International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology, Vol. 1, No. 4, October 2010
ISSN: 2010-0248

Teaching and Evaluation of Business Communication: Genesis and Growth

Shailja Agarwal and Subrata Chakraborty

Abstract—**Ever since the course of business communication forced itself to sprout out as an individual branch from its mother branch, HRM, the evolution of its teaching has become a landmark in management education and the challenges we face in getting it right in the 21st century have been immense (Du-Babcock, 2006). This paper attempts to discuss business communication as a course since its genesis and the future challenges in its teaching. Apart from this, the paper identifies evaluation of students of this course as major challenge. Time and again various stakeholders have emphasized on the possession of both verbal and non-verbal communication skills with the business management students (Gray, Ottesen, Chapman and Whiten, 2007) and while business communication syllabus across Indian business schools is a balanced mix of both written and non-written skills, the evaluation pattern, across the globe, is such that there is little provision of assessment on non-written skills. Hence, though the non-written modules of the business communication course do get taken up, there is little evaluation upon them, thus leaving a sense of incompleteness not only in terms of instructor and the course delivery but also in terms of students having a feeling of acquiring the said skills. This paper attempts to explore certain efforts that have been made to address this challenge and identifies certain focal points to be considered, if and when, evaluatiomn practices in business communication are redefined.**

Index Terms—**Introduction: Teaching And Evaluation of Business Communication: Genesis And Growth**

I. Introduction

Among the various courses taught in a management program, those dealing with promotion of communication skills assume particular importance (Chakraborty and Agarwal, 2010). Ever since the course of business communication forced itself to sprout out as an individual branch from its mother branch, HRM, the evolution of its teaching has become a landmark in management education and the challenges we face in getting it right in the 21st century have been immense (Du-Babcock, 2006). This is so because, due to the nature of companies becoming more and more information sensitive, managers and leaders alike need to enhance their oral and written communication skills (Colff, 2004). How to build the needed skills remains a key challenge before many business schools. This is so because not only are there issues relating to language of communication, there are also other aspects like mannerism, body language, etc. Schools frequently, struggle to address this challenge effectively.

The teaching of business communication has been characterized by stability and change. At present, we are going through a transition period in which we are adapting and learning how to communicate in this ever changing environment. Our challenge is to build on the fundamental principles that were established in the past and develop new teaching methodologies, approaches, and techniques that will enable us to communicate more effectively in the present and increasingly so in the future.

Past

The teaching of business communication as a formal and distinct discipline originated in the United States (Krapels and Arnold, 1998; Locker, 1998; Rogers, 1996). Over the years, it has established itself as a crucial course and has become an integral component of business school curricula, with an earlier focus on teaching students how to communicate efficiently in local business and commercial environments in which the communicators shared a common background context (economic, linguistic, social, political, legal, physical, and technological).

According to Hagge (1989), business communication in the formative period was rooted in the study of style in the writing of letters and memos, with emphasis placed on the proper forms and correct use of English. The communication environment was relatively homogeneous, stable, and simple, and consequently general language could be adequately used in encoding and decoding messages. The teaching approach was appropriate in focusing on the form, structure, and process of business communication, and there was a fit between what was taught in the classroom and what could be applied in practice by business communicators. As a result, teachers of business communication could focus on teaching a general communication process and were not required to have specialized knowledge of professional disciplines and the communication approaches and styles of the professional genres of these disciplines. Although this early period of business communication teaching provided the foundation that we still use to guide our present teaching, it also provided an incomplete and limited perspective on the teaching of business communication in a global andmultidisciplinary communication environment. In this formative period, the focus was on teaching students how to exchange business messages within the context of a local communication environment.

Present

The present period represents a transitional stage (Du-Babcock, 2006) where we are learning how to adjust our teaching methods to better suit the realities of an ever

Jaipuria Institute of Management, Lucknow, India (Telephone : +91 - 522 – 2394296, email: shailja@jiml.ac.in sc@jiml.ac.in).

evolving and more complex, globalized, and multidisciplinary communication and teaching environment. With economic expansion to all parts of world, communicators are faced with the prospect of encoding and decoding an ever larger volume of more diversified messages. In this environment, individuals increasingly interact directly and indirectly in interconnected global communication networks and create interrelated global value-added chains (Porter, 1985) in their roles as producers and customers. As professionals increasingly use more complex and distinctive professional genres (see Bhatia, 2004), communication barriers are created as these professionals interact with professionals from other disciplines and with non-specialists, representing different cultures and possessing various levels of genre and subject knowledge, language, and culture competency.

Future

Our challenge is to teach students how to cope with and communicate in this increasingly complex and diverse global, multidisciplinary communication environment. The concurrent migration of workers and international relocation of production facilities have also created multilingual and multicultural workforces and the need to communicate more efficiently and effectively in multiple languages and in face-to-face communication. Our challenges to the future are to learn how to communicate in an information-overloaded environment, how to encode and decode messages within interactants at varying competency levels, and how to use and choose among communication media and technologies. The framework of business communication that has been developed in the past and present periods should now be used as the platform from which to extend and enrich our discipline and our teaching.

A key factor in the need to adapt to and embrace the future is the advancements made in technology. Current technologies are influencing not only the way businesses communicate globally but also the way in which teaching, learning, and research can be done collaboratively.

The challenge for us is how to move into the future stage when we are still learning how to adjust our teaching to better suit the realities of an increasingly complex and diverse global communication environment. As teachers of business communication, we should focus on developing and training our students to adapt and communicate effectively in current and future communication environments and develop their competencies to:

1) interact in a multilingual and multicultural environment in which individuals possess various levels of language proficiency and use different professional genres,
2) adjust to the varying linguistic and cultural competencies of their communication partners, and
3) use communication technologies effectively to provide real-time information and message exchange with counterparts in remote locations and in virtual organizations.

II. Evaluation Challenges In Business Communication

Amidst these challenges of teaching business communication in accordance with the ever changing needs of the ever changing business environment, there is another and equally, if not bigger, significant challenge, which is of coming up with a fair and objective method of evaluation of students while the course is in progress, including at the stage of its completion. Problems arise because of certain stated and implied needs. These are: reliability, validity, objectivity and verifiability. A proper solution often remains elusive.

Cowan (1999, RGU Year of Assessment Workshop) states, “assessment is the powerhouse of learning. It is the engine that drives learning”.

In most educational programs, a substantial proportion of teacher and student time is devoted to activities which involve (or lead directly to) evaluation by the teacher (Crooks, 1988) and much evaluation of teaching focuses on what teachers do in class (Juwah, 2003). The same is true of a program in business management. Though the idea of evaluation “generally evokes groans” (Feinberg, 1979) from the instructors as well as the students, it has powerful impacts- direct and indirect, positive or negative, deserving considerations towards a very careful planning and implementation.

In the early 1970s researchers (Snyder, 1971; Miller and Parlett, 1974) were engaged in studies of student learning at prestigious universities. What they found was that, unexpectedly, what influenced students most was not the teaching but the assessment. Students described all aspects of their study — what they attended to, how much work they did and how they went about their studying — as being completely dominated by the way they perceived the demands of the assessment system. Derek Rowntree stated that ‘if we wish to discover the truth about an educational system, we must first look to its assessment procedures’ (Rowntree, 1987). More recently, qualitative studies have emphasized the importance of understanding the way students respond to innovations in assessment (Sambell and McDowell, 1998).

Boud (2002) opined that assessment must perform double duty; not only must it assess content it must also prepare learners for future learning.

Juwah (2003) compiled some functions necessary to be performed for an evaluation to be effective:

act as a motivator for learning (Boud, Cohen and Sampson, 1999; Cowan, 1998);

promote deep learning – in which the learner engages with (a) the learning materials and resources, (b) other learners and (c) tutor/facilitator (Marton and Saljo, 1984);

contribute to the development of skills (Boud et al, 1999; 2002; Gibbs;1992; Ramsden, 1992);

be cost effective and sustainable (Boud, 2002).

Past

In higher education, most of the assessment is based on traditional assessment practices of essay and problem type examination. These traditional assessment practices, it has been found cannot adequately test for critical thinking, creativity, reflection etc. (Lewis and Johnson, 2002).

In a business education program, development of a student's ability to apply skills and knowledge in a variety of contexts is a critical need (Broadfoot and Black, 2004). Therefore, assessment of student progress in acquiring this ability becomes imperative. However business education in India, and also in many parts of the world, seems to depend primarily, if not exclusively, upon the traditional examination system of essay and problem type examination, quizzes, multiple choice questions, case studies etc(Juwah, 2003) for achieving this. One apparent reason for doing so is that the method is transparent and verifiable (Juwah, 2003). Another reason could be that many business schools, inadvertently or otherwise, tend to focus more upon content knowledge and hence end up using examinations to test such content knowledge in students (Ogunleye, 2006). However, to be fair to these schools, it must be said that the tools available to make assessments are also limited. The need, therefore, is to design a systematic evaluation design mechanism which, on one hand, should be transparent and objective and, on the other hand, should achieve the intended purpose. Since the results of any particular assessment device must be accorded "trust" by the stake holders if the consequences are to be acceptable, different parts of the world continue to be grappling with assessment challenges (Broadfoot and Black, 2004). New tools of evaluation like use of reflection in evaluation (Thorpe, 2000), in-basket writing exercise (Feinberg, 1979), business games (McKenney, 1962) etc. are constantly being experimented upon and developed. Such experimentation helps in enriching our understanding of the com plexity of the many links that may exist between assessment and learning and their various interplays. As is the case in many other courses, evaluation remains a sensitive as well as a contentious aspect of the business communication course too. Needless to say, it elicits the same groans from students and instructors. Before proceeding further, it may be beneficial to remind ourselves of the primary objective of a business communication course, which is to improve communication skills of students. These skills are to be improved and assessed as a whole rather than limiting only to some components, predominantly the written skills alone.

III. Dissatisfaction With Evaluation In Business Communication

Dissatisfaction with tests currently used to assess communication ability is neither new nor uncommon. Homer L Cox, in his study, as far as 1970, observed: "Overall, educators agreed that they were most dissatisfied with, and students were weakest in, ability to communicate in writing; however, dissatisfaction with tests and weakness observed varied in other areas of communication. It is probably safe to assume that other areas of communication ability are not being tested as frequently as ability to write, and weakness in these other areas may not be accurately assessed. The fact that other areas are undoubtedly less frequently measured may indicate that weakness in these areas is less easily assessed. Most effort seems to be made in improving writing ability, but writing ability remains the greatest weakness. Of course, we do not know how much worse the situation might be if efforts to improve this area were not made; but, on the other hand, we do not know how effective present efforts are. Writing may lend itself to testing; whether it should get the greatest amount of attention has not been clearly established." It must be remembered that good communication skills comprise the four major aspects of communication- LSRW. Of course, ability to distinguish between fact and assumption is also a vital part of communication skills as are a number of other abilities, but a test feasible in a limited span of time can include only the items which are basic to all others, namely: LSRW. Ironically, even all these skills do not get evaluated in the traditional system of examination that is followed in communication skills evaluation in Indian business schools and across. Generally it is an assessment of writing skills through writing while research has established the importance of oral skills as well with the corporate (Mainkar and Avinash, 2008; Maes, Weldy and Icenogle, 1997; Cox, 1970). As mentioned earlier, research (Cox, 1970) establishes that assessment in areas other than written skills is less frequently measured whereby indicating that weakness in these areas is less easily assessed; hence there appears to be an acute need to develop such tools as may be helpful to assess these other areas, i.e. non-written skills.

Present

With such kind of challenges, business communication instructors have now, for long, been toying and experimenting with the idea of peer assessment and it has gradually emerged as a focal point of experimentation and research in the current scenario. In fact, most of the experiments in business communication evaluation have, in some or the other way, involved peer assessment (for example: experiments by Lynch and Golen, 1992; Gueldenzoph and May, 2002 etc).

Peer assessment is an interactive and dynamic process that involves learners in assessing, critiquing and making value judgment on the quality and standard of work of other learners (Juwah, 2003), and providing feedback to peers to enable them enhance performance. Peer assessment is one form of innovative assessment (Mowl, 1996, McDowell and Mowl, 1996), which aims to improve the quality of learning and empower learners, where traditional forms can by-pass learners' needs. It can include student involvement not only in the final judgments made of student work but also in the prior setting of criteria and the selection of evidence of achievement (Biggs, 1999, Brown, Rust and Gibbs, 1994). Topping (1998) in his paper on peer assessment between students in colleges and universities provides a detailed typology of peer assessment methods. Evidence from research findings abound supporting the benefits of peer assessment to learners. These include peer learning in a non-threatening environment, the removal of power domination by the teacher over the student, the involvement of the student in the assessment process (Topping, 1998). By judging the work of others, students gain insight into their own performance. "Peer and self-assessment help students develop the ability to make judgements, a necessary skill for study and professional life" (Brown, Rust and Gibbs, 1994). Brown, Rust and Gibbs (1994), Zariski (1996), Race (1998) and others have described some potential advantages of peer assessment for students as

1) giving a sense of ownership of the assessment process, improving motivation
2) encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning, developing them as autonomous learners
3) treating assessment as part of learning, so that mistakes are opportunities rather than failures
4) practicing the transferable skills needed for life-long learning, especially evaluation skills
5) using external evaluation to provide a model for internal self-assessment of a student's own learning (metacognition), and
6) encouraging deep rather than surface learning.

Self and peer assessment "promote lifelong learning, by helping students to evaluate their own and their peers achievements realistically, not just encouraging them always to rely on (tutor) evaluation from on high" (Brown, 1996) However, as learners are central in this assessment process, concerns are of raised about their expertise in the knowledge content of the subject matter and their assessment skills to ensure reliability, validity and fairness (Juwah, 2003).

One reason behind peer assessment to be widely experimented as an evaluation tool could be that if all LSRW skills have to be tested, with time as a constraint, a group assessment task, now being designed by large scale assessment programs (Fall and Webb, 2000), or peer assessment task could serve the purpose.

IV. Some Experiments In Evaluation Of Business Communication Skills

Some efforts made by instructors towards the evaluation of either or all of LSRW skills are discussed below:

A. *Cross sectioning mock job interviews for peer evaluation*

Lundelius and Poon (1997) cross sectioned mock job interviews with peer evaluation in their multi section course at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. They slotted students to interview, and be interviewed by, students from other sections of the course, who then graded the candidates. The researchers felt that this approach better replicated the stress of being interviewed by someone the candidate did not know. It also helped students learn how to be interviewed when they also learnt the role of the interviewer. To prepare students for both roles, they provided specific guidelines on the criteria for evaluation, the context of the business interview, and techniques for commenting on the interviewee.

In addition to replicating the stress of asking and answering questions with strangers, the approach had another benefit. If they did not know the candidates, student-interviewers might feel less constrained to be excessively generous in their evaluations, and those evaluations counted as a percentage of the course grade. This raised the stakes for the candidates, motivating them to take the exercise more seriously than they would if they were being evaluated by classmates that they interacted with all semester. Also, because the interviewers from other sections were not familiar with the classroom performance of any given candidate, they were less likely to prejudge how well that candidate performed.

B. *Instructional Web Application*

A fairly typical example of formative and summative peer assessment was carried out in 1999/2000 by Bostock (2000) on an MSc module. 38 students developed instructional web applications (hypermedia or tutorials) on a topic of their choice for 25% of the module assessment. Each student placed their "draft" application on their web space, from which four assessors per assessee provided formative reviews as text criticisms and percentage marks against five criteria. Anonymity of authors was not possible as the student web addresses included their username but the assessors were anonymous; code numbers were used to identify reviews. After receiving anonymous reviews of their work students had time to improve it, and final versions were mounted on the web spaces by a submission deadline. Summative assessments of the same applications were done by the original assessors, sending only marks to tutors, apparently for moderation. The four marks per author were compiled but, in fact, the tutor re-marked all the work.

Sixteen students returned an anonymous evaluation of the assessments. For most students, some or all of the formative reviews had been useful, especially as anonymity allowed some reviews to be "ruthless". Text feedback was valued more than marks. Some said they had wanted more time to act on the criticisms. Most said that seeing other students' work had also been valuable. Feelings were mixed about the use of student summative marking in the module grade, and most only wanted them used if moderated by the tutor. The main problem with the summative assessments was that student preoccupation with the final examination meant that some students did not do them. The marking was variable. Student marks for any one application had a range of 11% with a standard deviation of 6.6%, on average. The correlation between the mean student mark and the tutor mark was only 0.45. This might be improved in future with negotiated criteria (Race, 1998) and more assessment practice (Brown, Sambell and McDowell, 1998).

C. *Listening-Efficiency Test*

Nichols, Brown and Keller in 2006 developed a forty-minute Listening-Efficiency Test based on the fact that college students most often find themselves in one of two listening situations – listening to directions or to expository lecture material. Consequently, the test was constructed to emphasize these two areas: Part I, Listening to Directions; and Part II, Listening to Expository Selections. "Listening to Directions" consisted of two sections. In section 1 (30 items), students were asked to follow certain specific directions relating to a "word table" consisting of 50 very simple words arranged in a grid form. In the second section (10 items) the numbers 1 through 8 were listed in consecutive order, and students were asked to follow directions relating to simple computations and dispositions of these numbers. The total score for Part I was the sum of the two sectional scores. In Part II, two literary selections provided material for testing the subject's ability' to listen to expository selections. After each selection had been read aloud by the test administrator, students were examined by the use of 21 multiple-choice type questions on its content. Several revisions of both parts resulted in a forty-minute examination designed to measure listening to directions and expository material. Attempts were made to develop a reliable and valid listening test; to study the effect of training in listening; to compare the effectiveness of the traditional freshman composition courses with that of the new communication program in terms of usually measured skills; and to study the relationship between skill and listening and skill in reading. The test was found to have a reliability coefficient of .94. Evidences of validity were rather meager, but preliminary data indicated that results on this test were not overly affected by general intelligence or achievement, and that listening to directions and listening to expository material were not identical skills. Findings in one aspect of the study indicated that listening skill could be improved by training, although further evidence concerning the retention of this improved skill would strengthen this conclusion.

D. Multifaceted Rasch Measurement

In 2009, Matsuno, used a Multifaceted Rasch measurement with 91 student and 4 teacher raters to investigate how self- and peer-assessments work in comparison with teacher assessments in actual university writing classes. The results indicated that many self-raters assessed their own writing lower than predicted. This was particularly true for high-achieving students. Peer-raters were the most lenient raters; however, they rated high-achieving writers lower and low-achieving writers higher. This tendency was independent of their own writing abilities and therefore offered no support for the hypothesis that high-achieving writers rated severely and low-achieving writers rated leniently. On the other hand, most peer-raters were internally consistent and produced fewer bias interactions than self- and teacher-raters. Each of the four teachers was internally consistent; however, each displayed a unique bias pattern. Self-, peer-, and teacher-raters assessed "Grammar" severely and "Spelling" leniently. The analysis also revealed that teacher-raters assessed "Spelling," "Format," and "Punctuation" differently from the other criteria. It was concluded that self-assessment was somewhat idiosyncratic and therefore of limited utility as a part of formal assessment. Peer-assessors on the other hand were shown to be internally consistent and their rating patterns were not dependent on their own writing performance. They also produced relatively few bias interactions. These results suggest that in at least some contexts, peer-assessments can play a useful role in writing classes. By using multifaceted Rasch measurement, teachers can inform peer-raters of their bias patterns and help them develop better quality assessment criteria, two steps that might lead to better quality peer-assessment.

Campbell, Mothersbaugh, Brammer and Taylor (2002) collected ratings of the quality of individual presentations as part of team performances in an upper level undergraduate business communication course at the University of Alabama during the spring of 2000. They collected ratings from three groups: the individuals themselves, peers, and the instructor. We used a common instrument that included both measures of holistic (overall) performance and measures of specific analytical factors that spanned both content and delivery. Their rubric also provided students with explicit behavior-based standards by which the quality of their performances would be judged-whether the judge would be their instructor or peer. Efficacy of their rubric was to be indicated by high explanatory power of the rubric for holistic performance ratings and significant effects of both content and non-content factors on holistic ratings.

The content of each presentation was based upon a six-week team assignment, which resulted in an analytical report-an audit of communication practices within a local organization or set of similar organizations chosen by the team. The goal of the presentation was to report the team's progress on this project to the instructor; thus, the presentations were both informative (i.e., detailing what tasks were completed and what remained to be done) and persuasive (i.e., convincing the audience that acceptable

progress had been made). Quality ratings were collected with an assessment instrument (which was the same for self, peer, and instructor) designed to answer the research questions presented earlier. The instrument also included several questions regarding demographic characteristics. Examination of these characteristics revealed a positive aspect of their sample in that it represented a broad cross section of age, gender, race, and work experience. Ratings of performance were collected from the same group of students, who attended presentations of other teams in their class. In addition, 59 students rated themselves by viewing a videotape of their presentation. (Self and peer ratings were not used to calculate grades in the course.

E. Group Discussion as a peer assessment tool

Chakraborty and Agarwal (2010) identified that with most of the evaluation experiments conducted only one of the LSRW skills could be evaluated. There wads found to be a huge gaap as far as a test was concerned, which would evaluate students on all – LSRW skills simultaneously. Therefore, they developed a process with the objective of getting every student evaluated on both written as well as non-written skills. A two-sided evaluation mechanism was put in place to achieve the dual purpose of leaning and evaluation. Group Discussion was used as a tool. This was done not only to ensure objectivity and participation but also to provide the entire class a feel of how individuals behave when involved discussions take place. Statistical analysis of the results suggested that the experiment was a useful one.

Topics were allotted one week prior to the group discussion as evaluation component was attached. On the day of the experiment, the detailed procedure was explained to the batch. The list of group division and who would evaluate whom was displayed on a LCD screen. Assessment Sheets and writing sheets were circulated. The assessment parameters were explained thoroughly. The Assessment Sheets carried the names of all the students with the instruction that they would only evaluate the students according to the list on display. The entire procedure, which took approximately three hours, was video taped to further assess the receptivity and involvement of the students to the new mode. Both peer and faculty were to conduct the evaluation by awarding marks to the students participating in the group discussion. Thus, while each student was himself/ herself getting evaluated, he/ she was also evaluating a set of pre-allotted students of the batch. This meant that at all times, students either evaluated a peer or be evaluated themselves by peers. Apart from this, while the students were assessing the group discussion performance of the students allotted to them, simultaneously, they were to justify in writing, in about seventy-five words per evaluation, why they thought the student deserved particular marks. Thus, they needed to critically comment on the performance of the students they evaluated. While this ensured their accountability towards the awarding of marks, it also comprised their own written evaluation of ten marks to be awarded by the faculty member.

It was found that students preferred the group discussion assessment condition more and also perceived it as a more accurate measure of their communication skills. Students' evaluation and faculty evaluation were found to be moderately correlated. (Correlation = .56) at .01 level of significance.

V. The Way Forward: Redefining Assessment?

The fact that evaluation in business communication needs redefining is indisputable now. The need of the hour is to develop a standard practice that could be used across when evaluating business communication skills of students and that could evaluate students on all LSRW skills, rather than evaluating them on writing skills alone. If current experiments with evaluation are to be given any consideration; then the fact that emerges emphatically is that, if and when, such a standard practice is put in place; peer evaluation would emerge as an integral part of the desired tool. If so be the case, appropriate training would be necessary to enable the participants familiarize themselves with the process of devising assessment criteria, developing an assessment rubric, assessing work and giving and receiving feedback. In addition, participants would require encouragement and support from the tutor/facilitator to help build their confidence in engaging with and using the assessment method to its maximum potential (Juwah, 2003).

Future assessment practices need to address certain stated and implied needs, which are – reliability, validity, objectivity and verifiability (Chakraborty and Agarwal, 2010; Broadfoot and Black, 2004). One of the yawning gaps in public test information in many countries is the lack of any comprehensively researched data on their reliability, even although the technical means for doing this are well known. The studies by Rogosa (1999) in California, and by Gardner and Cowan (2000) in Northern Ireland, are among the few available studies to address this issue. They show how alarmingly large are the chances of students being wrongly graded, and in the latter the authors draw attention to the fact that tests which are nationally important and can determine life chances of children do not satisfy the standards for testing of the professional test community. A different problem in validity was raised by Huse´n and Postlethwaite (1996), querying whether precise interpretations of a learner's intellectual functioning can be inferred from limited test responses. There is a pressing need for more statistical analyses of multiple sources of data in this respect, in order to infer probabilities for various inferences.

In particular, we suggest, the following questions are in urgent need of attention, when designing an appropriate assessment tool for the course of business communication:

1) How far do prevailing modes of student assessment tend to reinforce outmoded notions of curriculum content and student learning at the expense of twenty-first century learning skills and dispositions such as creativity and learning to learn?
2) To what extent has research into educational assessment focused to an excessive extent on techniques, at the expense of more fundamental analyses of its social and political role, and so failed to mount a concerted challenge to the inappropriate and damaging use of such techniques? Is it now time for the emergence of a new assessment paradigm born of the very different epistemologies and needs of the twenty-first century?
3) Are the students evaluated both on written and non-written skills immediately?
4) Does the proposed tool create learning opportunities for students?
5) Does the enable students to receive an immediate instructor and peer feedback?
6) Is the evaluation conducted evaluation in a manner that there is little or no scope of any element of subjectivity in the process?
7) Does the tool present a challenge to the students so that there is no lack of seriousness amongst them?

References

[1] Bhatia,V. K. (2004). Worlds of written discourse: A genre-based view. London: Continuum International.
[2] Biggs, J. (1999). Teaching for Quality Learning at University, Buckingham: SRHE and Open University Press.
[3] Bostock, S.J. (2000) Computer Assisted Assessment - experiments in three courses. A workshop at Keele University, May. http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/cs/Stephen_Bostock/docs/caa-ktn.htm
[4] Bostock,S. Student peer assessment. URL: http://www.palatine.ac.uk/files/994.pdf, retrieved on 30 July 2009.
[5] Boud, D. (2002). Seminar given on Assessment at the launch of the University of Glasgow's Centre for Research in Higher Education. 10 February 2002.
[6] Boud, D., Cohen, R. and Sampson, J. (1999). Peer Learning and Assessment. Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, Volume 24, No. 4, pp. 413-426.
[7] Broadfoot, Patricia and Black, Paul. (March 2004). Redefining assessment? The first ten years of assessment in education. Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice, Volume 11, No.1, pp. 7 – 26.
[8] Brown, S. (1996) Assessment, in Deliberations.
[9] Brown, S., Rust, C. and Gibbs, G. (1994). Involving students in the assessment process, in Strategies for Diversifying.
[10] Brown, S., Sambell, K. and McDowell, L. (1998). What do students think about assessment? 107-112 in Peer Assessment in Practice, Brown, S. (ed.) (SEDA paper 102) Birmingham: SEDA.
[11] Chakraborty, S and Agarwal, S. (2010). Broadening the focus of evaluation: An experiment. Int. Journal of Business Science and Applied Management, Volume 5, No. 1.
[12] Colff, Linda van der. (2004). A new paradigm for business education: The role of the business educator and business school. Management Decision, Volume 42 No. 3/4, pp. 499-507.

[13] Cowan, J (1998). On Becoming an Innovative University Teacher. Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education, RHE and Open University Press.
[14] Cowan, J. (1999). Assessing Reflection. Workshop presented at the Year of Assessment, The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen.
[15] Cox, Homer L. (1970). Communication testing practices: A survey of selected universities. Journal of Business Communication, Volume 8, No.1, pp.13-23.
[16] Crooks, Terence J. (1988). Impact of classroom evaluation practices on students. Review of Educational Research, Volume 58, No. 4, pp. 438-481.
[17] Donaldson, A.J.M. and Topping, K.J. (1996). Promoting Peer Assisted Learning amongst Students in Higher and Further Education. (SEDA paper 96) Birmingham: SEDA.
[18] Du-Babcock, B. (2006). TEACHING BUSINESS COMMUNICATION: Past, Present, and Future. Journal of Business Communication, Volume 43, No. 3, pp. 253-264.
[19] Fall, Randy and Webb, Noreen M. (2000). Group discussion and large-scale language arts assessment: effects on students' comprehension. American Educational Research Journal, Volume 37, No. 4, pp. 911-941.
[20] Feinberg, Susan. (1979). Evaluation of business communication techniques. Journal of Business Communication, Volume 16, No. 3, pp. 15-30.
[21] Gibbs, G and Simpson, C. (2004-05). Conditions under which Assessment Supports Students' Learning. Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, Issue 1.
[22] Gibbs, G. (1992). Improving the Quality of Student Learning. Bristol: Technical Education Services.
[23] Hagge, J. (1989). The spurious paternity of business communication principles. Journal of Business Communication, Volume 26, pp.33-55.
[24] Hartley, J. (1998). Learning and studying, London: Routledge
[25] Juwah, C. (2003). Using Peer Assessment to Develop Skills and Capabilities. USDLA Journal, Volume 17, No.1.
[26] Krapels, R. H., and Arnold, V. D. (1998). Response to Murphy's "Re-viewing business communication." Journal of Business Communication, Volume.35, pp.149-153.
[27] Locker, K. O. (1998). The role of the Association for Business Communication in shaping business communication as an academic discipline. Journal of Business Communication, Volume 35, No.1, pp.14-49.
[28] Lundelius,J and Poon. E. (1997). Cross-Sectioning Mock Job Interviews for Peer Evaluation. Business Communication Quarterly, Volume. 60, pp.165-170.
[29] Maes, Jeanne D; Weldy, Teresa G. and Icenogle, Marjorie L. (1997). A managerial perspective: oral communication competency is most important for business students in the workplace. The Journal of Business Communication, Volume 34, No.1, pp.67-81.
[30] Mainkar, Avinash V. (Feb2008). A student-empowered system for measuring and weighing participation in class discussion. Journal of Management Education, Volume 32 Issue 1, pp. 23-37.
[31] Marton, F. and Saljo, R. (1984) Approaches to Learning. In: The Experience of Learning. Marton,F., Hounsell, D. and Entwistle, N. (Eds). Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press.
[32] Matsuno, Sumie. (2009). Self-, Peer-, and Teacher-Assessments in Japanese University EFL Writing Classrooms. Language Testing, Volume 26, No.1, pp.75-100.
[33] McDowell, L. and Mowl, G. (1996) Innovative assessment - Its impact on students, 131-147 in Gibbs, G. (ed.) Improving student learning through assessment and evaluation, Oxford: The Oxford Centre for Staff Development.
[34] McKenney, James L. (July 1962). An Evaluation of Business Game in an MBA Curriculum. JSTOR: The Journal of Business, Volume 35, No.3, pp. 278-286.
[35] Mowl, G. (1996). Innovative Assessment, in Deliberations http://www.lgu.ac.uk/deliberations/assessment/mowl_content.html
[36] Nichols, Ralph G.; Brown, James I. and Keller, Robert J. (2006). Measurement of communication skills. International Journal of Listening. URL: http://www.listen.org 15, retrieved on 30 July 2009.
[37] Ogunleye, James. (February 2006). A review and analysis of assessment objectives of academic and vocational qualifications in English further education, with particular reference to creativity. Journal of Education and Work, Volume19, No.1, pp. 91-204.
[38] Patricia and Black, Paul (2004). Redefining assessment? The first ten years of assessment in education. Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice, Volume 11, No.1, pp. 7 – 26.
[39] Porter, M. (1985). Competitive advantage. New York: Free Press. pp. 911-941.
[40] Race, P. (1998) Practical Pointers in Peer Assessment, 113-122 in Peer Assessment in Practice, Brown, S. (ed.) (SEDA paper 102) Birmingham: SEDA.
[41] Race, P. (1998). Practical Pointers on Peer-Assessment SEDA Paper 102, Birmingham: SEDA Publications.
[42] Ramsden, P. (1992). Learning to Teach in Higher Education. London: Routledge.
[43] Rogers, P. S. (1996). Disciplinary distinction or responsibility. Management Communication Quarterly, Volume 10, No.1, pp.112-123.
[44] Thorpe, Mary. (2000). Encouraging students to reflect as part of the assignment process: Student responses and tutor feedback. Active Learning in Higher Education, Volume 1, No. 1, pp. 79-92.
[45] Topping, K. (1996). Effective Peer Tutoring in Further and Higher Education, (SEDA Paper 95) Birmingham: SEDA.
[46] Topping, K. (1998). Peer assessment between students in colleges and universities. Review of Educational Research, Volume 68, pp. 249-276.
[47] Zariski, A. (1996). Student peer assessment in tertiary education: Promise, perils and practice. In Abbott, J. and Willcoxson.