a self-evaluation based on a filmed version of the performance for all three conditions. Thus, the researcher obtained instructor, peer, and self-assessments, which were then used to analyze achieved levels of evaluation fidelity. By comparing the three independent groups, research addressed whether or not students improved their performance with the incorporation of peer workshops and speech evaluation training. As mentioned previously, student names were redacted from the assessed speeches. Data were also only collected for one speech, as previous research indicates that ratings of multiple speeches are extraordinarily consistent over time (Miller, 1964).

Qualitative Procedures

As noted, instructors asked students to assess an assigned peer's oral speech performance utilizing an evaluation form mirroring the instructor evaluation form used course wide. This form consisted of the following subcategories: Outline and References, Introduction, Body, Conclusion, Delivery, and Overall Impression. In addition, this is the same "Criteria for Evaluating Speeches" form used by Stitt et al. (2003) in their study on speech evaluation fidelity. Instructors asked students to provide a score for each respective category, an overall speech score, and most importantly for this portion of analysis, detailed comments explaining the rationale behind each individual score with the grading criteria. Thus, students provided comments as justification for their assessed scores.

Unitizing

Krippendorf (1980) defines the process of unitizing as identifying units, distinguishing them along defined boundaries, and selecting them for future analyses.

Individual student comments served as idea units for the present study. This type of thought unit represents an assertion, which signifies a single idea representing a single piece of information extracted from context of the larger whole (Budd, Thorp, & Donohew, 1967). Two graduate students extensively trained in qualitative methods participated in open coding of the data. Through this process, coder one identified 263 idea units within the sample, while coder two identified 249 idea units. This resulted in an acceptable unitizing reliability using Guetzkow's (1950) index of $U = .027$, indicating approximately 98.3% agreement between the coders in identifying the number of idea units to be categorized. After establishing unitizing reliability, the independent coders revisited the data with knowledge of individual discrepancies to produce a final sample of 280 idea units.

Categorizing

Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe categorization as a means through which individual units are sorted and placed into categories based on their surface level characteristics. In staying true to the features of an *etic* qualitative analysis, the researcher evaluated student comments on the basis of Simonds et al.'s (2009) four existing categories of speech feedback, reflecting the deductive nature of this specific form of content analysis. When conducting this specific type of analysis, researchers begin with existing ideas, theories, and perspectives in order to see if they apply in new contexts (Lett, 1990). This broad categorization includes student feedback comments labeled positive non-descriptive, positive descriptive, negative, and constructive (Simonds et al., 2009). Research must analyze the extent to which students use different types of speech

feedback comments in order to increase validity of the speech evaluation process, as well as identify specific areas for student speech improvement. In order to ensure a high standard of qualitative research, the researcher used a journal as an analytical tool to help identify the presence of potential biases and assumptions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This journalizing process helped to preserve the objectivity of the study, as well as bolster the truthfulness of the findings by revealing the researcher's thoughts and biases throughout this portion of the thesis.

Pilot Testing and Finalized Coding

From the 280 identified assertions, the coders selected the first 10 idea units (n = 30) from each individual class, or 10.7% of the data, to test the applicability and practicality of Simonds et al.'s (2009) categories. Although the categories were developed within this same classroom context, the coders wanted to ensure adequacy and develop coding guidelines by pilot testing the available information. Each coder reviewed the data and placed student feedback comments into a respective category. Upon completion of the data analysis, the researchers located points of disagreement, established coding rules, and repeated the process. This iterative procedure helped determine that the categories provided by Simonds et al. (2009) fit the data well. Coders placed individual idea units not fitting within the categories developed by Simonds et al. (2009) into a new category labeled "Other."

Measurement

Perceptions of peer interaction, evaluation fidelity, and student speech scores served as dependent variables for this study. Students recalled the experience with their

specific instructor after receiving speech evaluation training and participating in either the peer workshop (experiment) or individual speech workday (control).

Manipulation Check

In order to determine if students perceived differences across the three conditions, the researcher performed a manipulation check. Students were asked to provide responses to two scenarios regarding the amount of peer feedback they perceived themselves to offer prior to delivering their speeches and the amount of feedback they perceived their peers to actually incorporate prior to delivering their speeches (see Appendix F). The questions were concerned with perceptions of feedback located at different parts of the speech such as the introduction and body. In total, the manipulation check included two questions as they related to the five different parts of the speech: "I offered feedback to my peer regarding their…" and "My peer incorporated my feedback into their…" Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* (1) to *Strongly Agree* (5).

Final Speech Grades

For the basic communication course, student final grades are determined based on the speech evaluation score given by the respective instructor. Upon securing permission from participating students, each participating instruction provided the researcher with access to a pooled collection of instructor evaluation scores (final grades) for the entire class. In order to increase participant anonymity, names were redacted from the evaluations, and the researcher did not know which scores belong to which students. A range of 10 points separated evaluation scores of "A", "B", "C", and "D", respectively.

Evaluation Fidelity Strength

Evaluation fidelity strength was determined by comparing final instructor scores to the scores provided by both peer evaluators and the students themselves. For each speech presentation, the summation of the absolute difference between scores was collected from the final instructor-evaluated score, the final peer-evaluated score, and the final self-assessed score. After receiving difference scores for the entire class, a mean difference was calculated to represent the average distance between instructor-graded speeches, peer-graded speeches, and self-assessed speeches for the entire class. Previous research on evaluation fidelity (Mazer et al., 2013; Stitt et al., 2003) indicates that these scores should not be significantly different. Statistical tests then determined whether experimental group one, experimental group two, or the control group achieved a higher level of evaluation fidelity over the course of the speeches.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

This study uses a post-test only control group experimental design featuring two control variables, exposure to the peer workshop and formalized speech evaluation training. Scores for instructor, peer, and self-evaluations were collected and measured for six individual assessment categories on the instructor evaluation rubric, as well as the overall total score of the speech. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test both RQ_1 and RQ_2. For RQ_3, another ANOVA tested for differences between the final instructor evaluation score in each independent condition. Last, a fourth and final ANOVA assessed H_1 and H_2 by testing for a difference in the strength of evaluation

fidelity in each independent condition. This analysis occurs by comparing the summation of the mean absolute distance between instructor, peer, and self-assessed scores in the control group, experimental group one, and experimental group two. The sum of the distances between the peer assessed scores and the self-assessed scores to the instructor score indicates how far apart the groups are in their evaluations of the speech. After all 23 scores were collected for each individual class, a mean difference score was calculated to indicate the average total distance between peer, instructor, and self-assessed scores in the class. This mean distance was then compared for the experimental and control groups to determine which condition achieved the strongest levels of agreement with their instructors in relation to the grading criteria. The researcher relied on the .05 level of significance for all statistical tests.

Qualitative Analysis

To answer RQ_4, the individual coders proceeded to place the student feedback comments from the sample into five broad categories. The coding rules established during the pilot test and agreed on by the coders guided this categorization process. Through these rules, and the *a priori* development of categories, a sufficient inter-rater reliability was produced and Cohen's Kappa = .814 (Cohen, 1960). The independent coders only returned to the data twice to resolve disagreements.

To analyze RQ_5, the researcher compared the frequencies with which feedback comments occurred within each category. Next, a one-variable chi-square test compared whether the observed values significantly differed from the expected values for each category. Last, a Pearson product moment correlation between the number of feedback

comments provided on the forms and the overall peer-assessed scores addressed RQ_6.

This chapter presented a description of the methodology behind the thesis. Specifically, information pertaining to the participants, experimental design, measurements, and data analysis procedures were outlined in detail. The next chapter explains the results of the assessment.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

This chapter presents a coherent summary of the results of the thesis. First, the results of the manipulation check in relation to the first two research questions are presented. Next, the remaining quantitative results of the study will be examined in relation to the research questions and hypotheses that guide the study. Third, additional tests were conducted to act as a supplement to the quantitative findings. Finally, qualitative data are presented according to the direction determined by the remaining research questions.

Research Question One

In order to assess the effectiveness and overall value of peer workshops as positive enhancers of speech evaluation fidelity, students must perceive differences in the amount of interaction they perceived to have with peers during the speech process. RQ_1 focused on determining the amount of feedback a student perceived to offer to their partnered peer or peers. A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) compared the average amount of perceived feedback offered for students within each independent condition. No significant difference was found $F(2,134) = .192$, $p = .825$. Thus, students from within each one of the three conditions did not perceive to offer different amounts of feedback to one another (see Table 1). Students in the control group had a mean score of 4.02 ($SD = .94$). Students who received speech evaluation training (experimental

group one) had a mean score of 3.94 (*SD* = .93). Last, students who received speech evaluation training and participated in the peer workshops, or experimental group two, had a mean score of 4.05 (*SD* = .61). The non-significant results raise alarming questions about the procedural nature of the assessment process, as students participating in the peer workshop should have theoretically experienced more opportunity to provide feedback to their peers.

Table 1

One-Way Analysis of Variance for Peer's Perceptions of Feedback Offered

Source	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Between Groups	2	.278	.139	.192	.825
Within Groups	134	96.911	.723		
Total	136	97.189			

Research Question Two

RQ_2 measured the extent to which students perceived their peers to incorporate the feedback provided to them. The researcher computed a one-way ANOVA to compare the average level of feedback students perceived their peers to incorporate across three different conditions. A significant difference was found among the conditions $F(2,135) = 17.342$, $p < .01$ (see Table 2). A Tukey's HSD was used to locate specific differences between each of the conditions. The Tukey's analysis showed that students in the control group perceived peers to incorporate less feedback ($M = 2.66$, $SD = 1.44$, $n = 59$) than students in experimental group one ($M = 3.48$, $SD = .95$, $n = 36$) and experimental group two ($M = 3.97$, $SD = .68$, $n = 43$). Students in experimental group one and experimental group two did not significantly differ from one another. Thus, the second manipulation

check shows evidence of a successful manipulation between the control group and the groups that received speech evaluation training. At the same, there was no perceived difference between the group that received only speech evaluation training and the group that received training and participated in the peer workshops.

Table 2

One-Way Analysis of Variance for Peer's Perceptions of Feedback Incorporated

Source	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Between Groups	2	44.165	22.083	17.342	.000
Within Groups	135	171.900	1.273		
Total	137	215.065			

Research Question Three

To analyze the relationship between perceived amounts of peer interaction in the classroom and student speech scores, the researcher computed another ANOVA. The manipulation check indicated a difference between each independent condition in regards to the amount of peer interaction occurring within each distinct classroom setting. The ANOVA helped determine whether these perceived differences in levels of interaction with peers on speeches had an overall effect on the final instructor evaluation score. No significant difference was found $F(2,114) = .186$, $p = .830$. Consequently, it can be concluded that greater levels of perceived peer interaction in the basic communication course classroom do not result in students achieving higher speech scores (see Table 3). Students in the control group received a mean instructor evaluation score of 87.69 (SD = 7.92, n = 49), while students in experimental group one received a mean instructor evaluation score of 87.22 (SD = 8.26, n = 36).Next, students in experimental group two

received a mean instructor evaluation score of 86.53 (*SD* = 9.16, *n* = 32). This finding raises doubt about both the validity and relevance of peer workshops in the classroom; however, the presence of virtually identical mean instructor evaluation scores has important implications for the nature of instructor speech evaluation training.

Table 3

One-Way Analysis of Variance for Final Instructor Evaluation Scores

Source	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Between Groups	2	26.170	13.085	.186	.830
Within Groups	114	8000.099	70.176		
Total	116	8026.269			

Hypotheses One and Two

Finally, H_1 and H_2 were analyzed together using a final ANOVA test. The rationale behind the respective hypotheses came from previous research indicating greater levels of instructor-student agreement for classes who received training on how to implement criteria effectively. Additionally, previous literature and theory points to a belief that speech evaluation fidelity will be enhanced by giving students greater exposure to the criteria through peer interaction. This should result in greater similarity between the ways students and instructors grade the same speeches. Despite this notion, no significant difference was found between any of the independent conditions $F(2,114) = .240$, $p = .787$, rejecting both H_1 and H_2. Thus, the results indicate that the strength of evaluation fidelity does not differ based on the amount of perceived peer interaction in the classroom (see Table 4). Taking the average distance between both the self-evaluation and peer-evaluation from the final instructor evaluation, students in the control group

had a mean evaluation fidelity score of 7.04 (*SD* = 4.35, *n* = 49). Using this same measure, students in experimental group one had a mean evaluation fidelity score of 7.35 (*SD* = 5.07, *n* = 36) and students in experimental group two had a mean evaluation fidelity score of 7.89 (*SD*= 6.92, *n* = 32). When considering the range of 10 points that separates "A", "B", "C", and "D" speech scores, the results suggest that students and instructors can evaluate speeches with similar accuracy. These findings are also conceptually different from those of Brockelman (2005), which indicated a link between the inclusion of peer workshops and an increase in cognitive learning. However, future operationalization and testing is necessary to fully justify this difference.

Table 4

One-Way Analysis of Variance for Strength of Evaluation Fidelity

Source	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Between Groups	2	13.878	6.939	.240	.787
Within Groups	114	3289.862	28.858		
Total	116	3303.740			

Additional Quantitative Tests

In order to look at this contradiction more closely, the researcher conducted the same analysis using the same measurement for evaluation fidelity for each component portion of the speech evaluation rubric. For the *Outline and References* component, an ANOVA revealed no significant difference between any of the independent conditions $F(2,89) = .060$, $p = .941$. There was no change in the strength of evaluation fidelity for the control group (*M* = 1.14, *SD* = 1.31, *n* = 36), experimental group one (*M* = 1.19, *SD* = 1.65, *n* = 27), and experimental group two (*M* = 1.26, *SD* = 1.24, *n* = 29). For the

Introduction component, an ANOVA revealed no significant difference between any of the independent conditions $F(2,112) = 1.40$, $p = .252$. There was no change in the strength of evaluation fidelity for the control group ($M = 1.63$, $SD = 1.52$, $n = 48$), experimental group one ($M = 2.23$, $SD = 1.73$, $n = 35$), and experimental group two ($M = 1.88$, $SD = 1.65$, $n = 32$). For the *Body* component, an ANOVA revealed no significant difference between any of the independent conditions $F(2,113) = .320$, $p = .727$. There was no change in the strength of evaluation fidelity for the control group ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 2.08$, $n = 48$), experimental group one ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 2.33$, $n = 36$), and experimental group two ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 1.90$, $n = 32$). For the *Conclusion* component, an ANOVA revealed no significant difference between any of the independent conditions $F(2,113) = .573$, $p = .566$. There was no change in the strength of evaluation fidelity for the control group ($M = 1.34$, $SD = 1.11$, $n = 48$), experimental group one ($M = 1.22$, $SD = 1.09$, $n = 36$), and experimental group two ($M = 1.51$, $SD = 1.17$, $n = 32$). For the *Delivery* component, an ANOVA revealed no significant difference between any of the independent conditions $F(2,113) = .412$, $p = .663$. There was no change in the strength of evaluation fidelity for the control group ($M = 1.53$, $SD = 1.01$, $n = 48$), experimental group one ($M = 1.65$, $SD = 1.00$, $n = 36$), and experimental group two ($M = 1.73$, $SD = 0.88$, $n = 32$). Last, for the *Overall* component, an ANOVA revealed no significant difference between any of the independent conditions $F(2,106) = 2.04$, $p = .136$. There was no change in the strength of evaluation fidelity for the control group ($M = 1.53$, $SD = 1.01$, $n = 45$), experimental group one ($M = 1.59$, $SD = 1.63$, $n = 35$), and experimental group two ($M = 2.37$, $SD = 2.87$, $n = 29$). These results show consistency across the

entire evaluation form and statistically similar levels of speech evaluation fidelity within each condition. Despite the prevalence of non-significant results, these findings should have important ramifications for the structure and use of both speech evaluation training and peer workshops as pedagogical strategies in the communication classroom.

Research Question Four

RQ_4 focused on the types of written feedback comments used by students when evaluating their classmates. The content analysis used feedback comment categories initially developed by Simonds et al. (2009) to describe instructor speech feedback to students. Since speech evaluation training theoretically gives students and instructors the ability to grade speeches at a consistent and similar level, researchers wanted to discover whether the types of feedback comments used by students mirrored those used by instructors.

Positive Non-Descriptive

The first category of speech feedback comments, *positive non-descriptive*, demonstrates that a speaker did something well, but stop short of providing detailed explanations for why or how specific behaviors benefitted the speech. Specific examples of this type of comment included assertions like *good attention getter*, *good use of space*, and *awesome vocal variety*. These messages also included check marks or plus signs, possibly as indications that the speaker made sure to include each portion of the outline in speech. Overall, the positive non-descriptive comments reinforced the evaluator's approval of a portion of the outline without identifying the speaker's specific behaviors. The lack of specificity of the positive non-descriptive comments, tied in with the high

inference nature of the feedback, makes it difficult for students to implement this type of feedback into future speeches.

Positive Descriptive

The second category of speech feedback comments, *positive descriptive*, used low inference language to specifically identify the successful behaviors of the speaker. Comments in this category included *good summary which covered all main points of speech* and *I'm glad that you explained the times the fairy tale authors published*. Simonds et al. (2009) identify positive descriptive comments as desirable because of their ability to reduce students' uncertainty regarding which behaviors they should keep and use again for future speeches. In order to provide positive descriptive comments, students need to familiarize themselves with the criteria, pay close attention to the speech performance, and provide detailed justifications for why and how a behavior helped the speaker achieve their goals.

Negative

The third category of speech feedback comments, *negative*, specify a speaker's poorly performed behavior without providing specific suggestions how they could improve their speaking behavior. Examples of negative comments included *did not mention citation*, *didn't make it due to time*, and *a little unclear*. Interestingly, the negative comments often accompanied positive disclaimers. For instance, students commented that the speaker *rushed through, but did [a] full conclusion* and *I think it's overall effective, but sometimes I think you skip around too much*. Although this indicates a combination of both positive non-descriptive comments and negative comments, the

researchers acted under the assumption that the evaluator's main goal was to provide a negative critique of the student's performance. Examples of negative comments also included minus signs, which could indicate a speaker's omission of certain speech requirements or negative behaviors not meeting the speech standards.

Constructive

The fourth category of speech feedback comments, *constructive*, both acknowledge a speaker's need for improvement and provide specific directions on how to achieve it. Student feedback comments falling into this category gave specific instructions for how the speaker may improve for their next public speaking performance. For example, comments included phrases such as *maybe move to a different spot in the room* and *poor eye contact – use fewer note cards*. Similar to comments made in the *negative* category, many students provided positive qualifiers as supplements to their constructive comments. For instance, one student commented that *you did a good job, just work on delivery and making your speech flow*.

Neutral Observation

Researchers placed student feedback comments not falling within the four categories defined by Simonds et al. (2009) into a broad category labeled "Other." At the completion of the analysis, coders determined that these comments shared a similar theme: neutrality. This category generally included statements made by the evaluator regarding their level of interest in the topic at hand or simpy acknowledging a speaker's main points. For example, a student may have written *lots of history* as a comment regarding the body a presentation. Comments such as this have no positive, negative, or

constructive distinction from which a student could develop a comprehensive level of feedback. Thus, the coders put forth the development of a new category, *Neutral Observation*, unique to the peer evaluations.

Research Question Five

RQ_5 asked about the frequency with which students used positive non-descriptive, positive descriptive, negative, constructive, and additional types of comments in their peer evaluations. Table 5 demonstrates the relative frequencies of each type of written feedback that occurred. Clearly, students used positive non-descriptive comments (n = 150) most frequently, accounting for 53.6% of the data. Next, negative comments (n = 59) constituted 21.1% of the data, while constructive comments (n = 37) made up 13.2% of sample. Comments falling in the neutral observation category (n = 18) accounted for 6.4% of the data. Last, positive descriptive comments (n = 16) were fifth in terms of frequency at 5.7% (see Table 5).

A one-sample Chi square goodness of fit test compared the observed frequencies for each category with the expected values. The results revealed significant deviance from the expected values $\chi^2(4) = 218.75$, $p < .001$. Positive non-descriptive and negative comments occurred with greater frequency than expected. Thus, it appears that students are more likely to resort to using positive non-descriptive comments, followed by negative comments, constructive comments, neutral comments, and positive descriptive comments.

Table 5

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Written Student Feedback Comments

Type of Feedback	Frequency	Percent	χ^2
Positive Non-Descriptive	150 (94)	53.6	218.75**
Positive Descriptive	16 (-40)	5.7	
Negative	59 (3)	21.1	
Constructive	37 (-19)	13.2	
Neutral Observation	18 (-38)	6.4	

Research Question 6

RQ_6 sought to examine the existence of a relationship between the number of student feedback comments provided and the overall peer-assessed score. After conducting a Pearson product-moment correlation test, no correlation between the two variables was found $r(49) = .035$, $p = .809$. Therefore, the number of student feedback comments provided is not related to the overall score provided by the peer.

This chapter presented an overview of both the quantitative and qualitative results of the thesis. The next chapter offers further discussion of the results including theoretical and pedagogical implications. In addition, the chapter also identifies limitations of the assessment and recommends potential areas for future development in this area of study.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Researchers in the basic communication course constantly use assessment to drive program change and meet new educational objectives. Some of the previous work done in this area has highlighted both effective and ineffective implementations of specific training methods used to educate students within criterion-based grading systems (Mazer et al., 2013; Reynolds et al., 2004; Simonds et al., 2009; Stitt et al., 2003). Consequently, more research must be done to identify potential areas of application and development throughout the basic course. In doing so, basic course directors and instructors can ensure the growth of pedagogical content knowledge that includes strategies to cope with the changing nature of the general education curriculum (Valenzano, 2013).

This thesis begins by reviewing literature related to the implementation of objective grading systems and the inclusion of pedagogy focused on peer interaction within the classroom. The results of the study suggest that the peer evaluation context and subsequent knowledge construction process may be an overall reflection of the state of the basic communication course at this particular institution. In assessing the use of peer workshops as a strategy for reducing student uncertainty, it is clear that students are interacting and developing their knowledge of the course standards both within and outside of the classroom. With multiple speech evaluation training resources and outlets available, participants in this study demonstrated a similar and coherent understanding of

the criteria used to determine their grades across conditions. Despite manipulations across the conditions, students were able to utilize the shared information available to all sections of the basic communication course to their personal advantage. However, Mazer et al. (2013) state that instructors must focus more of their training time on teaching students how to provide effective feedback, and the current results appear to mirror this finding as the next step in refining the basic communication course.

Using an experimental design featuring both quantitative and qualitative methods, the goal of this thesis was to provide an assessment of the effectiveness of speech evaluation training and introduce a potential new pedagogical strategy aimed at reducing student uncertainty. The research encompassed three levels of speech evaluation scores (instructor, self, and peer), as compared to past research only including two levels of evaluation (instructor and self) (Stitt et al., 2003). The quantitative measures benefit the research by allowing the mean scores for perceived amounts of interaction, final instructor evaluation scores, and evaluation fidelity strength to be compared across three independent conditions. The qualitative methods allow for an in-depth examination of the type and nature of the written feedback comments used by students when evaluating their peers. Thus, both of these methods should be evaluated together as a cause-and-effect argument for future facilitation of speech evaluation training in the basic communication course.

In this chapter, a summary of the quantitative and qualitative data is provided. The chapter also discusses the pedagogical and theoretical implications of the findings, highlights the limitations of the study, and offers specific suggestions for future research.

Summary of Findings

Quantitative Analysis

The research questions were essentially concerned with examining the relationships between the amounts of feedback perceived to be incorporated in the communication classroom and the final overall score provided by peers, instructors, and the students themselves. Along similar lines, the two hypotheses predicted that students receiving the opportunity to participate in peer workshops would develop greater levels of speech-evaluation fidelity, or instructor-student agreement, compared to those experiencing less perceived opportunities for peer feedback. While the hypotheses were not supported and the majority of research questions proved inconclusive (i.e., the data failed to reveal any significant different between any of the three independent conditions), the results of the assessment remain significant to both the field of communication education and development of the basic course.

As previous literature has indicated (Broeckelman, 2005; Broeckelman-Post et al., 2011), students experience increased learning outcomes through structured peer interaction in the classroom like peer workshops; however, the current study indicated no such outcome. Perhaps the unique nature and standardization of the basic course at this particular institution can explain the lack of influence from this form of pedagogy. The differences across conditions included exposure to both formalized training and the incorporation of a peer workshop, yet all students had the same access to speech evaluation training resources. It might be assumed that because of their shared access to these resources, students worked together both within and outside of the classroom to

create an understanding of the objective evaluation criteria. Thus, the results of the thesis would suggest that students are using the class resources available to them (grading rubrics, spiral workbooks, etc.) in order to lower their uncertainty regarding the speech evaluation process. Students have access to these important models of expected performance both within and outside of the classroom long before the delivery of their first formal speech. The students' awareness of these resources allows them to develop a strong familiarity with the criteria that will determine their grades, as well as the expectations of their instructors. This brings extra significance to the qualitative portion of the study through the identification of students' training needs, despite the evidence suggesting increased knowledge of evaluation criteria through the required course materials.

Qualitative Analysis

This qualitative portion of the study attempted to fill existing gaps in communication education literature in two ways. First, the research examined the nature of written speech feedback comments provided by one peer when evaluating another peer's speech. Second, the study investigated the relationship between the number of written feedback comments and students' assessed speech scores to see if previously researched relationships exist when instructors extended speech evaluation training to their classes. By understanding these relationships, researchers can continue to develop the basic communication course as a testing ground for communication theory, as well as promote positive speech pedagogy for instructors and students alike.

For the fourth research question, the results of the content analysis indicate the

emergence of a new type of written feedback category: *Neutral Observation*. As stated earlier, these comments do not contain a positive or negative valence or offer advice for future directions. They typically featured remarks about general aspects of the speech such as a list of the speaker's main points that the observer noticed throughout the presentation. Although comments fell into this category with little frequency, the development of such a category still has specific implications for the nature of peer feedback and assessment in the classroom. First, this type of comment may be indicative of students' inability or unwillingness to provide justification for the score given to their partner. Rather than provide no feedback, students may try to demonstrate some attempt at an evaluation by merely making note of the behaviors they witnessed. This behavior potentially results from the decision by some instructors to make the peer evaluations a required assignment. The lack of positive or negative valence also affects how students can implement these feedback comments into future speech performances. Without providing a specific direction based on good or bad speech behaviors, peers will probably experience little benefit from either giving or receiving this specific type of feedback.

For the fifth research question, the results show that students most often resorted to using positive non-descriptive comments when evaluating peers' speeches. One potential explanation for the pervasiveness of this type of comment comes from students' general misunderstanding of the evaluation criteria. All participating instructors in the current study received speech evaluation training before delivering that same training to their students. Although the instructors experienced and learned the same training principles, the possibility exists that the delivery of these methods to students still

resulted in varying levels of understanding. If students do not have uncertainty reduced regarding the criteria that determines their score, then instructors should not expect them to demonstrate competency in applying these standards. Thus, students tried to compensate for their lack of knowledge and ability by offering short, high-inference comments that shielded their uncertainty by failing to justify why certain scores were given. In essence, feedback that fails to explain why certain behaviors either benefitted or hurt a performance limits the knowledge that can be applied to future speeches. Thus, this parallels the assumption by Simonds et al. (2009) that instructors will use greater levels of descriptive rather than prescriptive comments by finding the same result for students. Speech evaluation training programs may need to consider revising the way instructors train students in order to facilitate the use of more detailed, prescriptive feedback comments that offer suggestions for future growth and improvement.

In addition to students simply misunderstanding the evaluation criteria, Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory provides a different explanation of the findings. Politeness theory posits that all speakers of a natural language possess both a positive and negative face. Since feedback comments could potentially damage their reputation among the class, peers with the responsibility of evaluating one another experience a face threat. For this study, the findings indicate that over 60% of the messages analyzed were positive in nature. Consequently, students want to save their positive face by providing comments that reflect a good speech. This was also indicated through students' tendency to attach positive disclaimers to their negative feedback comments. Students use these positive disclaimers to make the negative evaluation appear less harsh. In doing so, the

student whom they evaluated is less likely to dislike or disapprove of them as a friend and classmate. This becomes especially prevalent when considering students' knowledge and awareness of future interactions with peers in class. Perhaps students who recognize the importance of interacting with their peers during future projects will offer feedback that does not threaten their reputation. This desire to save face with classmates would ultimately outweigh the evaluator's desire to save positive face with the instructor resulting from a demonstration of sound knowledge and individual competence using the evaluation criteria. More simply, students might want to show classmates that their relationships are valued at the cost of a loss of the same value towards the instructor.

In addition to protecting their own face, peers must also consider how their comments affect the positive face of the speaker. When students in the classroom present a public speech, a combination of fear and public attention can expose the face of the student (Reynolds et al., 2004). Reynolds et al. (2004) find that instructors try too hard to protect the positive face of students by providing positive politeness feedback that does not truly reflect the given score. Thus, students desire more helpful face-threatening comments that correlate with the actual score they receive. Despite this same tendency to save positive face in the peer evaluation context, student-student interaction changes how students ultimately approach the evaluation process. Rather than threatening the positive face, or self-image of the presenter, comments from the instructor force students to give up some of their own autonomy and will likely result in greater learning. Contrary to this finding, results of this study show that students who value their own positive face likely perceive that their classmates feel the same way when presenting a speech. Thus, student

evaluations feature greater amounts of high-inference feedback comments that protect a peer's positive face but do not offer detailed suggestions for future improvement. Speech evaluation training programs must consider adding more emphasis on teaching students to provide more detailed, prescriptive feedback comments that offer suggestions for future growth and improvement. Without this focus, perhaps an anonymous space through which students providing the evaluation feel comfortable and protected in giving usable, face-threatening feedback could lead to more positive results for both the presenters and the evaluators.

Finally, the sixth research question examined the existence of a relationship between the number of feedback comments provided by a peer and the overall score. The lack of a correlation indicates that the amount of feedback does not predict the score a speaker will receive. If students receive more comments, but these comments do not predict a better speech score, then perhaps students are not giving or receiving feedback comments in a meaningful way. One would expect a greater number of comments to lead to more feedback that a speaker could use to improve a speech. Since this relationship does not exist, students should be more concerned with providing in-depth reflexive feedback that details exactly how future improvements can be made. This provides even more evidence that instructors can be more intentional and deliberate in terms of providing effective training on using language from the criteria to provide feedback as well as using feedback to determine scores.

Implications

Pedagogical Implications

At the conclusion of the study, it becomes clear that the basic communication course has a specific identity that has remained the same throughout a long history of assessment and change. Ultimately, students use the models of expected performance available to them at the beginning of the course to reduce uncertain prior to their delivery of their first formal speech. Since students become familiar with the idea that their speeches will be graded based on a set of objective criteria, perhaps they learn to accept responsibility for knowing that criteria in order to achieve a good speech score early on in the course. This is evident based on the result that increased levels of formalized training, as well as increased exposure to the criteria through in-class peer workshops, prove to be no more effective at increasing student speech scores or evaluation fidelity than simply informing the class of the training resources that are available to them.

This type of pedagogical strategy may ultimately be more effective and appropriate within disciplines focusing on socially constructed notions of learning. The objectivity and standardization occurring in this specific sample of classrooms does not appear to blend well with the creation of shared meaning that becomes a focus within peer collaboration and dialogic teaching methods. The results indicated either neutral or negative results in relation to the implementation of this type of collaborative teaching method in the classroom. Thus, professors, instructors, and basic course directors relying on criterion-based grading systems may want to reconsider the way they approach peer feedback and peer interaction in the classroom.

As for alternative explorations of the peer workshops, the results emphasize the unique nature of peer collaboration within the classroom. Although the instructor-peer dyad contains unique implications for the personal face of both individuals, the peer-peer interaction would appear to have stronger implications for student behavior. Even in regards to comments and evaluations, peers given the task of evaluating their classmates may simply value these relationships over their own learning. Consequently, instructors and basic course directors must be concerned with teaching peers to be less polite. By learning to offer more face-threatening comments to their peers, students should develop a better understanding of what constitutes effective and ineffective aspects of oral delivery. At the same time, such face-threatening comments could lead to an increase in future development for the individual performing the speech. By reflecting on the prescriptive comments provided by their peers, both the assessor and the assesse should find some form of benefit in this process. The challenge comes from finding ways to training students on the importance of these points within general education courses for freshmen students. These individuals could potentially find themselves more concerned with establishing positive social relationships instead of developing important life skills in general education courses indirectly related to their focus areas of study. Consequently, when forced to take part in activities like peer workshops, students may feel much more inclined to protect their own positive face at the expense of a valuable learning experience. This confounding concept highlights a speculative reason for the lack of significant results within the current research.

Perhaps nothing in the study speaks more to student expectations of feedback in

the basic communication course than the results of the manipulation check. The results indicate that students did not perceive a significant difference in the amount of feedback offered to their peers across conditions. Theoretically, students participating in the peer workshops should have experienced more opportunities for feedback than instructors incorporating no method of peer collaboration in the classroom. This lack of a difference between conditions is likely due to the nature of the questions asked on the "Perception of Incorporation of Feedback" form (see Appendix F). The first question did not distinguish whether students perceived feedback to occur either within or outside of the classroom. At the same time, the question also did not identify the point in time which the students experienced the feedback. The random assignment of students into the control and experimental groups means it cannot be assumed that one group experienced more out of class interaction than another. Thus, the nature of the form and the ambiguity surrounding the students' perceptions of the question suggests that the first manipulation check should be interpreted with caution.

These findings are contradictory from the results found for the second manipulation check. There is a clear separation in the amount of feedback actually incorporated into speeches across conditions. This potentially reinforces the importance of systematic training for students in classrooms relying on criterion-based grading. Despite not perceiving to offer more feedback, students who had received some form of formal training perceived themselves to incorporate a greater amount of the feedback that was actually offered by their peers. Perhaps peers who were trained how to implement the criteria effectively felt more confident that the feedback offered to them by their peers

was a reflection of the desired standards and competencies. The lack of a relationship between increased amounts of peer interaction and greater instructor scores bolsters this finding by suggesting that the greater levels of feedback incorporated into the speech may not be accurate. Thus, students might simply perceive that their peers have had their uncertainty reduced regarding the criteria; however, they have actually misunderstood the application of the desired speaking principles. This finding is also supported by the qualitative data. The results show that students are not offering feedback to one another in an effective manner. This could have potentially damaging effects on student learning in the classroom. If students who have undergone training feel confident that their peers can offer feedback beneficial to their speech, then it is imperative that the feedback be accurate, useful, and effective. Thus, instructors at Illinois State relying on speech evaluation training should place greater emphasis on teaching students how to properly provide feedback to their peers in the future.

Ultimately, the results of the study show that students in the basic communication course use peer feedback on a regular basis both within and outside the classroom. However, the context of peer evaluations in the classroom means students will mask implications for future speech improvements as a way of saving positive face. When their personal reputations are on the line, it is possible that students will sacrifice the opportunity for their peer's future improvements in order to sustain their positive self-image. As the basic communication course typically features three or more speeches, perhaps future evaluation efforts should allow instructors more time to properly demonstrate how to use positive descriptive or constructive feedback to improve

speeches early on in the course. Then, students may be allowed to take responsibility of their own learning and demonstrate their knowledge of the routine criteria by applying it to their peers' speeches for later speeches. This type of assessment effort would mirror the reflective learning often seen through portfolio assessment in the basic course (Hunt, Simonds, & Hinchliffe, 2000), as students will have the ability to compare their own speech feedback comments to those previously offered by the instructor.

Theoretical Implications

The lack of influence of the peer workshops may highlight inconsistencies between the application of Vygotsky's (1978) concepts to children and adult learners. As previously indicated, Vygotsky primarily concerned himself and his theories with the development of children. Daniels (2001) also explains how Vygotsky's theories work to create and develop understanding in a culturally and socially constructed worldview. It is possible that both Daniels and Vygotsky applied the ZPD specifically to explain children socializing themselves with the surrounding environment in an evolutionary sense, rather than simply as a tool for learning. Thus, the current findings would reject Tudge's (1990) assertion that Vygotsky's concepts can be applied to the adult-adult dyad in addition to the adult-child pair. It is important to identify the reasons why this distinction may fail to translate to the adult learning environment from the adolescent stages by returning to Gallimore and Tharp's (1990) four phases of learning in the ZPD.

First, performance in the learning environment must be assisted by more capable others. This makes sense when considering the interactions that take place between an adult and a child. The adult has already obtained a socially constructed and culturally

crafted worldview that he or she may attempt to share with a child during their development. The results indicate that it is unfair to equate this relationship with that of the instructor and the student in the classroom. Both instructors and students, as adult learners, have already cognitively constructed their own worldviews that limit the span of potential development between parties. Although the instructor possesses knowledge not yet available to the student through their understanding of the criterion-based grading system, this knowledge does not work to alter how that student might view the world. Rather, students may interpret this knowledge as a means to an effective grade instead of a means to a life as a competent and confident communicator.

Second, Gallimore and Tharp argue that the second stage of learning in the ZPD occurs when individuals perform knowledge of the content on their own. Again, this understanding likely refers to the ways in which children learn to experience how their worldview shapes their actions for the first time. The adult, who possesses certain knowledge of the world, passes that culturally relevant knowledge to the child, who then puts it into practice on his or her own. In the context of this study, the instructor does pass control to the student by allowing them the opportunity to put the criteria into practice, but the level of that control fails in comparison to that offered by the adult to the child. In the instructor-student context, the instructor is simply allowing the student to take ownership over a certain skill. In the adult-child context, the adult may be teaching a specific skill; however, the skill occurs in the context of the child's initial cognitive development. Thus, despite the surface level similarities, the level and amount of control exchanged within this interaction is conceptually different.

Gallimore and Tharp outline the third state of learning in the ZPD as occurring when students perform a task in a manner that allows for the preservation of knowledge. When a child finally executes a task learned from their adult counterpart, they are tacitly retaining socially constructed knowledge as a method for interpreting the world around them. When peers are given the opportunity to practice implementing criteria on their peers in the classroom, they experience a problem from Vygotsky's theoretical explanation of learning. The adult-child dynamic represents a truly subjective process that allows for development in multiple ways and methods. Peers who participate in workshops are attempting to teach themselves objective standards for universally effective speeches. While the objective criteria do develop from sound research and testing, the process does not fit within the theoretical framework as offered by Vygotsky (1978). Students are not internalizing subjective knowledge of the world, but they are instead teaching themselves objective standards that can be applied in different situations. There is a fundamental difference between the types of knowledge being retained in the two interactions.

Finally, the last stage of learning within the ZPD occurs when students autonomously reproduce the same knowledge in later situations. Instead of creating shared meaning as it occurs between an adult and a child, peers interacting within workshops do not necessarily have to have a shared meaning to use the criteria themselves. As the child depends on the adult to learn how to perform and function in life, peers in the workshop can recreate their understanding without input from one another. Ultimately, while Vygotky's theory of the ZPD provides a coherent and tangible

explanation of the adolescent developmental process, it does not make theoretical sense to apply the same principles to the interactions occurring between fully developed adults. Thus, the subsequent analysis illustrates one possible explanation for the conceptual ineffectiveness of peer workshops to increase speech scores and evaluation fidelity strength.

Despite the evidence showing no connection between principles of the ZPD and peer workshops, there is still some potential in their application. Students certainly experience learning outcomes through their participation in this form of pedagogy (Broeckelman, 2005; Broeckelman-Post et al., 2011). Perhaps increased exposure to the collaborative peer environment may have helped students determine what success looks like in the classroom. Rather than creating a notion of success through one brief workshop, students may need more time together to truly understand what it means to implement the criteria effectively. Just as well, dialogic teaching methods may be better suited for inclusion within classrooms not utilizing objective criteria and standards. This type of teaching would allow students to create their own meanings, rather than work together to adjust mutual understanding to the expectations of the instructor. If this is the case, then future research should explore other potential avenues for the development of increased evaluation-fidelity between instructors and students.

Limitations

Researchers and scholars routinely use assessment efforts to reinforce and reshape the basic communication course. Through these measures, the basic course has become an important area for the development of both students and instructors alike. While both

the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study provide valuable insight into the refinement of speech education, one must consider some important limitations.

When considering the results of the research, it is important to consider the various assessment procedures that could have been interpreted differently by the participating instructors. First, the returning GTAs who participated in the study were recruited for participation at the beginning on the fall semester. Due to this timing, the possibility exists that these instructors found difficulty incorporating the speech evaluation training procedures into their class schedules. Results for instructors who delivered brief or informal speech evaluation training sessions may have differed from instructors who incorporated all of the necessary training activities. This could have directly impacted the results of the study, as some instructors may have omitted portions of the training, such as those pertaining to the construction and delivery of effective written speech feedback. Thus, while some instructors may have delivered speech evaluation to the full extent required, the timing of the study and nature of the basic course schedule may have become a limitation for others.

Second, the evaluation forms included within the current study contained information pertaining to each student's *Outline and References* section. Across all three conditions, students never received access to the final copy of their respective peer's outline or References page. However, the peer evaluation form still included a section for the evaluation of this portion of the student's outline. This could have potentially affected the strength of evaluation fidelity, or instructor-student agreement for speech evaluations. Instructors with access to a final copy of a student's outline, as well as their full reference

list, are likely to provide more accurate evaluations compared to students without this information. For example, students routinely left the *Outline and References* section blank on their peer evaluation form due to the fact that they never came across this portion of their peer's speech. Without this knowledge, the student evaluators lacked the ability to properly critique certain aspects of the speech that may have influenced the overall score. Thus, this lack of consistency between evaluators may have resulted in a faulty measure of evaluation fidelity.

The results of the manipulation check indicate that students across the three conditions might not have fully experienced changes in the amount of peer interaction occurring within their respective classes. As a result, the results of the study should be interpreted with caution. The form provided to the students failed to indicate whether or not the researcher intended to measures perceptions of peer feedback offered and incorporated within or outside the classroom. Perhaps students across the conditional groups mistakenly considered interactions with their peers outside of the classroom. This misunderstanding in regards to the expected conceptualization of peer interaction limits the generalizability of the findings and warrants refined assessment procedures for future research. Perhaps the researcher may also want to refine the "Perception of Incorporation of Feedback" scale to specify the desired operationalization of the construct.

Finally, one of the instructors in experimental group one who voluntarily agreed to incorporate the study design into the class schedule taught an honors section of the basic course. The possibility exists that students within this section exhibited greater desire to learn, achieve high scores, and demonstrate their competence to the instructor in

comparison to regular classes. While students with intellectual ability similar to those in the honors section could feasibly enroll in any section of the course, the inclusion of the honors section serves as a confounding variable for the results.

Suggestions for Future Research

Despite the limitations previously discussed, the results of the assessment warrant future inquiry into the nature of speech evaluation training in the basic communication course. In the future, basic course directors or scholars seeking to assess educational outcomes may want to consider requiring speech evaluation training as an element of the basic course. Requiring instructors to deliver speech evaluation training to students would create a platform from which researchers could be confident in the application of uniform training principles across class sections. Future assessment efforts in this area may also need to provide students with access to their peers' full outlines at the conclusion of their speeches so that their assessment scores reflect full and accurate knowledge of the presentation. Training in conducting peer evaluations across multiple sections of the basic course might also be improved through the use of instructional videos as stimuli. By providing videos to students as models of expected performance, students will directly observe the importance and proper function of the peer evaluations. Most importantly, the research needs to be replicated in basic course environments outside of Illinois State University. The current assessment provides rich insight into the state of the course at this specific institution; however, attempts to replicate the results at other institutions may shed light on important factors going unnoticed throughout the current research. Just as well, this type of assessment may provide even more evidence for the effectiveness or

ineffectiveness of the peer workshop as a pedagogical strategy.

Since students in peer workshops experience evaluation fidelity, instructors should feel less pressured to dedicate individual attention to every student during instructional class time. Instead, perhaps the peer workshops help to build increased levels on nonverbal immediacy (Mehrabian, 1967). Instructors who give students responsibility for their own learning can spend more time in class decreasing the psychological distance between themselves and their students by moving from group to group. Thus, the peer workshops may serve a purpose beyond simply helping students increase their knowledge of the evaluation criteria. Some of the other potential goals of the peer workshop could include increased student motivation, decreased communication apprehension, more opportunities for audience analysis, and greater levels of cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning. Instead of concentrating solely on increasing evaluation fidelity, future research should seek out relationships between these important communicative constructs and the inclusion of peer workshops. Not only would this help this discipline by advancing theory as a means of effective pedagogy, but also it would help justify the use of peer workshops as an instructional strategy.

One other potential area for assessment regards our knowledge of written student speech feedback in the basic communication course. This knowledge will help scholars understand even more about communication education. Assessment efforts should find new ways of testing and evaluating students' ability to apply and understand standardized grading criteria. As for peer evaluations, more attention should be placed on providing students with discursive spaces where they can provide feedback with anonymity and

confidence. Removing names from evaluation materials or having students evaluate video performances of speeches instead of live performances could reinforce and protect student identities. Thus, future researchers should consider whether or not providing anonymity to student evaluators results in greater generation of constructive feedback. Research efforts should also attempt to linguistically analyze the language that students use when providing feedback, rather than simply testing for the presence of feedback. Ideally, comments should reflect the same language used in the establishment of the evaluation criteria and that language should be reflected in the score. Instead of simply categorizing remarks made by instructors or students, research should look at whether or not the language used truly reflects the criteria on which it is based. Finally, content analysis generally serves only to describe the available data. The method is limited by the accessible data. This type of procedure attempts to report on the identification of specific trends to provide support for findings and conclusions. Consequently, this descriptive process may conceal underlying motives for observed patterns such as those reported here. Research methods such as in-depth interviews or focus groups could reveal more exhaustive information about the speech evaluation process that remains untouched by the current methodology. In particular, in-depth interviews with students may reveal specific differences between the types of comments they desire from instructors and the types of comments they desire from students. The context of the student-student interaction may mean that students do not share the same desire for face-threatening comments from their peers as they do from their instructors.

Conclusion

As mentioned previously, the basic communication course provides researchers, directors, and institutions a perfect platform from which they can evaluate student learning and test communication theory. Assessment measures such as this provide evidence for the relevancy and necessity of communication education. Just as well, to continue finding new ways for students to grasp important communication concepts, instructors must consider the invisible and referent knowledge of the best ways to teach communication. Instructors can put these ideas into practice to develop the pedagogical content knowledge surrounding the basic course. Ultimately, if research can develop better teaching strategies, then communication scholars will have better evidence and ammunition for the advancement of their beloved discipline.

This study contributes to the growing importance of communication education by assessing whether or not students developed a stronger understanding of universally desired speaking skills after working together in peer workshops. Past research clearly indicates that speech evaluation training from the instructor to the students is beneficial, yet multiple contextual factors ultimately masquerade and influence students' ability to apply this knowledge when evaluating peers. Thus, instructors and researchers must continue searching for new ways to incorporate peer learning into the basic course in a manner that suits all parties involved in the classroom experience. If individuals interested in the basic course want to further develop the communication education agenda, research must continue using assessment techniques to truly understand how instructors teach and students learn.

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APPENDIX A

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLLECTING SELF, PEER, AND INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION FORMS

Instructions for Collecting
Self, Peer, and Instructor Evaluation Forms

1. All 23 students enrolled in your COM 110 class are eligible to participate in the study.
2. If the student agrees to participate, have them sign the informed consent and return it to you. If a student opts out of participation, please inform them that they can be switched to another section of COM 110 taking place at the same time.
3. Prior to speeches, please pair students together for the purposes of evaluating speeches. When a student performs a speech, both the instructor and the peer whom they were partnered with will grade them. In addition, students must video record their speech performances. At the completion of their speeches, they will review the film and provide a self-assessed evaluation score. I will provide you with 23 copies of the desired "Peer Evaluation Form". Copies of the "Instructor Evaluation Form" and "Self Evaluation Form" are located within the Spiral Book on pages 16 and 21, respectively.
4. After you have graded the speeches, the peer has graded their partner's speeches, and students have graded themselves, please make a copy of each evaluation form. **There should be 3 evaluation forms for each student: instructor, peer, and self**. You will have access to the copier in the main office and can use the following, temporary copy code for these purposes. Patty or Jason can assist you with the copier.
   Copy Code: _____
5. Once you have copied all evaluation forms, please staple each set (instructor, peer, and self) and place these materials in the provided envelope. Return the originals to the student during the next class period.
6. At the conclusion of speeches, please also have students complete the "Perceptions of Incorporation of Feedback" questionnaire. These forms will be provided to you. When this is completed, please place the questionnaire responses in the envelope.
7. Please include the consent forms in the envelopes as well.
8. We will redact the student's names once we collect all of the evaluation forms.
9. Please return the envelopes to Kody Frey's office or mailbox as soon as possible.

APPENDIX B

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATING PEER WORKSHOPS

Instructions for Facilitating Peer Workshops

1. All 23 students in your COM 110 class are eligible to participate in the study. If the student agrees to participate, have them sign the informed consent and return it to you. If a student opts out of participation, please inform them that they can be switched to another section of COM 110 taking place at the same time.
2. On your own time, please randomly pair students together the peer workshops.
3. Peer workshops will take place on the instructor's day of choice. They are suited for implementation into individual workdays prior to the delivery of informative speeches. Students will need to bring a rough draft of an outline, along with the supplementary materials packet (Spiral Book)
4. Once in pairs, students will evaluate one another's rough draft outlines according to the criteria in the spiral book. The criteria are located on pages 14-15 of the Spiral book.
5. Students will provide each other with feedback demonstrating how to improve specific written portions of the rough draft to meet the "A" criteria. This includes feedback regarding formatting, content, and structure.
6. At the completion of the class period, please inform students that they should implement their peer's feedback prior to delivering their speeches.

Instructions for Collecting Self, Peer, and Instructor Evaluation Forms

1. When a student performs a speech, both the instructor and the peer whom they were partnered with in the peer workshop will grade them. In addition, students must video record their speech performances, review the film, and provide a self-assessed evaluation score. I will provide you with 23 copies of the desired "Peer Evaluation Form". Copies of the "Instructor Evaluation Form" and "Self Evaluation Form" are located within the Spiral Book on pages 16 and 21, respectively.
2. After you have graded the speeches, the peer has graded their partner's speeches, and students have graded themselves, please make a copy of each evaluation form. **There should be 3 evaluation forms for each student: instructor, peer, and self**. You will have access to the copier in the main office and can use the following, temporary copy code for these purposes. Patty or Jason can assist you with the copier.
   Copy Code: _____
3. Once you have copied all evaluation forms, please staple each set (instructor, peer, and self) and place these materials in the provided envelope. Return the originals to the student during the next class period.
4. At the conclusion of speeches, please have students complete the "Perceptions of Incorporation of Feedback" questionnaire. This form will be provided to you. When this is completed, please place the questionnaire responses in the envelope.
5. Please include the consent forms in the envelopes as well.
6. We will redact the student's names once we collect all of the evaluation forms. Please return the envelopes to Kody Frey's office or mailbox as soon as possible

APPENDIX C

INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION FORM

INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION FORM: INFORMATIVE SPEECH

Name:_____ Topic:_____

OUTLINE AND REFERENCES (10 pts.)
Purpose statement clear
Follows Outline Format
References correct/sufficient

_____ pts.

INTRODUCTION (20 pts.)
Gained attention
Showed relevance of topic to audience
Established credibility
Introduced topic/thesis statement clearly
Previewed body of speech

_____ pts.

BODY (30 pts.)
Main points clear
Strong evidence & supporting material
Organization effective
Language precise, clear, powerful
Transitions effective
Sources are well integrated,
credible, & cited fully

_____ pts.

CONCLUSION (10 pts.)
Audience prepared for conclusion
Purpose & main points reviewed
Closed speech by reference to
intro./other devices

_____ pts.

DELIVERY (15 pts.)
Maintained eye contact
Used voice, diction, & rate for maximum effect
Used space, movement,
& gestures for emphasis

_____ pts.

OVERALL IMPRESSION (15 pts.)
Topic challenging
Adapted to audience
Maintained time limits
Evidence of preparation & practice
Quality & relevance of visual aids
Was informative

_____ pts.

Total Points _____

APPENDIX D

PEER EVALUATION FORM

PEER EVALUATION FORM: INFORMATIVE SPEECH

Name:_____ Topic:_____

OUTLINE AND REFERENCES (10 pts.)
Follows Outline Format
References correct/sufficient

_____ pts.

INTRODUCTION (20 pts.)
Gained attention
Showed relevance of topic to audience
Established credibility
Introduced topic/thesis statement clearly
Previewed body of speech

_____ pts.

BODY (30 pts.)
Main points clear
Strong evidence & supporting material
Organization effective
Language precise, clear, powerful
Transitions effective
Sources are well integrated,
credible, & cited fully

_____ pts.

CONCLUSION (10 pts.)
Audience prepared for conclusion
Purpose & main points reviewed
Closed speech by reference to
intro./other devices

_____ pts.

DELIVERY (15 pts.)
Maintained eye contact
Used voice, diction, & rate for maximum effect
Used space, movement,
& gestures for emphasis

_____ pts.

OVERALL IMPRESSION (15 pts.)
Topic challenging
Adapted to audience
Maintained time limits
Evidence of preparation & practice
Quality & relevance of visual aids
Was informative _____ pts.

Total Points _____

APPENDIX E

SELF EVALUATION FORM

SELF EVALUATION FORM: INFORMATIVE SPEECH

Name:_____ Topic:_____

OUTLINE AND REFERENCES (10 pts.)
Purpose statement clear
Follows Outline Format
References correct/sufficient

_____ pts.

INTRODUCTION (20 pts.)
Gained attention
Showed relevance of topic to audience
Established credibility
Introduced topic/thesis statement clearly
Previewed body of speech

_____ pts.

BODY (30 pts.)
Main points clear
Strong evidence & supporting material
Organization effective
Language precise, clear, powerful
Transitions effective
Sources are well integrated,
credible, & cited fully

_____ pts.

CONCLUSION (10 pts.)
Audience prepared for conclusion
Purpose & main points reviewed
Closed speech by reference to
intro./other devices

_____ pts.

DELIVERY (15 pts.)
Maintained eye contact
Used voice, diction, & rate for maximum effect
Used space, movement,
& gestures for emphasis

_____ pts.

OVERALL IMPRESSION (15 pts.)
Topic challenging
Adapted to audience
Maintained time limits
Evidence of preparation & practice
Quality & relevance of visual aids
Was informative

_____ pts.

Total Points _____

APPENDIX F

PERCEPTION OF INCORPORATION OF FEEDBACK SCALE

Perception of Incorporation of Feedback Scale

Directions: On the scale below, please circle the number regarding your peer's oral speech performance after participating in the peer workshop.

1. I offered feedback to my peer regarding their…

Outline and References	1 *Strongly Disagree*	2 *Somewhat Disagree*	3 *Neither Disagree nor Agree*	4 *Somewhat Agree*	5 *Strongly Agree*
Introduction	1 *Strongly Disagree*	2 *Somewhat Disagree*	3 *Neither Disagree nor Agree*	4 *Somewhat Agree*	5 *Strongly Agree*
Body	1 *Strongly Disagree*	2 *Somewhat Disagree*	3 *Neither Disagree nor Agree*	4 *Somewhat Agree*	5 *Strongly Agree*
Conclusion	1 *Strongly Disagree*	2 *Somewhat Disagree*	3 *Neither Disagree nor Agree*	4 *Somewhat Agree*	5 *Strongly Agree*
Overall Impression	1 *Strongly Disagree*	2 *Somewhat Disagree*	3 *Neither Disagree nor Agree*	4 *Somewhat Agree*	5 *Strongly Agree*

2. My peer incorporated my feedback into their…

Outline and References	1 *Strongly Disagree*	2 *Somewhat Disagree*	3 *Neither Disagree nor Agree*	4 *Somewhat Agree*	5 *Strongly Agree*
Introduction	1 *Strongly Disagree*	2 *Somewhat Disagree*	3 *Neither Disagree nor Agree*	4 *Somewhat Agree*	5 *Strongly Agree*
Body	1 *Strongly Disagree*	2 *Somewhat Disagree*	3 *Neither Disagree nor Agree*	4 *Somewhat Agree*	5 *Strongly Agree*
Conclusion	1 *Strongly Disagree*	2 *Somewhat Disagree*	3 *Neither Disagree nor Agree*	4 *Somewhat Agree*	5 *Strongly Agree*
Overall Impression	1 *Strongly Disagree*	2 *Somewhat Disagree*	3 *Neither Disagree nor Agree*	4 *Somewhat Agree*	5 *Strongly Agree*