RETRIEVING THE RESEARCH AGENDA FOR COMMUNICATION EDUCATION: ASKING THE PEDAGOGICAL QUESTIONS THAT ARE "EMBARRASSMENTS TO THEORY"

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This essay is an invitation for all communication scholars to retrieve the serious discussions and focused inquiries about teaching that are so much a part of this discipline’s heritage. During a period when educational scholars have been discovering that knowledge about effective teaching and learning is highly discipline specific, communication education research has tended to rely on generic educational models. In contrast to instructional communication scholarship that must cut across many fields, communication education research needs to be exceedingly content and context specific. Recognizing the ways that theory and pedagogy mutually inform each other, researchers are urged to target the particular problems of teaching various communication concepts and skills and to seek solutions in the most current theoretical understandings of communication.

It is informative to review the issues of the Speech Teacher from its early decades and to find articles by the leading scholars in rhetoric and communication theory thoughtfully and passionately addressing the issues of teaching speech. Pedagogy was not considered a technical sub-speciality then, but a major concern of every member of the discipline. What, why, and how we taught were serious questions that demanded our full intellectual and ethical engagement. For the majority of communication scholars pedagogy is our praxis. While we may write about organizations, the media, or politics, it is in our classrooms that we ourselves wield power and manipulate symbols with real consequences on other human lives. It might be expected, then, that dialogues about communication education would provide the unifying discourse of our field, that the one place all our leading scholars would meet would be in dialogues over teaching, that the most intense theoretical debates would be joined in pedagogically oriented writings. Instead, sadly, the area of our field that can most engage us all in situated debate about communicative practice has gradually become marginalized.

This essay is an urgent call for a renewed and reinvigorated study of the teaching of communication. It begins with a brief review of a shift in emphasis that has occurred over the past two decades, highlighting the confusion that has somehow persisted over the terms instructional communication and communication education. This clarification is significant because it is the scholarship in the latter area that is my present concern.¹ The majority of the paper then is devoted to arguing that there are important reasons for communication scholars, regard-

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less of academic speciality or research orientation, to participate in the dialogue over how communication is taught and learned. To that end, the final section of the paper sketches some guidelines for a more theoretically sophisticated and engaging form of discipline-specific pedagogy.

COMMUNICATION EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTIONAL COMMUNICATION

For many decades communication education was a valued professional concentration in a discipline that, after all, sprang from such master pedagogues as Socrates, Isocrates, Aristotle, and Quintilian, and took form in this country as the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking. Gladys Borchers, Loren Reid, and Karl Wallace were revered along with their contemporaries in rhetorical theory and public address. “Speech Ed” was quite a respectable academic speciality at a number of leading graduate schools when I chose it in the late 1960s. Generally, those of us in the area planned to direct basic communication courses, teach speech methods classes, supervise secondary school student teachers of speech, and perhaps explore language and communicative development in children. We were soon to embrace a broader mission. Although there had been calls since 1938 for speech professors to become more involved in teacher education, and although many departments had some involvement in preparing teachers as public speakers (Lynn, 1977), it was in the early 1970s that a number of factors converged that led to the emergence of the field of study that has now come to be called instructional communication. I recall the heady discussions at the SCA-sponsored Memphis Conference of Teacher Educators where we claimed as our mission the teaching of communication principles to all teachers of all subjects at all levels (Newcombe & Allen, 1974).

The new subarea was well launched by 1976 when Speech Teacher changed its name to Communication Education. The invitation for manuscripts had previously identified the journal as being “for instructors in all aspects of speech communication” and requested manuscripts on teaching methods. With the name change came a new request for contributions which stated that in addition to providing resources for speech communication teachers, “Communication Education also seeks to assist teachers of all disciplines and academic levels to apply communication theory and research to classroom teaching and learning.”

In the next year definitions of instructional communication were elaborated. Empirical evidence of the content being offered in the emergent courses in classroom communication revealed that these generally dealt with “verbal and nonverbal interaction between teacher and students and between or among students” (Lynn, 1977, p. 4). A conceptual delineation of the subarea was advanced by identifying unique characteristics of instructional communication that differentiate it from communication in other contexts, such as public speaking, interpersonal relationships, small groups, and organizations (Nyquist & Booth, 1977). Essays in Communication Yearbook further elaborated the scope of instructional communication (Scott & Wheless, 1977; Wheless & Hurt, 1979).

Given such a clear conceptual charter, it is intriguing that scholars within and beyond the area did not quickly agree on the definitions of and the relationships between instructional communication and communication education. Through
the 1970s and 1980s ambiguity reigned in the literature, in the designation of courses in graduate programs, in the groupings of convention papers, and in the phrasing of position descriptions (Sprague, 1991). As late as 1989, in a special edition of this journal, clarification still was required. McCroskey, in the editor's introduction, differentiated among "scholars whose focus is on instruction in communication ... scholars whose focus is on communication in instruction, and ... scholars whose interests cut across both of these foci" (p. v). Staton's essay in that same issue offered extended definitions.

Communication education (formerly speech education), one of the oldest fields of our discipline, is the study of teaching of speech communication. The emphasis historically has been on teaching speech communication in traditional classroom settings ranging from kindergarten to the college/university level. Communication education is a field of study important primarily to those within the discipline of speech communication. It is of interest and value to those who are teachers of speech in some capacity. (p. 365)

This area of study is contrasted to instructional communication that, Staton explains, is typically defined as:

the study of the human communication process as it occurs in instructional contexts—across subject matter, grade levels, and types of settings. The focus is on communication variables that can or do affect all instructional environments. . . . Most of the research has examined communication variables in the classroom context, with a fewer number of studies investigating larger instructional environments such as an entire school or school system. Instructional communication is not limited to the teaching of speech communication but is concerned with the process of communication in teaching any subject matter. (p. 365)

The curious and persistent lack of conceptual clarity between these two related but distinct areas may well have detracted from a strong academic image, reflecting negatively on both. But by far the most significant danger of the conflation of the two terms has been in allowing scholars from other areas of communication studies to exempt themselves from engaging in pedagogical inquiry. If "instructional" is just another context to study, like "organizational," then it can be dismissed by the majority of scholars as someone else's technical specialty area. No such marginalization of communication education can be justified; it deals not with a context for study but an arena of practice that affects every professor and teacher.

THE NEED TO RETRIEVE PEDAGOGICAL RESEARCH FROM THE MARGINS OF THE COMMUNICATION DISCIPLINE

Sharing journal space and association interest groups with the new area of instructional communication has certainly had many benefits for communication education researchers, many of whom are active in both areas. Given the different goals of the two subareas, however, it does not follow that they are well served by relying on exactly the same theoretical and methodological models. By its very definition, instructional communication research needed to develop generalizations about teaching that were widely applicable so that they could serve as the basis for consultation in teacher education programs across disciplines and levels. Just the opposite seems true for communication education scholarship: to be most useful it should be exceedingly context and content specific. Instead, with some notable exceptions, communication education re-
search in the last two decades has relied on generic educational models and concepts: behavioral objectives, Rogerian classrooms, mastery learning, Bloom’s taxonomy, Piagetian phases of development, and Keller’s PSI. Methodological priorities favored studies that were able to make the most parsimonious empirical generalizations. The measurement of communication apprehension moved toward the development of a single instrument that could be applied to interpersonal, small group, and public settings. Inquiries into communicative competence sought to identify a list of universally effective behaviors. However, sound, these highly abstracted research claims offer little insight into the complexity of teaching specific communication courses.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC PEDAGOGICAL THEORIES

In moving toward the establishment of inclusive general theories, communication education research ran against the grain of the broader literature of higher education. An important trend over the last decade has been in the opposite direction—toward the development of discipline-based pedagogical studies. As Edgerton (1989) states, “There is only so much that is important to know about teaching in general. Teaching is highly context specific, and its true richness can be fully appreciated only by looking at how we teach a particular subject to a particular set of students” (p. 15). The wide interest in Cross and Angelo’s (1988) program of Classroom Research, which calls for small, localized, applied studies, indicates a recognition that generic instructional models are of limited use. Cognitive research on the context-specific nature of learning (e.g., Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Perkins & Salomon, 1989) complements the work, indicating that mastery of complex bodies of knowledge is gained through the apprehension of holistic patterns achieved only through apprenticeship relationships and extensive practice in those fields (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1984; Glaser, 1984; Schön, 1987).

Most influential has been Shulman’s (1986a, 1986b, 1987) classification of the three kinds of knowledge that teachers need (over and above the generic teaching skills that include competence as communicators): subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and curricular knowledge. In a keynote address before the American Association of Higher Education, Shulman (1989) made a plea for higher education to commit itself to developing a “Pedagogy of Substance” that would focus on the history, the epistemology, and the nature of discovery, and, perhaps most important, the connections within and outside each discipline. Commenting on the challenge involved, he said:

It would be deep work, and it would carry with it a new kind of disciplinary scholarship, which should be celebrated by journals and by promotion and tenure for successfully pursuing such scholarship, because the highest level of attainment in those fields should be for those who not only know their discipline but can teach it. (p. 13).

The effort to integrate teaching (representation of knowledge) and research (advancement of knowledge), along with the integration and application of knowledge as four dimensions of scholarship, is the basis of Boyer’s Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate (1991). This work appears to have generated wide discussion; perhaps at long last the reward system of higher education that privileges one kind of scholarship over all other forms is being subjected to historical and ethical scrutiny.
As members of the academy experiment with a new vocabulary that no longer places teaching and research in opposition, some take the opportunity to insert the argument that truly excellent teaching may in fact signal the highest mastery of a discipline. Edgerton (1989) states, "The outstanding pedagogue recognizes that you can't teach everything, and so understands the subject matter deeply enough to be selective, to be simplifying, to be structuring and organizing" (p. 10). Reminiscent of Ausubel's (1964) classic statement that the only integration of the logical and psychological structures of a discipline occurs in the lives of the mature scholars of each field is Williams' (1986) taxonomy of discourse that has scholars moving from pre-socialized knowledge (where they are inarticulate in their disciplines), to socialized knowledge (where they are fully immersed in the jargon and technicalities of their field), to post-socialized knowledge (the highest level of mastery that involves the ability to translate ideas to novices and to converse with scholars from other disciplines). Using this classification, it can be argued that the "brilliant prof who cannot teach anyone except doctoral students" may be stuck at the socialized level. The truly brilliant spokespersons of a discipline are frequently those who can share their knowledge meaningfully with entering students, laypersons, and scholars from diverse fields. Oliver Wendell Holmes is credited with saying, "I do not give a fig for the simplicity on this side of complexity. But I would give my life for the simplicity on the other side of complexity" (cited in Parks, 1986, pp. 50–51). Teachers with discipline-specific pedagogical or curricular knowledge have achieved that elegant form of simplicity; they can make their content starkly clear without trivializing it. Paraphrasing Shulman, Edgerton (1989) describes this talent:

Excellent teachers have a special domain of knowledge. Not only do they have a deep understanding of the subject; not only do they know about how to teach in general, as in how to lead an effective classroom discussion. Excellent teachers have a repertoire of analogies, metaphors, demonstrations that enables them to transform their subject into terms their students can understand. (p. 15)

As experts in how their discipline is learned as well as how it is taught, excellent teachers also know the common misconceptions in their courses. They can identify the bottlenecks where students routinely get into trouble (Anderson, 1991) and, as one of my colleagues described it, are able to "talk the rhythm of their courses," warning students about the rough spots ahead.

**Inadequacy of Current Pedagogical Research in Communication**

There are many excellent teachers of speech and communication at all levels and in all areas of our discipline who practice the scholarship of teaching but who do not write about it. Approximately half the articles published in this journal in recent years have dealt with the concerns of teachers in general, not teachers of speech communication. Of the work that I would classify as communication education (using Staton's definition cited above as a criterion), perhaps half of it has dealt with communication apprehension. Undeniably, that body of scholarship addresses a serious concern, but the research on other dimensions of classroom instruction in speech communication is sparse indeed. For about a decade there was not a single secondary speech communication methods text in print. Only recently was the first major book on teaching the college communication course published (Daly, Friedrich, & Vangelisti, 1990),
and it was more an anthology of perspectives than a volume representing a theoretical stance toward teaching. Despite some progress, I agree with Book's (1989) assessment that, "Pedagogical content knowledge unique to communication has gone virtually unexamined" (pp. 318–319).

At least as serious as the limitation of the quantity of discipline-specific pedagogical research, are the charges that both the practice and scholarship of communication education have not kept pace with theoretical advances in the field. Taking stock of communication education scholarship over a decade ago, B. Aubrey Fisher (1981) expressed his concern about the gap between our theory and our pedagogy.

Communication theory in the 1980s incorporates a diversity of perspectives and methods aimed at describing and explaining how humans actually establish relationships with one another. Pedagogical practices, however, have not kept pace with advances in the theoretical/research emphasis on the global view of communication as a functional process. . . . If the past teaches us any lesson at all, we should be well aware that too much disparity exists between our basic courses that we teach as fundamental skills and our theory/research that we conduct in discussions limited to ourselves. Perhaps that disparity is one reason why we claim to be misunderstood by educators outside our field and why we often find ourselves defending our significance in the curriculum, particularly at the high school/college undergraduate level. An integration of theory and pedagogy may be a first step toward recognized respectability. (pp. 65–66)

Over the past decade things have not improved greatly. Surely, there have been advances in pedagogy, but on the whole there have been even greater advances in communication theory; the gap is widening. As one meta-analysis (Allen & Preiss, 1990) recently documented, much persuasion instruction still relies on the Yale Studies of the 1940s. While journal articles reveal deep and interesting divisions over how best to approach the understanding of human communication, introductory textbooks do not represent these theoretical camps. Instead, they generally resemble each other. If textbook advertisements, college catalogues, and state curriculum guides are accurate, the communication field has not fully relinquished the outdated views of communication based on conduit models of information transmission or platform speaking approaches to rhetoric.

In several other disciplines that border on ours I discover pedagogical work that runs closer to their theoretical mainstreams. Just as Book (1989) notes that other fields have far more serious scholarship related to K-12 pedagogy and curriculum, I have observed these contrasts across the disciplines' treatments of teaching and learning in higher education. The journal Teaching Sociology, for example, often includes articles by symbolic interactionists or structuralists who have very different ways of understanding the group interaction in sociology classes. One recent issue (April, 1989) featured essays by graduate students critical of their own academic socialization with incisive reactions from senior scholars. Articles in Teaching Philosophy incorporate the ongoing debates between Rawlsian and feminist ethical theorists; discussions of how to teach critical thinking grapple with postmodern challenges to traditional notions of rationality. The Modern Language Journal, Language Learning, French Review, and TESOL Journal approach classroom teaching issues with linguistic theories that reveal very current understandings of language. Foreign language teachers report empirical studies of the actual learning outcomes from correcting spoken errors
on the spot. They study their students' implicit theories about language learning that may block progress. They also draw on awareness of theories of embodiment to justify instructional approaches involving a great deal of total physical involvement. These teaching methods are controversial, but the debates on them are pursued vigorously in terms of the discipline's own theories. Finally, our colleagues in English have engaged teaching issues in some very theoretically informed and practically useful ways. When they "discovered" rhetoric a while ago and rallied around a handful of classical themes, some beginning composition teachers took the risk of relating those concepts to their classes (Fulkerson, 1990). If messages are written for specific audiences, then the criteria for effectiveness had to be re-evaluated. Composition courses were restructured to involve more peer criticism and response. In some intellectual circles the notion of discourse communities almost has eliminated the application of formalist standards to judge student writing. Additionally, reader response theory, Lacanian criticism, and poststructuralism all are scrutinized for implications of how to teach as well as how to do literary criticism (Lipking, 1987). The debates over the literary canon have moved from the realm of theory into issues of curriculum (Brodkey, 1989). English teachers have drawn on feminist theory, ethnic scholarship, and liberatory pedagogy to argue for more inclusive definitions of literacy. Finally, classroom interaction has been theorized: Habermas' Ideal Speech Situation is offered as a way to understand technical writing (Wells, 1986), and speech acts theory is applied to the comments teachers write on student papers (Barnes, 1990).

In reporting these fragments of discipline-specific pedagogical research in other fields, I do not presume to judge its overall quality, nor am I qualified to say if it is really on the cutting edge of theory in any of these fields. Moreover, I am not suggesting that the pedagogically oriented scholars in these fields enjoy great prestige relative to other sociologists, philosophers, linguists, or literary critics. Shulman, Edgerton, Boyer, and all the others notwithstanding, it will be a long time before the academy as a whole values pedagogical scholarship as highly as other forms. But what I do see in these other disciplines that I find more rare in our own is a genuine debate over both curriculum and teaching method argued from intellectual premises. What to teach and how to teach it are approached as issues that manifest the deeper intellectual tensions current in each discipline.

At least theoretically, if one were to observe the communication in the classrooms of leading researchers, one would expect to find great differences in pedagogy. A scholar who really believed in a constructivist view of social interaction would make very different decisions than another scholar whose own research on communication reflected traditional behavioral science assumptions. Presumably, they would have different teacher-student relationships, encourage different kinds of classroom discourse, and evaluate instructional outcomes differently. Maybe they do. But they certainly do not use their teaching experiences as data to support their theoretical positions, nor do they write persuasively about how their theories influence their teaching. With an indifference disguised as tolerance, academics typically privatize differences in teaching as matters of individual style and depoliticize curricular issues in the name of academic freedom. The false dichotomy between theory and classroom practice has led to depictions of the latter as purely descriptive, hence not scholarly, hence better suited for The Speech Communication Teacher, instructors'
manuals, or various special publications for teachers. Case studies of teaching practice, however disseminated, are rarely challenged. They seem to fall more into the category of incidental tips scholars might exchange about some maintenance dimension of one’s professional life, such as how to organize one’s files or depreciate one’s professional library. Another person’s ideas about teaching are there to take or leave depending on their utility, but they are not controversial enough to be worthy of real intellectual scrutiny.

One consequence of the gap between communication theory and teaching practice is that there are sharp discontinuities across the curricula at different levels of instruction. Elementary speech curriculum (when it is influenced by our discipline at all) generally reflects developmental models based on Piagetian assumptions. Secondary speech curriculum seems heavily influenced by the oral performance part of our heritage supplemented by some interpersonal communication and group communication concepts from the 1960s and 1970s (Speech Communication Association, 1991). Undergraduate courses still generally ask students to master the received theories and some skills by examining communication in various contexts moving from intrapersonal, to interpersonal, to group, to organizational, and on to the cosmos. Up to this point, the “communication” students learn about is quite different from the “communication” discussed in the current literature. Suddenly, at some point during graduate education, either at the M.A. or Ph.D. level, the curriculum rejoins theory. Graduate students are plunged into postmodernism or structuration theory and expected to shift to radically new ways of thinking about communication. Teaching methods at the graduate level may vary as drastically or change as abruptly as curriculum. All this seems to occur without an apparent overall plan or an effort to ease students’ transition.

Another major consequence of the downplaying of pedagogy shows up in the messages that are sent to new scholars. Graduate programs do not seem to encourage students to undertake research into the teaching and learning of our own discipline. There are questions about curriculum, about communication development, and about the effectiveness of teaching methods that are at least as interesting and important as the other things that we study. We need to recognize both the practical and theoretical significance of these issues and commit ourselves to investigating them. At no level is this problem more pronounced than in the preparation of secondary teachers of speech communication (Book, 1989). As the current generation of dedicated methods teachers and student teaching supervisors retires, who will replace them? Although virtually every campus of any size has a teacher preparation program, fewer and fewer doctoral students seem to be designating secondary speech methods as their speciality. Too often this extremely important work falls into the same category with directing the basic college course or coaching forensics—two other roles that nourish our profession tremendously. Bright young scholars who take on these demanding tasks need collegial support for their contributions and administrative support that makes it feasible for them to pursue some sort of research program.

**Resistances to Pedagogical Studies by Communication Theorists**

The limitations of current research identified here speak to the need for a strong corps of specialists in communication, but I hope that the broader
implication is clear. To reunite theory and pedagogy requires that virtually every member of the discipline consider communication education as a second or third area of professional commitment. How enriched both our teaching and our theorizing would be if all scholars agreed to contribute to the literature of this area from time to time, to read it often and to respond as critically as they would to work in their own areas of specialization, and regularly to engage in intellectual discussions of teaching with their own colleagues and graduate students!

Let there be no mistake; this is not a modest proposal. Even with widespread discussion of Boyer’s notion of a scholarship of teaching, the dichotomies between teaching and research, between theory and practice, are deeply ingrained in academic culture. Such habits of thought and language die hard as is shown in some of the controversies in the communication literature (Berger, 1992; Proctor, 1992). So-called mainstream university-level scholars have historically had a relationship with pedagogical studies that is ambivalent at best, and contemptuous at worst. The longstanding dismissal of schools of education and of educationally oriented colleagues within each field depends upon holding to the traditional belief that, at least at the higher education level, one learns to teach by knowing one’s subject. If this content/process separation was somehow intellectually tolerable in the days of tidier linear communication models, it is difficult to sustain today. With each theoretical advance in the social and interpretive sciences it becomes harder to hold on to the former view of pedagogy as “a totally reliable and transparent vehicle for Truth” (Radhakrishnan, 1991, p. 114). Lusted (1986) alternatively defines pedagogy as “the transformation of consciousness that takes place in the intersection of three agencies—the teacher, the learner and the knowledge they produce together” (p. 4). Lather (1991) endorses the inclusion of these three components of pedagogy in a conceptualization that “refuses to instrumentalize their relations, diminish their interactivity or value one over the other. It, furthermore, denies the teacher as neutral transmitter, the student as passive, and knowledge as immutable” (p. 15). These contemporary discussions of pedagogy are highly compatible with our communication theories and should make the educational literature much more palatable to scholars who may have formerly dismissed it as simplistic.

I have been haunted by Nelson’s (1986) comment that “pedagogy is an embarrassment to theory.” The words refract in many ways. He cannot mean only that a subset of “real scholars” are ashamed of their association with pedagogical issues or of paying too explicit attention to matters of teaching. At another level, Nelson’s statement is a recognition that there is some measure of professional embarrassment attendant to Fisher’s observation that our basic textbooks and our course strategies lack the sophistication of our most current research. But I think we come closer to Nelson’s meaning with the recognition that a scholar’s best theories are those that are tested and refined in the crucible of classroom dialogue. Britzman (1991) explains how pedagogy constitutes praxis:

The dichotomy between theory and practice, which represents, in actuality, the fragmentation of knowledge from lived experience is challenged when the context of theory is practice, not other theories. . . . The act of theorizing is not an imposition of abstract theories upon vacuous conditions. Theorizing is a form of engagement with and intervention in the world. Theory
always lives in the practical experience of us all and yet must be interpreted as a source of intervention. (pp. 54–55)

Grossberg (1986) makes a similar point in discussing the risks of teaching the popular as opposed to the canonical, and observes that “theoretical and pedagogical moments are often deeply implicated in each other” (p. 178).

But pedagogy embarrasses communication theory in more profound ways than by pulling it sharply down to earth. The problems become particularly awkward for those who adhere to various postpositivistic theories. Nelson (1986) argues that for a great number of scholars their own classroom experience functions as a form of comic betrayal as they are faced with the possibility that teaching and professional writing would be two unrelated or even antagonistic activities, with an outmoded certainty reigning in the classroom and doubt and intellectual play reigning in our writing. Writing would be aimed, in effect, at challenging the very values and ideology the classroom continued to serve. (p. xiv)

With this understanding of embarrassment as betrayal, yet a final layer of meaning of Carey’s statement is revealed. We cannot exempt our classrooms from the insights we apply to every other sphere of interaction that we study. Beneath that intellectual imperative lies an ethical one. How could any teacher bracket off from daily life Foucault’s double edged meaning of the word discipline, or fail to acknowledge the unremovable hyphen in his analysis of power-knowledge (1977)? Recognition of our complicity in the power politics of the academy is the final sense in which pedagogy is an embarrassment to theory. Ultimately, more than any academic trend or sense of nostalgia, the reason to draw pedagogy back from the margins is to ensure probing discussions about how we use power in the lives of our students.

GUIDELINES FOR A DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC PEDAGOGY

In her argument for a renewed emphasis on pedagogical content knowledge, Book (1989) identified a number of specific examples of teaching activities and exercises that she termed as inappropriate ways to represent our field. Extending her critique here, I suggest that much of our pedagogy is inappropriate because it contradicts or ignores our current understandings about the nature of what we teach: communication. If we were to increase our efforts to develop pedagogical knowledge and curricular knowledge that better reflected the content knowledge of our discipline, there are a number of important theoretical issues that would need to be addressed. Here are a few of the guidelines we could use to shape a discipline-specific pedagogy.

A discipline-specific pedagogy would recognize that communication, by definition, is a social phenomenon. In the past decades communication scholars have exposed and challenged the individualist and cognitivist bias that dominated our field (Bochner, 1978; Lannamann, 1991). The irony of a communication theory centered in individual cognitions parallels Sampson’s (1983) commentary on the absurdity of a social psychology that was in no meaningful sense social. Our field is coming to appreciate the insights of scholars like Voloshinov who insisted that the linguistic act or the utterance “is born, lives and dies in the process of social interaction... its form and meaning are determined basically by the form and character of this interaction” (cited in Bakhurst, 1990, p. 218). Given this
understanding, we are unlikely to develop ways to help students jointly create meanings with others by drawing exclusively on models of individuals strategically scanning private repertoires. More relevant might be Vygotsky's (1934/1986) explanation of the social genesis of mental activity. Learning, like communication, is unequivocally interpersonal. Intellectual structures are not "programmed in" but are communicated through significant interactions. From this it follows that the stages of communication development are not universal, but are determined within each culture. A pedagogy based on this model would not study traits or individual classroom behaviors of learners or teachers, but would focus on the "between" in communication learning and the cultural shaping of meaning.

A discipline-specific pedagogy would recognize that communication is a complex, ongoing process. It seems unnecessary to have to remind ourselves of what is on the first page of every textbook and in the first lecture of every class. Unfortunately, in later chapters of our books and later meetings of our classes we sometimes seem to assume that communication competence is a static goal that students can achieve through following certain prescriptions. Our own scholarship tells us otherwise, as Sykes (1990) observes.

Our domain is complex, not only because individual messages are tremendously varied, but also because messages occur simultaneously and in sequence. Like notes sounded on a piano, they are heard and then gone to be succeeded by many others. It is their interrelation, their patterns, that ultimately we seek to describe and understand in the same sense a musician seeks to understand both chords and progressions. (p. 206)

Some people have more advanced understandings and higher levels of skill in dealing with this complexity. How did they learn? Possibly through listening to lectures or achieving prespecified behavioral objectives, but more likely through an extremely complex blend of observation, apprenticeship, role-playing, and reflection. A pedagogy of process would tap into the full complexity of learning communication in action.9

A discipline-specific pedagogy would recognize that human speech communication is performed, embodied, and usually oral. It will be a few more decades before historians of our discipline can make sense of our love-hate relationship with oral discourse. I look forward to reading their work, which may take the form of a psychoanalytic study of our own ambivalence toward corporeality. As we move farther away from the enlightenment philosophers' desire to transcend physicality and approach pure reason, we come to acknowledge that meanings originate in and are inscribed on our bodies. Ong (1982) observes, "The oral word . . . never exists in a simply verbal context, as a written word does. Spoken words are always modifications of a total, existential situation which always engages the body" (p. 67). Our discipline is positioned to explore this reunification of human experience by attending to the physiological and phonetic nature of speech. European scholarship in human communication has generally been less neglectful of these connections (Gutenberg, 1990; Toulmin, 1991). Yet, as we purge speech from our journals and association titles, other fields scramble to include it. As a new journal based on performance studies gains immediate intellectual respect for bringing cutting edge theoretical work to bear on human speech, we still often display embarrassment (or even contempt) toward the performance emphasis in our basic courses (Macke, 1991). Recapping the scholarship on the
oral noetic, Haynes (1990) asks why we continue to model introductory commu-
nication classes after English composition courses. Full sentence outlines, for
example, textualize discourse in ways that can obscure the very features of oral
speech that make it so socially powerful. A comprehensive pedagogical theory of
speech communication cannot be exclusively cognitive. It must consider how
people learn to do things, vocally and physically. It must accept “performance”
as a defining feature of discourse instead of an aesthetic afterthought; it must see
orality as a powerful way of knowing and not as an inferior form of written
literacy. This latter confusion Ong (1982) says is equivalent to regarding horses
as automobiles without wheels (p. 12).

A discipline-specific pedagogy would recognize that much speech communication behav-
ior is unconscious or automatic. Because speech communication behavior is devel-
oped through enculturation speakers are not always conscious of how and why
they talk. Here, I part way just slightly with Book’s strong advocacy of metacog-
nitive models as the key to understanding communication learning, and note
that there are some elements of communicative competence where other
models of learning are more relevant. Psychologists’ and sociolinguists’ treat-
ments of the automaticity of spoken discourse have influenced our understand-
ings of communication (Hample, 1992; Kellerman, 1992). For example, Tan-
nen’s (1989) study of repetition in conversation shows that people often complete
sentences and echo phrases for the purpose of building solidarity without even
realizing what they are saying in a referential sense. Bavelas and her colleagues
(Bavelas, Black, Chovil, & Mullett, 1990; Bavelas & Coates, 1992) document
how communicators unconsciously coordinate their own verbal and nonverbal
actions with those of other interactants in ways that suggest exquisitely choreo-
graphed joint productions. Andersen’s (1986) exploration of the role of conscious-
ness in communication persuasively establishes that sheer efficiency alone would
dictate that a great deal of effective communication must be habitual and that
expertise is a matter of entrusting vast resources to largely unconscious levels of
competence. (Indeed, our much-studied communication apprehension is at
least in part a form of self-consciousness or too much awareness of some aspects of
communication.) The modeling on which so much communication learning
depends is not usually a conscious or analytic process, nor is the sort of pattern
recognition or holistic apprehension that cognitive psychologists describe as
characteristic of expert knowledge. A comprehensive theory of communication
pedagogy would not rely as heavily as we do on self-report data, necessarily
limited to what the learner is conscious of, and it would not just draw on
hierarchical cognitive models suited to teaching other more traditionally
“academic” subjects. It would seek further insights about how people learn
complex and partially habitual skills like driving, ice skating, and playing the
piano. We would understand much more than we do about the interplay of the
conscious and unconscious dimensions of learning.

A discipline-specific pedagogy would recognize that speech is tied to cultural and
personal identity. Our communication theories widely acknowledge that language
both reflects and affects culture. Language performed through speech is a
powerful social marker as well as one of the primary expressions of self. Indeed,
advise to speak a certain way is advice to be a certain way. Therefore, defining a
curriculum for effective speech is not a neutral act. The politics of curriculum
conceal struggles over who gets to shape how people speak. Definitions of
competence serve gatekeeping functions to keep some codes out of the cultural mainstream. Even apparently innocent interventions into existing patterns of talk will encounter intense resistance if they are perceived by students as attempts to alter their cultural or personal identity. A sophisticated pedagogical theory would acknowledge the tension between honoring identity and establishing “competence” within the dominant discourse communities (Rose, 1989). The ethnographic and critical turns in communication research reveal how much is to be learned about communication in the areas of human experience on the threshold of consciousness (Conquergood, 1992). Those who teach speech travel daily in the sociolinguistic borderlands and need sensitive new ways to “hear students into speech” (Palmer, 1983) without homogenizing their talk. The notion of voice that has proven so heuristic in our rhetorical and organizational studies (Deetz, 1992; Huspek & Kendall, 1991; Lessl, 1989) has not been fully explored in the classroom context. Ironically, English teachers have paid more attention to helping students “find their voice” in compositions than have teachers of oral communication.

A discipline-specific pedagogy would recognize the relationship between communication and power. Though the power of speech has always been acknowledged, the cultural and philosophical scholarship of the past few decades has illuminated the depth and breadth of that power. Disciplines previously concerned with material, mental, or structural forms of power have identified the ways that ideological constructions create and support social arrangements. These new understandings make it hard to be content with the traditional ways of teaching communication ethics that merely cautioned, “speech is a powerful tool for good or evil, so do be responsible in using it.” We know now that the notion of speech as a tool that can be picked up and then put down again is a poor metaphor to describe communication (Stewart, 1986). We are inside language and cannot distance ourselves enough to escape its influence. What does this realization suggest about how and what to teach students of communication? Surely the pedagogical work of such a politically embedded subject would include a strong ethical and critical strand. A few “affective” objectives tacked onto a class syllabus cannot begin to suffice for the courses we teach. A student who has effectively learned about communication and learned how to communicate will know how communication creates and serves existing power arrangements, how to resist certain forms of power, how to get power, how to use it responsibly, and how to give it away or share it by empowering others. We might actually learn a bit about such teaching by observing the methods of martial arts teachers or those who teach the use of deadly weapons. But inspiring awe and counseling restraint are but a small part of our task—one tied to the more limited vision of speech as tool. The only pedagogy suited to our subject would, like our emerging theories, reflect the full scope of social life. Toulmin (1991) cautions against bracketing off contextual factors from studies of communication development. “Every human activity—linguistic as much as any other—represents the intersection of neurophysiological, developmental, linguistic, social, familial, cultural, and a dozen other kinds of processes” (p. 449). Our discipline’s heritage in dialectic should prepare us to look at tensions that exist across these levels of analysis. Possible models for such analysis would be resistance theories (Hall, 1980), Vygotsky’s activity theory (Engeström, 1987), and Bakhtin’s (1981) notion of social heteroglossia, all of which entail the exploration of contradic-
tions rather than the quest for linear causal models. Finally, because communication is both our subject and our teaching method, a pedagogy that recognized the connection of language and power would be highly self-reflexive. Our teaching methods would be constantly scrutinized in terms of the metamessages they send and the social relations that they model. The scholarship of feminist pedagogy and ethnic studies demonstrates that such a project, pursued in the spirit of dialogue with students and colleagues, demands considerable intellectual rigor and personal courage.

In this essay I have suggested that, compared to related disciplines, the communication field seems to have marginalized pedagogical work. There is a current recognition in higher education that every discipline needs a vital branch of pedagogical and curricular scholarship informed by the best theoretical work in that discipline. To overcome a traditional disdain for this sort of research a critical mass of leading scholars throughout the communication field will need to recognize that pedagogy informs theory as well as the converse, and to endorse Boyer’s notion of the scholarship of teaching. \textsuperscript{10} I have presented some guidelines for the sort of discipline-specific pedagogy that would reflect the current state of our theoretical understandings of communication. It would acknowledge the intrinsically social, evanescent, performative, oral, sometimes unconscious nature of the communication processes that we are asking students to master. Taking into account the psychological complexity of tampering with cultural and personal identity, and the political implications of communicative power, our pedagogy would disavow neutrality. Vigorous discussions of the ethical and practical implications of curriculum and of teaching methods would again animate our field. Clearly, this conversation cannot be limited to those who claim communication education as a research interest. All those who teach, and who realize that it matters what and how they teach, can assist in retrieving communication education research from the margins of our discipline.

\textbf{NOTES}

\textsuperscript{1}In no sense is anything stated here intended to suggest that instructional communication and communication education are in conflict or that one has damaged the other. Affiliated with both, I have called for expanding the work done in instructional communication (Sprague, 1992). The present essay is meant as a companion research agenda. It is my position that while the greatest need facing instructional communication research is for an \textit{expanded} perspective on inquiry, the greatest need for communication education research is to be \textit{retrieved} from its marginal status and \textit{re-owned} by a wider base of scholars.

\textsuperscript{2}By 1985 the call for manuscripts for this journal changed to a request for scholarship “on topics related to communication in instructional settings” in contrast to the previous language that described the journal as “a practical resource for teachers of speech communication.”

\textsuperscript{3}I am familiar with three attempts to summarize the work published in \textit{Communication Education}, none of which use the communication education/instructional communication distinction to classify the articles. Staton-Spicer and Wulf’s (1984) review of 186 empirical articles published between 1974 and 1982 establishes six categories based on the content of the articles. Eber and McGukin’s (1992) grounded theoretic survey of \textit{Communication Education} from 1981–1991 classifies articles on the basis of whether they are grounded in theory, research, or experience, and whether they address pedagogy, content, or assessment. Barker (1989), in supporting his claim that communication education research is becoming more plentiful, classifies research methodologically. Using only the general categories of “qualitative” and “quantitative,” he argues that an increase in the latter constitutes advancement of the area. Throughout his essay, he uses “communication education” as a general term that subsumes instructional communication. A cursory review of convention programs reveals that the approximately equal proportion of instructional communication and communication education work holds for panels and papers sponsored by the Instructional Development Division of SCA, and no doubt for its regional and ICA counterparts. At the 1992 SCA convention, two thirds of the papers on panels sponsored by the Instructional Development Division dealt with instructional communication rather than communication education.
Eber and McGukin (1992) found 31 articles on communication apprehension in the 10 year period their review covered.

SCA and the regional and state associations deserve credit for publishing a number of pamphlets, booklets, newsletters, and bibliographies to support teacher education. A book on Communication Pedagogy: Approaches to Teaching Undergraduate Courses in Communication, is forthcoming (Lederman, in press.)

I have heard textbook authors report on convention panels that when they tried anything unusual at all, the reviewers insisted that their books return to the familiar formulas for either public speaking or the "hybrid" course. Publishers sometimes candidly disclose that text selections in our field seem to be very dependent on "bells and whistles," like videotapes and computer text banks, and so they do not have to coach their sales representatives on the fundamental intellectual divisions that seem to play a greater role in text selection in some other disciplines.

An exception to this would be Haynes (1988) who uses an extended example of a student speaker to illustrate his argument about oral literacy. Special issues of Communication Education, such as the one on teaching rhetorical criticism (July, 1989), the recent issues on gender in the classroom (January, 1991), or multicultural communication education (July, 1991), best illustrate the kinds of cross-applications of theory and pedagogy that can enrich both.

I base this conclusion partly on evidence, such as Edwards, Watson, and Barker's (1988) report, that the number of programs even claiming Communication Education as a speciality has dropped to only 17, but more on my own experiences. My perusal of recent Dissertation Abstracts reveals less than one such dissertation a year, those heavily concentrated in developmental aspects of communication education. My department's efforts over a three-year period to hire an active researcher also prepared for secondary teacher supervision yielded no recent doctoral graduates whose dissertation work was related to secondary communication education or adolescent development. When consulted by other departments seeking to hire such a person, our scanning of the professional networks continues to confirm this impression: There are people who want to do research in instructional contexts, there are people willing to direct a basic course and supervise TAs for a few years to get a position, but there are few students completing doctoral programs ready and willing to take on the preparation and supervision of secondary teachers in our discipline.

The sophisticated series of "write aloud" research (in composition study) is an example of trying to get at the processual nature of invention. Only two convention papers that I am aware of have attempted to apply this methodology to studying speech invention (Daly, Weber, Vangelisti, & Henrickson, 1988; Sheckles, 1989). In a related study, Daly, Vangelisti, Maxwell, and Neel (1989) used an ingenious method of getting at the invention process by monitoring individuals' talk as they communicated with other people via computer networks.

I am very hopeful that this is the case. Not only are leading scholars beginning to write about pedagogy as it informs theory (cf. Deetz, 1992), but graduate student research reports show a trend toward incorporating pedagogical theory into their studies of rhetoric (Attias, 1991; Beasley, 1991; Deem, 1991; Supriya, 1991).

REFERENCES


