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FULL PAPERS

A Comparative Review of Mississippi Business Teacher Certification Methods

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Currently, a variety of routes are available to become certified to teach business and technology education courses in the secondary sector, and that has contributed to enrollment decline in traditional business teacher education programs nationwide (Gordon, 2011). In addition to traditional business teacher education programs at comprehensive universities in the state of Mississippi, alternate routes to obtain certification include options such as summer workshops, web-based modules, semester-long training sessions, graduate courses with add-on endorsements, and Praxis II endorsement testing. Are any of these certification options more appealing and/or effective in preparing business and technology teachers than the others? Are there particular reasons why one route is chosen over another?

The purpose of this study is to survey current teachers of business and technology courses in Mississippi to determine which route was taken to secure business and technology teacher certification, why that particular route was chosen, and whether or not the teachers felt adequately prepared to teach and manage a classroom upon gaining certification. The table below defines each type of certification process.

<i>BUSINESS/TECH CERTIFICATION ROUTE</i>	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>
Traditional Teacher Education Programs	Bachelor's degree or higher in teacher education from a state approved or NCATE approved program from a regionally/nationally accredited institution of higher learning. Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching, Praxis II Business

	Education, technology literacy assessment
Alternate Route Programs	Bachelor's degree (non-education) from a regionally/nationally accredited institution of higher learning, Praxis II Specialty Area Test, successful completion of alternate route program
Career Technical Educator License Workshops	Bachelor's degree or higher, one year of verifiable appropriate occupational experience in the past ten years, completion of the VIP program, passed technology literacy assessment, completion of related content methods course
Reciprocity from Another State	Original, valid out-of-state license, sealed copy of all college transcripts, and documentation provided to show a passing score on a core subject test required for certification test by the issuing state, or documentation that verifies certification.

The following research questions will be addressed:

- Which educational route did the majority of current Mississippi business and technology teachers take to become certified?
- What factors initially influenced the chosen certification route of current business and technology teachers in Mississippi?
- Did the certification route taken have an effect on current business and technology teachers' level of preparedness to teach the new statewide curriculum framework?

Methods and Procedures

To conduct this study, a descriptive mixed-methods approach was utilized (Newman, 2006). Teachers who currently teach the following courses in the state of

Mississippi were included in the targeted research population: (1) Business Law, (2) Personal Finance, (3, 4) Information and Communication Technology I and II, (5, 6) Graphic Design I and II, (7) Entrepreneurship, (8) Business Finance, (9) Accounting Fundamentals, (10) Business Fundamentals, (11) Management Fundamentals, (12) Management Essentials, (13) International Business, (14) Marketing Essentials, (15) Sales and Distribution, (16) Web Design and Media Rich Content, (17) Intro to Information Technology, and (18) Technology Foundations. Qualified teachers of every public school district in the state with any of the aforementioned courses were eligible to participate in this study.

Professional email addresses of teachers were collected via district websites, school websites, and statewide public educational listservs. Thereafter, all teachers included in the specified research population were emailed a researcher-created electronic survey powered by www.surveymonkey.com. All responding teachers who met the aforementioned course criteria were included in the research sample.

This study is limited because the content of many school and district websites is sometimes limited, making the process of obtaining a comprehensive listing of all business and technology teachers in the state difficult. Additionally, access to state business education listservs is generally prohibited in Mississippi. However, the researchers remained dedicated to employing data collection methods to obtain a representative sample through all legal and ethical means possible. This study is delimited to only business and technology teachers in the state of Mississippi simply because each state has its own unique certification processes, and data specifically related to Mississippi is greatly needed to assist with supporting and/or refuting

upcoming state level certification requirement modifications. Collected data was organized and analyzed by the teacher certification routes of respondents, and all personal identifying information was kept confidential.

Findings

The findings reported after analyzing all data collected are displayed in both quantitative and qualitative form to support each research question. Ideally, all public school districts with business and technology courses would be represented in the sample of this study; however, not all districts participated. A total of 159 teachers were emailed to request participation, and 55 teachers (35%) responded. Although 57.4% of all responses were from teachers who currently teach Business Fundamentals for at least one of their preps, teachers of several other high school business courses were also represented including (1) Marketing Essentials, (2) Management Fundamentals, (3) Personal Finance, (4) Accounting Fundamentals, (5) Entrepreneurship, (6) Business Finance, (7) Business Law, (8) Management Essentials, (9) Sales and Distribution, (10) Graphic Design I, (11) Graphic Design II, (12) Career Pathway Experiences, (13) Accounting, and (14) Global Marketing. All respondents were high school teachers, and 61.8% of them hold Master's degrees.

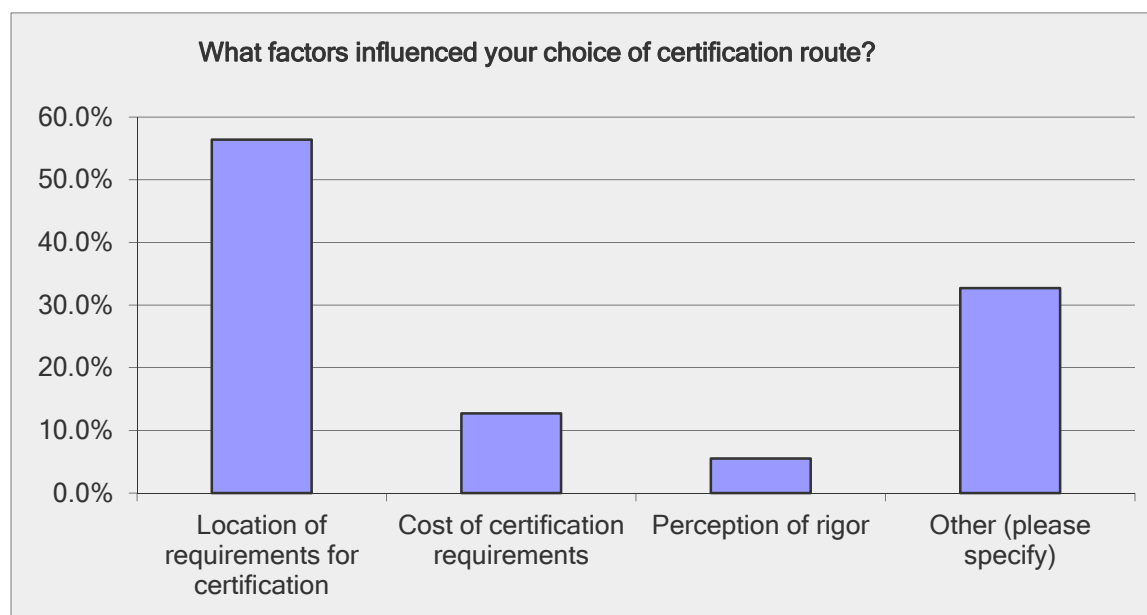
- **R1. Which educational route did the majority of current Mississippi business and technology teachers take to become certified?**

Upon review of results, it was determined that 43% of all participants in the study earned their certifications through a traditional certification program, 42% of participants earned their certifications through alternate route certification programs, and the

remaining 15% obtained career and technical education teacher certification through non-academic training workshops and experiences.

- R2. What factors initially influenced the chosen certification route of current business and technology teachers in Mississippi?**

56.4% of participants stated that location of requirements was a major factor in choosing a certification route; 32.7% chose “Other”; 12.7% stated that cost of certification requirements played a factor in their decision; 5.5% denoted that perception of rigor affected their choice of certification route. The selection of multiple responses per individual was permitted. The following chart represents the responses regarding influences:



Those who chose the “Other” category stated that their particular licensure method was chosen due to career path changes following obtaining a bachelor’s degree in a different field, limited jobs in corporate America, or the lack of traditional programs in their community.

- **R3. Did the certification route taken have an effect on current business and technology teachers' level of preparedness to teach the new statewide curriculum framework?**

When asked about the newly revised state curriculum, 75% of respondents who stated that their specific method of certification had a positive effect on their level of preparedness to teach were those who obtained traditional methods of certification through a teacher education bachelor's degree program. While these teachers agreed that their programs completely prepared them to teach; all respondents (including the remaining 25% who received alternate route training) stated that the constant changes to certifications and curriculum are overwhelming, discouraging, and expensive. Those who chose the career and technical licensure route acknowledged the benefits from the required trainings, and stated that the additional trainings improved their technology knowledge and skills.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Although lifelong learning is imperative in the field of business technology education, the data suggests that perhaps the constant demand for additional required trainings at the teachers' expense may need to be reconsidered or implemented differently. Overall, those who received traditional teacher education training as an undergraduate stated that their programs greatly prepared them to teach; but as state licensure requirements continue to change, and their original endorsements now become obsolete, those who chose this route often resent their extensive training. While the majority of those who chose alternate route methods did not state that their training prepared them to teach new curriculum, similar sentiments about endorsement changes

were discussed as a concern. The data also suggests that location and accessibility of program requirements play a major factor in the selection of certification routes. To efficiently recruit, retain, and promote sustainability within the field, coordinators, instructors, and stakeholders of business and technology certification programs must devote the necessary time and attention to develop and continuously review program requirements for relevance and effectiveness (Scott-Bracey, 2011). Therefore, an open line of communication must be kept between state boards of education and institutions or organizations responsible for training pre-service teachers. Results of this study can assist all related business and technology certification training entities by providing realistic insight to perspectives of those currently teaching in the field. Additionally, findings may provide a foundation to assist academic stakeholders in making critical decisions related to the future of business and technology education in the state of Mississippi.

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An Emerging Trend: Cloud Service Brokerage

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Gartner Research coined the term Cloud Services Brokerage (CSB) and defined it as an IT role and business model in which a company, or other entity, adds value to one or more (public or private) cloud services on behalf of one or more consumers of that service via three primary roles including aggregation, integration, and customization brokerage. Cloud Service Brokers offer four functions: marketplace, management, brokerage, and enablement.

A marketplace offers an e-commerce platform for federated cloud services that is made up of competitive service offerings and diverse cloud computing resources from various cloud providers. A CSB can assist companies with multiple cloud management by providing a single account or dashboard to access all the cloud provides. A CSB enabler provides technology to implement CSB, and a CSB provider offers combined technology, people and methodologies to implement and manage CSB-related projects (IT Glossary, n.d.).

Purpose or Objective

The objective of this paper is to explore the role of a Cloud Service Brokerage (CSB) in various industries. Researchers discuss the market size of the cloud, cloud service brokerage, and the cloud brokerage enablement industry; opportunities and challenges for a CSB; the total addressable market for a CSB; and potential key business use cases for a CSB.

Methods and Procedures

Researchers elected to use applied research methods in this study. Systematic inquiry involving the practical application of science, assessing the theories for business or client driven purpose are a few of the parts of applied research. A motivation behind applied research is to engage with people, organizations, or interests beyond the academic discipline. This engagement with the "outside world" gives applied research some distinctive characteristics.

Findings and Results

A cloud services broker plays an intermediary role in cloud computing. CSBs make it easier for organizations to consume and maintain cloud services, particularly when they span multiple cloud providers (Cloud Computing, n.d.). According to Gartner, three major CSB roles are identified: Intermediation, Aggregation and Arbitrage. An intermediation broker provides value-added services on top of existing cloud platforms, such as identity or access management capabilities. An aggregation broker provides the "glue" to bring together multiple services and ensure the security and interoperability of data between systems. A cloud service arbitrage provides flexibility and "opportunistic choices" by offering multiple similar services to select from.

CSBs fill the brokerage space between the cloud providers and cloud consumers by providing the marketplace multiple competing services in their catalog and making it easy to find the best cloud service provider at the best price. Furthermore, the roles of CSBs may include facilitation of deployment and integration of applications across multiple clouds. Some of the value-added services that a CSB may offer include virtual machine portability, migration, application programming interface management, and

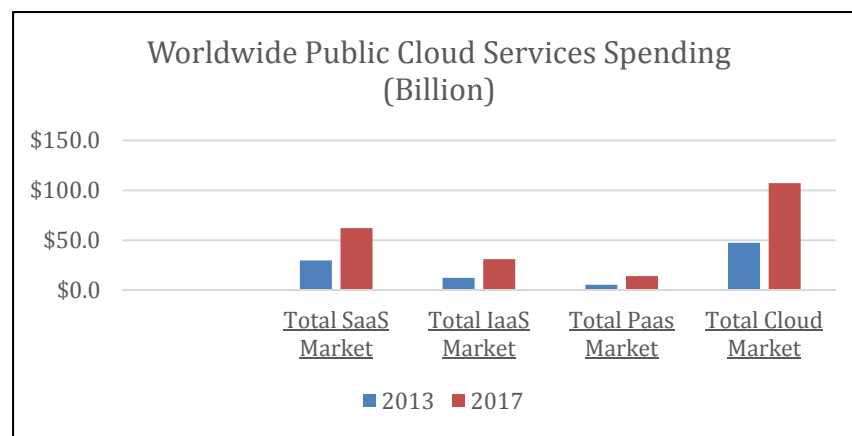
normalization through their cloud brokerage platforms like ComputeNext. The cloud brokerage platforms also allow cloud consumers the freedom to move between platforms and keep options available from a diverse group of cloud providers, which overcomes the problem of vendor lock-in with a single cloud provider.

Worldwide Public Cloud Services Spending

Overall, worldwide public cloud services spending is expected to grow from \$58 billion to \$107 billion (U.S. dollars) at a CAGR of 22.6% (Figure 1). An increase in momentum for cloud adoption by companies has occurred.

Figure 1

Worldwide Public Cloud Services Spending



According to Markets and Markets, the Cloud Brokerage Enablement market was \$225.42 million in 2013 and is expected to grow to \$2.03 billion by 2018, at a CAGR of 55.3 percent. The overall global Cloud Brokerage market was at \$1.57 billion in 2013 and is expected to grow to \$10.5 billion by 2018, representing a CAGR of 46.2 percent from 2013 to 2018. According to Gartner, an estimated 80% of organizations will use cloud services by 2014, and 20% of those services would be intermediated through CSBs by 2015.

Figure 2Cloud Brokerage Enablement and Cloud Service Brokerage Market

Market Overview	2013	2018	CAGR
Cloud Brokerage Enablement market (Billion)	\$0.23	\$2.03	55.26%
Cloud Service Brokerage (Billion)	\$1.57	\$10.50	46.24%

Pain Points

Companies are now deploying a wide range of cloud services to meet their changing needs, but this is causing the companies to face certain problems. Some of the pain points that companies encounter are complicated vendor relationships, risks associated with every vendor, security concerns, complexity of service interoperability and data portability, management of individual principals, their authentication, authorization and privileges within or across systems, and country specific laws regarding cloud usage demanding the data centers be located within the geographical boundary of the countries.

Value Proposition

CSBs can help overcome most of the pain points cloud consumers face today. The cloud brokerage platform offers a single sign-on that lets cloud consumers log into the system and keep track of all their cloud providers and cloud consumption. CSBs have made multi-cloud management very easy by offering an interactive dashboard that let users view all transactions occurring and by including important reports. CSBs offer a diverse set of heterogeneous services from which cloud consumers can choose. They offer transparency across all the occurring transactions and cloud usage. CSBs also

provide a wide choice of cloud providers and data center locations globally. A CSB platform provides cloud consumers with one account, one invoice, and one support contact for all their computing needs from various cloud providers.

Use Case Scenarios: A lot of different sectors, such as information technology, media, government and finance can benefit by using CSBs for their technological needs. Some of the identified use case scenarios are

- Any startup business needs a basic IT setup and as the business grows, the need for an agile infrastructure arises with little or no capital expenditure. CSBs can help startup businesses to meet their growing demand for infrastructure by allowing the businesses to search, find, and procure, and therefore access their computing resources on a single platform in few simple steps.
- The information technology industry often develops, tests, and scales new services or offerings. Companies can easily scale up or scale down their test and development environment through a CSB platform.
- In the research sector where companies require extensive computational tasks that demand high scalability and high performance, computing can be easily achieved through a CSB platform.
- The current trend of e-education delivered through e-classes or e-learning management systems has changed the face of the education sector. The education sector is more dependent on cloud technology than ever before. CSBs can help in this sector by bridging the gap between educational institutions and the various cloud providers. Education institutions can choose the right cloud

provider based on the location of the cloud provider, service level agreements, performances, availability, and certifications.

- Today's global and fast-paced entertainment and media industry needs global collaboration in the most cost-effective way. Transcoding, cloud-based media asset management systems, accelerated file transfer, storage, and access control are some of the technological needs of this industry. CSBs can play a vital role in this industry as intermediation and aggregation brokers.
- As government is also taking a leap towards cloud technology to achieve its strategic goals, CSBs can tap into this opportunity. Recently, Gravitant's cloud matrix (Gravitant's cloud brokerage platform) enabled the State of Texas to transform to an IT-as-a-service model. The state of Texas wanted to adopt cloud computing as the ultimate way to access multi-sourcing to get better cost and responsiveness (Cloud Broker, n.d.). It is now using a cloud matrix for all of its technological needs.

Conclusion

Cloud Service Brokerage is one of the emerging trends in the technology industry. With evolving technology and changing customer needs, the Cloud Service Brokerage market is expected to grow exponentially in the near future. The cloud service brokers have the opportunity to capture this untapped market as companies are now exploring alternatives to adopt the cloud for their infrastructure and software needs.

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**Business Students' Proofreading Skills:
Self-Assessment vs. Actual Performance**

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Abstract

Research has been recognizing the importance of self-assessment on the effective writing process, including on-going revision, editing, and proofreading skills. Self-efficacy can impact quality of writing as well when students perceive that their writing ability is related to their actual writing competence. When the student's level of self-confidence increases, his or her actual performance increases.

Students in two business communication courses, one for business students and one for non-business students, were asked to "grade" themselves on eight writing skills. Students were then given a writing prompt so that the instructor could evaluate the students' current level of knowledge and skill in business communication.

Have you as an instructor ever stressed, "Be sure to proofread your report." How often do instructors write "Proofread!" on the bottom of a paper they are grading?

Proofreading is a necessary skill, but is rarely taught (Madraso, 1993).

Proofreading is reviewing the correctness of the grammar, punctuation, syntax, sentence structure, and mechanics of the document. Proofreading focuses on each word and punctuation mark; it is both a reading and a writing skill (Harris, 1987).

Proofreading has little research compared to larger scale and more semantic aspects of revision, perhaps because of automatic spell checkers (Pilotti et al., 2012).

Even though a spell-checker would find errors in non-words (e.g., *fron* instead of *from*), it would not notice word errors (e.g., *form* instead of *from*). Therefore, proofreading for word errors is person-driven rather than software-checked. Research by Ferris (1995), Harris (1987), and West (1983) has shown us that error detection in

general is difficult for most people; and finding errors in our own writing is even more of a challenge because we know what we want to say, essentially we are not *reading the words*.

Proofreading consists of checking the writing for accuracy of grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, lexicon, spelling, typos, and other syntax. Proofreading is the reading of text to detect and correct errors (Pilotti et al., 2012). It is difficult to proofread one's own work because of the familiarity with the word text that the writer does not see the errors (Turner, 2011).

In 2005, the Society for Editors and Proofreaders' Code of Practice defined proofreading as "a process of identifying typographical, linguistic, coding, or positional errors or omissions on a printed or electronic proof, and marking corrections" (p. 4). However, more recently, Harwood, Austin, and Macaulay (2012) noted that because of the variety of practices in the context of proofreading student writing, a constant definition for proofreading does not really exist.

Revision, on the other hand, is an ongoing task throughout the writing process. Revision includes logical order of thoughts, rewording sentences, providing clarity of ideas, and working on style of writing. "Re-vision" is literally translated as "re-seeing" the document for the first time.

Students must understand that proofreading is only one part of revision. *Proofreading* focuses on the correctness and precision of the language and grammar; whereas, revision focuses on comprehension of and anticipated recipient reaction to the message content. *Editing* overall includes the five c's of effective communication, including clear, correct, complete, concise, and courteous exchange of meaning as it

was intended. Editing occurs after at least one complete draft, changing word choices and sentence strategies, reflecting on the non-verbal impact of the “you” viewpoint. Proofreading occurs at the end of the writing process, even after editing; while revising occurs throughout, proofreading should be at the end of the writing process (Carduner, 2007; Madraso, 1993).

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to compare the self-assessment of business students in various aspects of written communication skills as compared to their actual level of knowledge and skills at the beginning of the semester.

Purpose

This study addressed the instructional strategies used to teach proofreading concepts in a required business core managerial report writing-intensive class at the junior level. The following course student learning outcomes were impacted by these proofreading strategies:

1. Demonstrate the writing process to produce effective documents.
2. Recognize effective writing strategies.
3. Integrate communication principles for effective written documents using appropriate technical skills.

This study compared student proofreading skills and their self-assessment pre- and post-course. The purpose of the study was to have students self-assess their proofreading skills.

Need for the Study

While students might be able to understand and apply the grammar rules in individual exercises, when they need to write holistically, they fail to apply those same rules because there is disconnect between the linguistic analysis and the overall written communication (Carduner, 2007).

Self-assessment is important for several reasons:

- Professional development and lifelong learning
- Reinforcement of pedagogic value
- Effective writing and editing processes

Most business communication courses only have one or two English classes as pre-requisite courses, so students do not have a good writing foundation when they enter the business writing class. Additionally, business schools rate written communication as the highest student learning outcome most critical to student success; therefore, focus on writing skills should continue to be a priority in the business curriculum (Wardrope, 2002).

Methods and Procedures of the Study

Sixty-four (64) business students in two junior-level Managerial Reports classes were asked to assess (“grade”) themselves in eight different written communication skills:

- Spelling
- Grammar
- Punctuation
- Proofreading

- Reading
- Word Processing
- Vocabulary
- Sentence Structure

Students graded themselves using the following scale:

A – Excellent in this area; I could teach the concept.

B – Good in this area; once in a while I am not sure if I am correct.

C – Fair in this area; I am about average but know I could do better.

D – Poor in this area; I definitely need to improve my skills.

Students were then given a pre-course writing exercise to evaluate their current level of knowledge and skills in proofreading written business messages. Results of the comparison between student self-assessment and their actual performance on the proofreading skills are presented.

The following pre-course questionnaire was administered to students on the first day of the semester. Data from the survey over three semesters showed that most students think they are good at proofreading and they know their grammar; however, the pre-course assessment suggested that they are not proficient in grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and proofreading. Students also do not use references, such as dictionaries and thesauruses (online or print). Students do use the software spell checker and grammar checker tools (only because of the red and green squiggly underlines).

The study used convenience sampling of the students who were enrolled in the classes during the semester. The research questions included the following:

1. Do proofreading skills improve throughout the semester?
2. Do students accurately perceive their level of proofreading?
3. Are students more aware of proofreading at the end of the semester?

This study used a pretest-posttest to collect and compare data on proofreading skills from 64 students. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. The percentages of students who scored themselves with a grade of A, B, C, D on the various communication skills are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Student Self-Assessment

n=64	A			B			C			D		
	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3
Spelling	13%	25%	13%	69%	44%	38%	13%	19%	19%	6%	13%	19%
Grammar	13%	6%	6%	44%	38%	31%	31%	50%	56%	13%	6%	6%
Punctuation	19%	0%	6%	25%	69%	63%	56%	31%	25%	0%	0%	6%
Proofreading	19%	6%	6%	44%	50%	44%	38%	38%	25%	0%	6%	13%
Reading	31%	31%	31%	31%	31%	38%	31%	25%	19%	6%	13%	13%
Word Processing	50%	63%	75%	44%	38%	25%	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Vocabulary	19%	13%	6%	50%	50%	63%	31%	25%	19%	0%	13%	13%
Sentence Structure	19%	6%	6%	31%	63%	69%	50%	25%	13%	0%	6%	13%

Review of Literature

Self-assessment is a critical skill in the writing process for professional development and lifelong learning (Langan et al., 2008). As self-assessments have become more predominant, research is further establishing the importance that self-

assessment has on pedagogic value (Patri, 2002). It can be an effective method for helping students learn. Self-assessment is also an important component of an effective writing and editing process. In fact, research has shown that self-assessment of written communication can impact the quality of the writing (McCarthy, Meier, & Rinderer, 1985).

The emphasis in most business communication courses is written and oral communication, usually with the main focus on the principles of business writing and the correct use of grammar and punctuation in the form of memos, letters, and reports (Wardrope, 2002). While one or two English Composition classes may be pre-requisites to the business writing course, most students enter the course as mediocre, or even poor, writers of business documents. Most undergraduate business students take, at most, one course emphasizing oral and written communication skills. Educators need to determine how to teach students to write well in perhaps only one required core course for all business majors.

Pre-requisite knowledge and skills are still necessary to improve learning and academic performance (Schunk, 2003). Knowledge and skill in their major and oral communication skills were perceived as well developed in student self-assessment; in contrast, written communication, teamwork, and analytical reasoning were ranked the lowest in students' self-assessment (Arnold et al., 1999).

Self-Assessment in Reading

The research is lacking on an important part of the writing process: proofreading (Harwood et al., 2012). The challenge for students is that we typically read text and sentences as a group of words for comprehension, reading ahead, putting meaning into

how the words are put together into the context. Reading and proofreading are not the same activity. While proofreading is a reading skill, it is more of a concerted effort to focus on the text of words; whereas, reading scans the sentences quickly for comprehension. We do not read word-for-word; rather we read for comprehension, with our eyes rapidly scanning ahead to put meaning into the context (West, 1983).

Therefore, simple reading is not proofreading (Madraso, 1993).

Proofreading requires that we look at the existence of words, or lack of words, specifically. The “illusion of knowing” what the sentence reads makes proofreading difficult as readers fail to detect word errors because their context-related expectations lead the proofreader to not detect the error (Pilotti et al., 2012). Proofreading is “a highly developed verbal skill that involves competence in both reading and writing” (Harris, 1987, p. 466). A distinct difference between reading and proofreading exists because of the sensitive and unique task of detecting word errors (Pilotti et al., 2012).

When reading, students see *what they mean* rather than *what they write* (Harris, 1987; Shaughnessy, 1977). They do not see surface errors because they *read* rather than *proofread* (Harris, 1987). Inexperienced readers do not notice the omissions or errors when reading their own writing because they themselves have not done much reading. Experienced writers modify their normal reading process/pace so they actually see the words on the page, rather than just what they expect to see.

Discussing the differences in the process between reading and proofreading is critical for student understanding. Further, discussing the differences among revising, editing, and proofreading—all an essential part of the writing process—is also important.

Self-Assessment in Writing

Self-assessment is a critical skill in and of itself (Orsmond, 2004); furthermore, self-assessment is critical in the writing process and impacts the quality of writing (McCarthy et al., 1985).

Self-assessment in the higher education business communication classroom can be an effective method for helping students learn. Students need to address the strengths and weaknesses of their finished product, as well as the entire writing process. Self-assessment is an active learning method that helps students develop learner autonomy, independence, and self-reflection (Arnold et al., 1999; Langan et al., 2008; Orsmond, 2004; Patri, 2002). Students develop an awareness and appreciation of their competencies (Langan et al., 2008).

Additionally, positive self-assessment of both their capabilities and progress toward skill accomplishment is critical for sustaining self-efficacy for students' learning and improved performance (Schunk, 2003). Introspective self-assessment on the part of the student can potentially increase competence because of the awareness of self. Inclusion of self-assessment tools empowers learners (Langan et al., 2008).

Proofreading should be used as a complement to grammar instruction to allow students to make a writing-grammar connection to find and correct errors in their writing (Carduner, 2007). With purposeful emphasis on good writing, significant and relevant feedback, formative assessment, and strategic teaching; students can be taught to write well in one course (Enos, 2010; Pittenger, Miller, & Allison, 2006; Quible, 2006). Enos (2010) found that with instruction and assessment, students can improve their editing and proofreading skills in just one college course. Students become better writers as a

consequence of enhancing their proofreader skills (Madraso, 1993).

In addition to discussing research findings that indicate poor proofreading and editing performance, one must also focus on strategic instructional interventions that will address this problem and improve students' writing abilities.

Madraso (1993) emphasized that "the only way to improve proofreading is to teach proofreading" (p. 33).

Instructional Strategies for Proofreading

McCarthy et al. (1985) found a relationship between student perceptions of their own writing and their actual writing performance. Therefore, self-assessment of the student's writing abilities, as well as his or her own written work, should reinforce this concept.

Proofreading examples. In the introduction to proofreading concepts, introduce the importance of proofreading and the consequences of proofreading errors by providing examples from newspapers, billboards, websites, signs, and other media for written communication. Not only do proofreading errors trouble readers, but they also portray a lack of professionalism on the part of the writer signaling that the writer did not take the time to verify accuracy and did not have an eye for detail.

Students must first understand the value of proofreading before they will care to invest time in learning proper proofreading strategies. Providing examples of flyers, signs, newspapers, TV advertisements, and other public relations pieces might reinforce this concept.

Proofreading self-awareness. One strategy is to be aware of one's own frequently occurring errors. Students can record the number of times they make specific

proofreading errors to determine their areas of weakness in grammar and punctuation. Then, they know what to look for in future proofreading.

Proofreading self-assessment. A Self-Assessment of Proofreading Skills and Strategies can also be used to develop a self-awareness of proofreading strategies, such as the example shown in Figure 2.

In conjunction with the self-assessment, a lesson plan for the instruction of proofreading strategies may also prove helpful:

1. Review proofreading strategies with students.
2. Discuss proofreading marks.
3. Do proofreading exercises.
4. Have students use correct proofreaders' marks to proofread their own written documents.
5. Have students peer-review other students' papers.
6. Have students review their proofread/marked papers and revise for correction.
7. Ask students to determine their most commonly made errors
8. Ask students to assess which errors they have the most difficult time finding.
9. Review proofreading strategies again.
10. Ask students to compile a list of proofreading tips.

Figure 2. Self-Assessment of Proofreading Skills and Strategies

	Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Always	Unclear Concept or N/A
Do you proofread when you are most alert?					
Do you minimize distractions when proofreading?					
Do you access online or print dictionaries when you proofread?					
Do you access online or print thesauruses when you proofread?					
Do you access other online or print reference manuals when you proofread?					
Do you allow time to pass between finishing and proofreading your document?					
Do you proofread in a well-lit setting?					
Do you read aloud when proofreading?					
Do you read slowly, word-for-word, when proofreading?					
Do you proofread the same document more than once?					
Do you check for noun-pronoun agreement?					
Do you check for subject-verb agreement?					
Do you proofread numbers and quantitative data?					
Do you check for typos and misspellings?					
Do you check your punctuation?					
Do you check your capitalization?					
Do you check your sentence structure?					
Do you check for parallelism?					
Do you ensure active voice when appropriate?					
Do you proofread for dangling and misplaced modifiers?					
Do you check for camouflaged verbs?					
Do you use the software spell checker?					
Do you use the grammar checker?					
Have you ever been taught about proofreading strategies?					
Do you look for specific proofreading errors?					

(Adapted from Smith & Sutton, 1994)

Proofreading exercises. Students should not hand in the first draft of their writing. They must realize that the first draft is not the final draft. Students should edit and proofread their own papers as well as peer-review other papers in class. Students must understand that they are accountable for their accuracy in writing.

After an initial writing, students should do a variety of proofreading exercises both independently of the writing and in the final stages of editing their writing. As proofreading instruction is introduced, the exercises need to be done during class; and then, students should be responsible for their proofreading drafts as part of their homework.

Initially allowing class time for proofreading practice is important—both for student self-assessment and peer-review—so that students can see improvement between time/drafts of their writing. Ultimately, the student learning outcome of proofreading instruction is for students to become independent editors in their own writing (Carduner, 2007).

Proofreading tips. Other useful strategies prove helpful in proofreading:

- Use a pointer (e.g., finger, pencil) to force the reading of each word and punctuation mark.
- Read sentences backwards.
- Read one word at a time.
- Use a straight-edge under each line as it is read.
- Read aloud.
- Use available spell check and grammar check software features.
- Put some time (i.e., a day or two) between finishing a draft and

proofreading the draft.

Proofreading technologies. Research has also shown that effective use of technology in writing helps students address the surface errors of their document more readily than using print reference materials, such as dictionaries (McNaughton, Hughes, & Clark, 1997).

Advanced Influential Strategies for Proofreading

Research shows that proficient editing and proofreading skills are critical for business students to master effective writing within their careers (Bacon & Anderson, 2004; Bush & Henderson, 2003; Enos, 2010; Quible, 2006).

The proofreading process should be formative so that students play an active role in reflecting on revising their writing, rather than having the instructor do it for them (Harwood et al., 2012). One ineffective method for teaching proofreading would be to use track changes/comments on an electronic document, whereby the student can just “accept changes” without actually digesting them.

The formative active learning process forces students to develop strategies to learn from their errors and to understand the corrections (Harwood et al., 2012). Students may learn little from instructor comments on surface features because they already have the knowledge of grammar and punctuation (Cho & Cho, 2011). Their lacking skill is proofreading. If the proofreading is already done for them, students do not need to think; they only need to change or fix the marked error mechanically. When proofreading another student’s paper (peer-reviewing), the student practices the proofreading skill.

Giving a Standards Practices Exam about four weeks into the semester has proved beneficial. Providing old tests and keys available on Blackboard or other course delivery software so that students can do self-assessments and grade themselves to find their problem areas is also helpful for them to focus on specific grammar and syntax. Further, reinforcement of the appendix in the textbook, external links to websites, and reference manuals made available for student studying can be useful. Having at least one class period of an extensive review of correct grammatical and punctuation usage before an exam has also proven successful.

Proofreading opportunities can and should be integrated into different assignments. Students can proofread various papers throughout the semester using correct proofreaders' marks, hand them in that way, and then the instructor proofreads and grades over the top with additional proofreaders' marks. The final grade is based upon how many more errors the instructor finds after the student did the proofreading. Additionally, rather than fixing the error, the instructor could only note an error in the margin so that students need to figure out for themselves what the error is.

Oftentimes, instructors use correct proofreading marks and fix the errors. So when the student revises, he or she does not need to think; he or she only needs to fix the error mindlessly. Alternatively, by placing a checkmark in the right margin of the line that contains an error (or two checkmarks, if two errors appear in that line), the student must not only determine the error, but also must decide how to correct the error. Madraso (1993) adds another dimension to this strategy. She grades the paper and records both the grade and the total number of checkmarks in her gradebook. Students then have two weeks to revise their paper, correcting any errors. If the student decides

not to revise, the number of checkmarks (uncorrected errors) is subtracted from the original grade. She has found this revision process to be an effective motivator for students to correct their errors; and as students are challenged to detect and correct their own errors, their learning is reinforced and they are improving their ability to proofread. Additionally, the majority of the work is done by the students, rather than the instructor commenting specifically about each mistake. This indirect intervention technique allows for formative assessment (Harwood et al., 2012). After all, the objective of proofreading should be for students to find and correct their own errors.

Mehlmann and Waters (1985) found that learning does not result from independent proofreading exercises and drills because students are not able to transition from those drills into practical application. Students need to see their errors and critically think about the error and the correction. As students use active learning in the proofreading process, they will learn how to avoid the errors upfront (Madraso, 1993). Further, the comprehension and application of their proofreading skills motivates students to find their own errors and fix them (Madraso, 1993).

Writing is also related to reading. Research has indicated that many inexperienced writers result from being inexperienced readers, but they can still become effective proofreaders if they are taught (Madraso, 1993; Mehlmann & Waters, 1985). Proofreading does not necessarily improve as a result of general verbal ability or the teaching of spelling or mechanics, but writers do make fewer errors initially because of that teaching, but their ability to find errors does not necessarily improve (West, 1983).

Students need to take the time to set their papers aside—no procrastination. Writer awareness should be promoted to focus on reoccurring errors and own

grammatical weaknesses. For example, when grading papers, an instructor might know some troublesome errors to look for in student papers:

- Students use the word “defiant” when they mean “definite.”
- Two often misspelled words are “moral-morale” and “personal-personnel.”
- People often forget the “r” in “your” (e.g., Bring you book to class.).
- Watch “lose” vs. “loose” and “cloths” vs. “clothes.”
- Common misspellings include words ending in “ant” or “ent.”
- Homophones can be a problem for many students (e.g., its vs. it’s, there vs. their vs. they’re).

Instructors must be cautious to improve the student’s *writing process*, not just the current *written product* (Harwood et al., 2012).

Data Findings and Analysis

At the end of the semester, students noted that their proofreading skills had improved and their use of outside reference materials had increased (e.g., online dictionary). They also thought they had a clearer understanding of the writing process. Most students indicated that they could spend more time proofreading after they had received graded papers and the proofreading concept had been discussed in class than they indicated on the first day of class. Students also self-assessed their proofreading skills lower at the end of the semester than at the beginning of the semester, perhaps due to awareness of proofreading necessity. Some of the findings are included in Figure 3:

- Most students (81%) think their writing does improve with revision.
- Over half of all students (59%) think that writing is critical for their future

career.

- Only one-fourth of students (26%) are careful of punctuation, grammar, or spelling in written communication.
- Over half of all students (59%) do not proofread their writing.

Figure 3. End-of Semester Student Reponses (N=64)

	SD	D	N	A	SA
I think I am a good writer and/or proofreader.	14%	63%	9%	10%	4%
	77%		23%		
My writing improves when I have several opportunities to revise and proofread.	4%	6%	9%	48%	33%
	10%		90%		
Good proofreading skills are critical for getting a job in my field.	14%	19%	8%	24%	35%
	33%		67%		
I think my final documents have improved by using the computer; e.g., fewer errors.	4%	32%	33%	22%	9%
	36%			31%	
I am careful of grammar, punctuation, and spelling in my writing.	15%	26%	33%	19%	7%
	41%			26%	
I usually do not proofread my writing because of Spell Check and Grammar Check features.	7%	20%	14%	44%	15%
	27%			59%	

Implications for Business Education

While the importance of writing skills for business graduates has been established, the effectiveness of business communication courses often can be questioned (Pittenger et al., 2006). Wardrope (2002) reaffirmed the importance of

business communication skills in each business discipline and the emergence of written communication as most critical to student success.

Mehlmann and Waters (1985) found that learning does not result from independent proofreading exercises and drills because students are not able to transition from those drills into practical application. Students need to see their errors and critically think about the error and the correction. As students use active learning in the proofreading process, they will learn how to avoid the errors upfront (Madraso, 1993). Further, the comprehension and application of their proofreading skills motivate students to find their own errors and fix them (Madraso, 1993).

Summary

A relationship exists between self-assessment and academic performance; and self-efficacy and previous performance are major indicators of writing achievement. When students persist and work hard for achievement, they increase their self-efficacy. Educators should use teaching approaches to encourage critical thinking for all students, especially for students with low self-efficacy.

As a result of these writing assessments, students were more engaged and developed an awareness of their writing ability. They also developed a greater liking of the subject and ability to evaluate writing. Qualitative changes were also noticeable in student writing ability; perhaps suggesting a connection between awareness, perception, and ability.

Because students usually do not self-assess on their own, instructors should require them to monitor their progress throughout the semester by having students assess their skills and knowledge at the beginning, during, and end of learning a

concept. As students perceive improvement in their learning progress, and in turn, their self-assessments; they will increase their self-efficacy and motivation for learning the content. The influence of instructor feedback can positively increase self-efficacy and motivation for continued learning. Feedback also prompts the instructor to adapt the teaching style and materials based upon assessment of student learning.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Student writing can improve significantly in a single course with continuous, effective instructor intervention, focusing on the basics of writing principles during the course. Writing assessment activities facilitated student writing improvement in many areas:

- Making students more aware of their writing ability
- Developing a greater student liking of the subject
- Enhancing student ability to evaluate writing
- Making students more engaged in the writing content
- Creating a connection between awareness, perception, and ability.

Based upon the above conclusions, the following recommendations should be considered:

- Instructors should require students to monitor their progress
- Instructors should provide immediate feedback with initial writing exercises
- To increase self-efficacy and motivation
- To adapt teaching style and materials based upon assessments
- Issues at midterm should be addressed specifically before moving on to new concepts

- Future research should include identification of criteria in self-assessments to ensure effective written communication

Strategically, instructors need to force students to slow down the reading process so that they look at each word and piece of punctuation independently. Both the revision and editing processes require them to use the reading approach to lend comprehension and meaning to the text. Because effective communication constitutes an exchange of meaning as it was intended; the revision, editing, and proofreading processes are necessary in writing.

Recommendations from the results of this study suggest that students implement specific proofreading strategies into their writing process. Instructors should assess student proofreading skills by the second day of class not only to determine a pre-test score but also to instill awareness in students towards proofreading. Proofreading skills should be measured again on the last day of class to determine the level of improvement in skill and awareness. A variety of instructional strategies should be used to allow students to enhance their proofreading skills for future retention.

As this study continues into future semesters, learners will be asked to assist in the identification of the criteria that should be self-assessed to ensure effective written communication. Student involvement in establishing the assessment criteria will potentially increase their understanding and application of the assessment criteria.

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English Language Learners in the Business Education Classroom

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Abstract

This study explores English Language Learners in the business education classroom. Instructional methods used by secondary business education teachers to help English Language Learners be successful in their classrooms are presented. There is an analysis of the education and/or training business education teachers have completed to help them work effectively with English Language Learners. Finally there is a discussion of the support that schools/districts provide to business education teachers to help them meet the needs of the ELLs in their classrooms.

According to the National Council of Teachers of English (2014), in the past 30 years, the foreign-born population of the United States has tripled. These numbers have led to reports about an underserved population of students who have been identified as English Language Learners (ELLs).

The *Glossary of Education Reform* (2014) defines English-language learners, or ELLs, as “students who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, who often come from non-English-speaking homes and backgrounds, and who typically require specialized or modified instruction in both the English language and in their academic courses.” Some of these students were born outside the United States in countries where English was not the native language and they immigrated to the U.S. while others were born in the United States into families who do not speak English in the home.

In 2011-2012, The National Center for Education Statistics estimated that 4.4 million English Language Learners lived in the United States. The National Education Association believes that, “Achievement gaps between ELLs and non-ELL students are deeply rooted, pervasive, complex, and challenging for the National Education Association affiliates and members.”

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the methods used by business teachers to help English Language Learners find success in their classrooms, identify the training business teachers have completed to help them work with ELLs, and to explore the support business teachers receive from their schools/districts to help them work with ELLs. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What instructional methods do business education teachers employ to help English Language Learners be successful in the classroom?
2. What training have business education teachers completed to help them work with English Language Learners?
3. What assistance do schools/districts provide business education teachers to help them work with English Language Learners?

This study and the resulting findings will assist business educators and business teacher educators in learning about the instructional methods that are being used by classroom teachers to meet the needs of English Language Learners, what kinds of education/training business teachers are completing to help them work with English

Language Learners, and the type of support that is being provided by schools/districts to practicing business teachers when they are working with ELLs.

Review of the Literature

Children of immigrants are the fastest growing segment of the school population in the United States with their growth highest in grades 7-12 (de Jong, Harper, & Coady, 2013). Many of these children do not speak English fluently so they are labeled English Language Learners (ELLs). Although the United States government requires school districts to provide services to ELLs, it does not have a policy for states to follow in identifying, assessing, placing, or instructing them (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). This requirement along with the exponential growth in ELL numbers is placing heavy demands on schools. In addition, it creates a need for professional development for practicing teachers because many schools may not have budgets to hire the specialized teachers and other personnel to work with this influx of ELLs.

In many cases, ELLs are mainstreamed into regular classrooms with little or no notice to the classroom teachers. Research suggests that most regular classroom teachers are not prepared to work with ELLs (de Jong, Harper, & Coady, 2013).

English Language Learners are a very diverse population in terms of prior formal education and their proficiency with the English language. This presents several challenges for teachers who are trying to help these students as well as meet academic standards (Newman, Samimy, & Romstedt, 2010). Some ELLs come to the United States with a strong educational background, and they may have content knowledge but lack proficiency in the English language to effectively communicate that knowledge. Others may not have the content knowledge or mastery of the English language. Yet

the classroom teacher is expected to help these students learn while also working with mainstream students, English-speaking students, gifted/talented students, and students with special needs.

According to Gandara and Hopkins (2010)

About 79 percent of English learners in the United States speak Spanish as their native language; much lower shares speak Chinese, Vietnamese, Hmong, and Korean. About 80 percent of second-generation immigrant children, who by definition are native-born U.S. citizens, are what schools call long-term English learners. These students, who have been in U.S. schools since kindergarten, are still classified as limited English proficient when they reach middle or high school—suggesting strongly that preschool and elementary programs are not adequately addressing the needs of English learners.

Methodology

This qualitative study used a survey methodology to determine the prevalence of English Language Learners in business education classes at the secondary level, to examine the types of instructional methods used by business education classroom teachers to effectively meet the needs of the ELLs in their classrooms, and to describe the scope and type of support provided to practicing business education teachers when working with ELLs. Although many business education research studies have used a quantitative method and contributed valuable information to the body of knowledge of the business education profession, a qualitative method allows the researcher to

explore questions related to issues that cannot be as easily addressed with a quantitative method (Broadbridge, 2004; Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006; Gaytan, J., 2007).

Because no appropriate survey questionnaire could be found after reviewing the literature, one was created by the researcher. This questionnaire was piloted on two business teacher educators and three practicing high school business teachers. Based on the recommendations of these individuals, minor adjustments were made to the questionnaire before it was sent out.

A web-based design was chosen for the survey because computers are generally available and easily accessible to business teachers, an electronic survey is more cost-efficient, and it can be delivered more quickly than a paper-and-pencil survey. Responses can be received more quickly as well. Considerations of reliability, validity, sampling, and generalizability were the same as those encountered in any traditional survey method.

In this study, an email was sent to the potential participants explaining the purpose of the study and providing them with a link to an electronic survey. An electronic survey is “one in which a computer plays a major role in both the *delivery* of a survey to potential respondents and the *collection* of survey data from actual respondents” (Jansen, Corley, & Jansen, 2007, p. 1). Those recipients who were interested in participating in the study could click on the link in the email taking them to the electronic survey. The recipients who did not want to participate did not have to do anything; they could simply close out of the email.

The participants in this study were practicing business teachers in grades 9-12 in a state in the Midwest. Since this research study was conducted online, the survey was

completed at each participant's own computer which meant that participants were most likely in different physical locations. Of the 983 surveys sent to business teachers, 128 usable surveys were returned which constituted almost a fifteen percent return rate. General demographic information was collected, and participants were asked several questions concerning their perceptions of English Language Learners.

Data collection was confidential, and all data was stored on the researcher's computer which is username/password protected. Potential participants were informed that data might be included in professional publications and presentations geared toward business teachers and business teacher educators. However, the participants' names and any identifying information would not be included in publications or presentations because data would be used at the aggregate level only with no identifiers.

Findings

The following three tables summarize the data responses to each of the research questions:

1. How likely are you to use each of the following instructional methods when working with English Language Learners?
2. What additional training have you had to help you work with English Language Learners?
3. What assistance does your school/district provide to help you work with English Language Learners?

Table 1.

Question: How likely are you to use each of the following instructional methods when working with English Language Learners?

	Very Likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Very Unlikely	Response Total
Utilize interactive teaching strategies (i.e. cooperative learning, hands-on learning, etc.)	48% (60)	31% (39)	17% (22)	2% (2)	2% (3)	126
Pair student with buddy	45% (58)	32% (41)	18% (23)	2% (3)	2% (3)	128
Provide visuals/pictures to express concepts	39% (49)	40% (50)	15% (19)	2% (3)	4% (5)	126
Make connections from student's individual life to course content	37% (47)	37% (47)	20% (25)	3% (4)	3% (4)	127
Peer-to-peer activities	36% (46)	43% (55)	16% (20)	3% (4)	2% (3)	128
Take the student's culture into consideration when teaching	28% (36)	49% (63)	16% (21)	4% (5)	2% (3)	128
Provide opportunities for alternative or authentic assessments	25% (32)	44% (56)	26% (33)	2% (3)	2% (4)	128
To utilize help from an aid	23% (30)	39% (50)	23% (30)	8% (10)	6% (8)	128
Employ academic games	23% (29)	32% (41)	30% (38)	11.02% (14)	4% (5)	127
Communicate with parents and engage them in student's education	21% (27)	43% (55)	29% (37)	4% (5)	2% (3)	127
Provide explicit reading instruction	15% (19)	48% (61)	26% (33)	9% (11)	2% (3)	127
ELLs keep learning logs/journals to track and showcase their learning	4% (5)	18% (23)	47% (59)	24% (30)	8% (10)	127
Make home visits	2% (3)	1% (2)	31% (40)	33% (42)	32% (41)	128

*Note: The number in parenthesis is the actual number of people that responded.

Table 2.

Question: What additional training have you had to help you work with English Language Learners?

	Response Total	Response Percent
I have not received any training on ELLs/bilingual education	77	58%
Participation in professional development (i.e. workshops)	40	30%
Exposed to ELL content embedded within degree/certification program	19	14%
Coursework in post-baccalaureate degree program (one or more courses entirely focused on ELL/bilingual education)	15	11%
Certification/endorsement related to ELLs/bilingual education	1	1%
Major/minor in area related to ELLs/bilingual education	0	0%

Table 3.

Question: What assistance does your school/district provide to help you work with English Language Learners?

ESL teacher comes to my classroom and assists as needed
 Bilingual parent volunteer
 Collaboration on my part with ELL and special needs teachers and specialist; no special assistance comes from school or district
 In-service workshop
 Informal assistance via ESL faculty
 When I had a Russian-speaking student, his English-speaking stepdad was helping him learn English. There was no assistance in my classroom for the semester.
 Help students based on my own experience and training

I work with the student individually or other students work with him in a group assignment. Student can speak but has great difficulty writing English.
ESL teacher helps student during her study hall.
No assistance; I make do as I can with the language barrier; have a student who knows the language try to help
ESL aide comes to my classroom and assists as needed
Our students go to the ESL and Bilingual teachers for extra help with classwork.
Student is taken out of my classroom to see the ESL teacher 2x week. This, however, is counter-productive as the student then gets behind in her work.
Student receives assistance from ELL instructor outside of class.
ESL program

Discussion and Conclusions

When working with ELLs, nearly 50% of the participants in this study indicated that they would utilize interactive learning strategies such as cooperative learning and hands-on learning. These kinds of strategies have the advantage of requiring the learner to be an active participant in the learning, and studies have shown that when students are actively involved in the learning process, more learning takes place (Smart & Csapo, 2007).

In cooperative learning, students generally work in small groups with group members having different skills and abilities. Each group member is responsible for not only learning but also helping other group members learn. Hands-on learning is learning by doing. This concept is not new to business teachers because one component of business education has always been vocational education (now career and technical education) which focuses on applied or hands-on learning.

Another strategy that business teachers indicated they were likely to use was to pair the ELL with a buddy. The buddy could be another child that shares the same native language or it could just be another child who is willing and able to help the new ELL student. According to Conteh (2012), multiple buddies could be established—one

buddy might be the “language buddy” and share the same native language. Another buddy might be the “school buddy” who helps the ELL get to know the routine of the school, where things are, when things happen, etc. Teachers may also employ a learning buddy who can help the ELL with school work.

Nearly 60% of the participants in this study have not had any training in working with English Language Learners. Although the business teachers in this study are located in the Midwest, that figure seems to be representative of teachers in general. According to Mary Ann Zehr (2009)

Prospective teachers are more likely to get training about students with disabilities than about English-language learners as part of their teacher-preparation programs, a Government Accountability Office study says.

That's the case even though the ell population is one of the fastest-growing student populations in U.S. schools.

A majority of traditional teacher-training programs have at least one course that focuses solely on how to educate students with disabilities, while no more than 20 percent of such programs require at least one course that focuses entirely on how to teach English-language learners, according to the study. English-learners are more often "a partial focus of required courses" than are students with disabilities, the study says.

In addition, a larger proportion of teacher-preparation programs require field experience for prospective teachers working with students with disabilities than those who work with ells.

Responses about the support that business education teachers receive from the school/district varied greatly. Some participants indicated that their school/district had an ESL teacher that came to the classroom to help English Language Learners while other participants indicated there was no assistance or help from the school/district at all. One participant commented, "When I had a Russian-speaking student, his English-speaking stepdad was helping him learn English. There was no assistance in my classroom for the semester." Another participant said, "Student is taken out of my classroom to see the ESL teacher 2x week. This, however, is counter-productive as the student then gets behind in her work." Based on these comments, it appears that there are no standards in place to help business teachers work with English Language Learners.

Recommendations and Future Research

As a result of this research study, several recommendations and implications for future research came to light. First, because English Language Learners have a presence in the business education classroom, business education teachers employ a variety of instructional methods to help ELLs be successful in their classes. However, further research needs to be done to determine the effectiveness of these instructional methods when working with English Language Learners in business education classes.

Second, no standardized curriculum seems to be available to help prepare business education teachers to effectively meet the needs of the ELLs in their classrooms. Research should be conducted to develop a set of national standards that can be incorporated into college and university business teacher preparation programs

in order to ensure that all business teacher education candidates are adequately prepared to effectively meet the needs of ELLs when they become practicing teachers.

Third, public schools have a duty to provide a quality education for all students. English Language Learners are one segment of students in today's schools and as such support should be provided by schools/districts to business education teachers to help them ensure that English Language Learners have the same opportunities for learning as other groups of students.

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**Managing Competency Development by Self-Reflection:
Theoretical Concept and Empirical Results of Student Teaching in
Business Teacher Education**

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Abstract

Reflection significantly supports the acquirement of competences and is fundamental to develop business teacher professionalism. The current research focuses on the area of (self-)critical-experimental attitude and willingness to reflective practice. The student teaching integrated in the master program Business Education and Development at the University of Graz offers great potential. In this session theoretical approaches to (self-)reflection and instruments in student teaching as well as results of the accompanying research are presented and discussed.

The development of business teacher professionalism according to the basic curriculum for a subject relevant study program involves the following three mutually referential dimensions: 1. differentiated and integrated knowledge and skills regarding pedagogically relevant fields of action, 2. (self-)critical and experimental attitude and willingness to reflective practice and 3. pedagogical ethos and balancing identity (Section Business Teacher Education of the DGfE, 2003).

The objective research focuses on the area of (self-)critical-experimental attitude and willingness to reflective practice. Especially the willingness and ability to critically question one's own beliefs and openly find new ways should be promoted early in the curriculum. The student teaching integrated in the master program Business Education and Development at the University of Graz offers great potential for this, which is why adequate concepts and tools have been developed and designed to encourage the

students to a theory-based reflection of their practical experience (Riebenbauer & Stock, 2012). This also involves the students' own control of skill development and professional guidance. Theoretical approaches to (self-)reflection, structure and instruments in student teaching as well as results of the accompanying research are introduced and discussed.

Research Questions

The following research questions are pursued:

- What is the goal of self-reflection in the context of the student teaching phase?
- What instruments are used, how do they work and which are helpful for the students?
- What support do students need for self-reflection and for managing competency development themselves?
- What further development potentials are given to improve students' competency development?

Methodology

The new conception of the student teaching in the master program Business Education and Development in Graz is based on a theoretical and literature-based critical analysis, inter alia with theories of reflection (i.e. Korthagen, 1999; Zimmerman & Campillo, 2003; Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005; Dilger, 2007) and profession research (i.e. Helsper, 2001; Blömeke, 2002; Terhart, 2011). The implementation of the student teaching, including the accompanying seminar at the University and the tools used are continuously evaluated.

The research approach follows on the one hand a hermeneutic approach and on the other hand, the evaluation of the student teaching is carried out in form of a quantitative accompanying research. It aims at a continuous improvement of the student teaching phase of all participants in terms of a cooperative quality development process. As part of the quantitative research, a survey among students and mentor teachers is carried out with an online questionnaire at the end of the phase. So far, results are available from three semesters, in which 82 students and 122 mentor teachers are involved in the student teacher training. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of these students and 61.5% of mentor teachers participated in the survey.

Results

The first results of the accompanying research show a very good feedback; however, also critical remarks are made by the students and mentor teachers. Results display, among other things, that the instruments used such as an *evaluation sheet for competence development* and a *learning diary* are useful for the students in dealing with their own skill development and support their learning by comparing self-perception and external perception. Of student participants, 87.5% state that the learning diary supports their self-reflection, especially individual feedback (73.8%); and group-feedback (82.5%) on their learning diary entries is helpful.

The results for the evaluation sheet for competence development show that they are handled differently. Talking about the competence development is beneficial in the middle (55.2%) and at the end of the semester (50%). Also, development potentials for the instruments as well as for their use are revealed and critical factors for success for competency development and student teaching are identified.

Conclusions

Conclusions and recommendations concerning the research were presented at the 2015 Business Education Research Conference in Chicago. The following is a brief summary:

- Reflection on experiences and student's learning is very important for competence development and professional orientation.
- Reflection must be part of the core curriculum.
- Purpose and methods for self-reflection must be clear for students and mentor teachers.
- Evaluation sheet and learning diary are adequate instruments to support and guide learning process, development of competences and career orientation for the students.
- A shared strategy and close cooperation of all stakeholders involved in the student teaching is needed.
- Sustainability respectively the development of a durable reflective attitude is a big challenge and has a future impact as students become multipliers.

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**Online Quality Course Design vs. Quality Teaching:
Research Based on the Quality Matters Higher Education Rubric**

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Historically, business educators were on the forefront of online/distance education. As early as 2003-2004, Policies Commission for Business and Economic Education (PCBEE) had the foresight to issue its *This We Believe* policy statement about *Enabling and Enhancing Educational Experiences through e-Learning*, (Policy Statements, n.d.). The PCBEE continued this focus through the years with six more policy statements aimed at online/distance learning in one form or another.

These PCBEE statements covered both course design and online teaching. Although each of the six policies contains discussion about both design and teaching, they do tend to fall into either instructional design or teaching as shown in the table below.

Course Design	Teaching
Policy Statement 85: This We Believe About Virtual Learning Environments	Policy 89: This We Believe About Ethics in a Virtual Environment
Policy Statement 87: This We Believe About Virtual Professional Development	Policy 91: This We Believe About Social Media in Education
Policy Statement 94: This We Believe About New and Emerging Instructional Strategies	Policy 93: This We Believe About Generational Issues in Education and the Workforce

Source: Policy Statements <https://www.nbea.org/newsite/curriculum/policy.html>

Although course quality, course design, and quality teaching are not mutually exclusive, many times professional development regarding teaching online tends to divide into these two categories. This research looks at how closely aligned quality

course design and quality teaching aligned to create a successful learning experience for students.

Literature Review

In any learning environment, quality course design is essential as it impacts the quality of teaching. However, when specifically investigating the online teaching and learning environment, one must look more closely at course design as a factor in quality teaching. Research completed on the Quality Matters (QM) Program, an international organization working to improve the design of online and blended courses, is important to review. The QM Program has developed standards in rubric format based on a wealth of research used to evaluate the design of online and blended courses (QM, 2013).

Swan, Matthews, Bogle, Boles, and Day (2010) revised a course based on the QM standards, and better student outcomes were achieved. Therefore, the standards for good course design enhanced student outcomes that further enhanced student learning. Swan et al. (2010) noted student performance may have improved due to the fact that the QM redesign directed instructors to focus on linking objectives to outcomes, translating to effective course activities and/or interactivity. Therefore, based on this information, one could state that the delivery/teaching was enhanced as well. Additional studies have been completed that note the QM standards (which impacts good course design) have an effect on student learning (Hall, 2010; Moallem, 2007; Swan, 2003). If properly designed with interaction, clear structure, and strong content, (Driscoll, Jicha, Hunt, Tichavsky, & Thompson, 2012), online courses can offer a learning environment equally as effective as the traditional F2F classroom.

QM rubrics were created to assist in the design of quality online courses. The QM 2013 higher education rubric contains 8 general standards and 41 specific standards for course design. Each specific standard is assigned a point value to be used during the course design assessment for use by a team of reviewers. This team is comprised of one team leader, one content expert, and one peer reviewer who have all completed extensive training through QM. Twenty-one (21) specific standards are assigned higher point values in which all of these must be met in the review.

Research was also conducted on Chickering and Gamson's (1987) seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. Combining research on both quality design and quality teaching in the online environment is essential to assist faculty in helping students achieve set learning outcomes.

Chickering and Gamson (1987) reviewed the literature to investigate good principles of teaching. The following resulted from their research as the seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. Good teaching practice

1. encourages contact between students and faculty;
2. develops reciprocity and cooperation among students;
3. uses active learning techniques;
4. gives prompt feedback;
5. emphasizes time on task;
6. communicates high expectations; and
7. respects diverse talents and ways of learning.

The seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education have been recognized as an effective method for the evaluation of teaching and course design.

Although originally used to establish the best practices for the face-to-face (F2F) environment, the seven principles have been applied to online teaching. Ritter and Lemke (2000) noted the use of the Internet can facilitate good educational practices. Students believed the use of email encouraged student-faculty contact, and prompt feedback was facilitated with the use of the Internet. Students also noted the Internet materials allowed for more efficient use of time and enhanced their learning.

Newlin and Wang (2002) encouraged “the application of the seven principles of good practice in undergraduate education to guide the design and implementation of Web-based courses (p. 325)” Good design was recognized as important to good teaching as their research found the development of good online courses is guided by pedagogical practice instead of simply being driven by technology. McCabe and Meuter (2011) also found effective learning environments can be created when aligning course design and development with the seven principles.

Sowan and Jenkins (2013) noted by applying the seven principles of good practice in undergraduate education to course design and delivery, the quality of hybrid courses can be improved. This concept emphasizes the fact that a connection can be drawn between course design and delivery (teaching) and student mastery of course content, along with the achievement of learning outcomes. The connection between course design and delivery was reemphasized as important concepts during the review of research for the development of the 2011-2013 QM Higher Education Rubric. Swan (2003) analyzed student perceptions and found clear and concise course design, among other factors including interaction with instructors and active discussions with

peers, were major factors in the creation of learning communities, thus supporting online teaching and learning.

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to categorize the 2013 Quality Matters (QM) higher education rubric standards to Chickering and Gamson's (1987) seven principles of good practice in undergraduate education. The research question was as follows.

How do the QM higher education rubric standards align with the seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education?

Methods and Demographics

The collection of data was accomplished through an anonymous, Web-based survey. Participants were asked to review the 41 QM higher education rubric specific standards and categorize them based on Chickering and Gamson's seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. If participants believed the QM specific standard could not be categorized into any of Chickering and Gamson's standards, they had the opportunity to note "other" and add a different principle of good teaching based on their perception and experience.

Participants in the study included 493 attendees at the QM 2013 conference and 64 National Association for Business Teacher Education (NABTE) representatives for a total of 557. The participants received an initial email request with a link to the survey and three reminder emails each sent approximately two weeks apart. One participant's email continued to be undeliverable; therefore, 556 participants received all four email requests. Consistently at least 120 participants responded to all but 7 questions for an approximate 22% return rate.

Of all participants, 47% were faculty members; approximately 30% were instructional designers; and the remainder of participants (23%) classified their profession as “other.” Ninety-five (95) percent of the participants have taught online courses and of those, 55% have taught online courses for more than 10 years and approximately 26% have taught for 4-6 years.

Findings/Results

Based upon the participants’ responses, Table 1 provides an overview of the three principles of good teaching which resulted in the highest ratings (percentages) as aligned with the eight (8) QM general standards.

QM General Standard (GS)	Teaching Principle	Percentage
GS 8: Accessibility	Respects Diverse Talents & Ways of Learning	78.7%
GS 2: Learning Objectives or Competencies	Communicates High Expectations	49.2%
GS 6: Course Technology	Encourages Active Learning	43.0%
GS 1: Course Overview & Introduction	Communicates High Expectations	39.9%
GS 7: Learner Support	Respects Diverse Talents & Ways of Learning	34.6%
GS 5: Learner Interaction & Engagement	Encourages Active Learning	30.0%
GS 3: Assessment or Measurement	Communicates High Expectations	28.8%
GS 4: Instructional Material	Communicates High Expectations	25.1%
GS 4: Instructional Material	Encourages Active Learning	25.1%

The input from participants indicates that the QM general standards align well with three particular teaching principles: 1) Respects Diverse Talents & Ways of Learning; 2) Communicates High Expectations; and 3) Encourages Active Learning.

However, four of the seven principles were rated by less than 25% of the participants as noted below.

- Encourages Contact Between Students & Faculty – 20.1%
- Develops Reciprocity & Cooperation Among Students – 24.0%
- Other – 20.3%
- Gives Prompt Feedback – 15.7%
- Emphasizes Time on Task – 16.1%

In the highest “Other” category, rated with 20.3%, participants noted another teaching principle may be necessary to specifically categorize GS 7: Learner Support. The specific standards connected to GS 7: Learner Support include clear course instructions, student support areas, and resources to help students succeed. Participants noted through the “Other” option that principles for good teaching also include learning resources, structure, clarity, organization, and professionalism.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Gives Prompt Feedback and Emphasizes Time on Task were rated the lowest for alignment with any of the QM standards (15.7% and 16.1% respectively). This may indicate that the QM higher education rubric may need to be edited to more fully align with these principles of good teaching. The 2013 QM rubric includes only one specific standard pertaining to response time and feedback. Under GS 5: Learner Interaction & Engagement, specific standard 5.3 notes the instructor’s plan for classroom response time and feedback on assignments is clearly stated. Under GS 3: Assessment or Measurement, specific standard 3.5 notes that students have multiple opportunities to measure their own learning progress. QM could add specific standards pertaining to

prompt feedback or enhance, in particular, student self-assessment as prompt feedback.

Emphasizing Time on Task may be connected to two additional specific standards. Under GS 2: Learning Objectives, specific standard 2.4 notes instructions to students on how to meet the learning objectives are adequate and stated clearly. Under GS 4: Instructional Material, specific standard 4.2 notes the purpose of instructional materials and how the materials used for learning activities are clearly explained. These two specific standards could be updated to incorporate the fact that instructors include the approximate time students should spend on various tasks involved in the learning process.

The results of this research have definite implications for QM, online faculty and instructional designers. As QM continues to update its general and specific standards, the results of this research may provide thought for consideration for future revisions of its rubrics. Online faculty may become more aware of the importance of conducting quality reviews of their online courses. Faculty may also become cognizant of how good design impacts good teaching, along with the principles for good teaching. As instructional designers consider how to design and develop quality online courses and as online faculty teach courses, they should both consider the principles of good teaching.

Impact on Business Educators

As business educators continue to teach online courses, the need to continue to practice the “We believe” statements that frame business education in content, design, and teaching skill increases. Policy statement 87, *This We Believe about Virtual*

Professional Development reiterates the importance of professional development within teaching “. . . impacting a teachers’ professional practice, curriculum, educational community, professional organizations, and professional philosophy“ (Policy Statements, n.d). This includes both quality design and quality teaching that is so important to student success.

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Supporting New Teachers to Retain Them in the Profession

Dianna Briggs, University of Northern Iowa

The Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy at the University of Washington published a report which stated approximately 14% of teachers leave their first year, 10% after two years, 9% after three years, 7% after four years, and 6% after the fifth year confirming that nearly half (46%) of new teachers leave by the end of five years (Ingersoll, 2003). Reasons identified by these teachers for leaving included: low pay, job dissatisfaction, lack of support, working conditions, and personal circumstances (Boe et al., 2008; Brooks-Young, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll, 2007; Inman & Marlow, 2004; NCTAF, 2002; Williams, 2003). This high rate of attrition has created critical issues for both schools and their students.

“There’s a crisis in America’s high schools” (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004, p. 18). Schools across the United States are dealing with a widening achievement gap, and there is a direct link between student achievement and teacher effectiveness. Research has indicated that, on average, the most effective teachers see a 53 percentage point student achievement gain in just one year (Marzano, 2003).

Some new teachers can be highly effective their first year, but most will take a few years to hone their skills and fully develop into highly-effective educators. New teachers who remain in teaching beyond their first five years generally remain for much of their career (Johnson, 2004). But schools are struggling to keep new teachers in the profession beyond those first five years. This means that the battle to close the achievement gap is being hampered by the turnover of teachers in the classroom.

Just as new teachers gain their stride and begin to make a noticeable difference in student learning, many decide to leave the classroom (Ingersoll, 2004). Carroll (2007) summarized the issue of new teacher retention and the achievement gap when he stated, “These schools struggle to close the student achievement gap because they never close the teaching quality gap—they are constantly rebuilding their staff” (p. 2). If these schools cannot retain new teachers and increase effectiveness, there is very little hope that educators will be able to help close the achievement gap (Kaplan & Owings, 2003; Marzano, 2003).

Depending on the source, estimates of the amount of money United States schools spend every year due to teacher attrition ranges from \$2.1 billion to \$7 billion (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004; Kopkowski, 2008; NCTAF, 2002). Using the most conservative industry model approved by the Department of Labor, the cost for recruiting, hiring, and training a new teacher is approximately “30 percent of the exiting teacher’s salary—a cost that is not recoverable” (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004, p. 18). Results of a study conducted by the Texas State Board for Educator Certification revealed a new teacher turnover rate of approximately 40% of those in their first three years which resulted in a cost for Texas of approximately \$329 million a year (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Kelley, 2004). Thus, the resources school districts are forced to spend on new teacher attrition substantially undermine meaningful school improvement.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify how educational stakeholders can better support new teachers to help retain them in the profession. These stakeholders

included teacher educators, school administrators, and mentors who work with new teachers in their initial years of teaching.

New teachers have identified varying reasons for leaving including: low pay, job dissatisfaction, lack of support, working conditions, and personal circumstances (Boe, Cook, & Sunderland, 2008; Brooks-Young, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll, 2007; Inman & Marlow, 2004; NCTAF, 2002; Williams, 2003). This study was designed to not only determine the reason for leaving, but to identify what supports could be implemented to possibly stem the flow of new teaches from the profession.

Methodology

The Iowa Department of Education collects data annually from all school districts regarding school personnel. This data base of information, the Basic Educational Data System (BEDS), provided a potential sample of 329 participants who were identified as having been employed in the schools during the a school year but not during the following school year. The list was reduced to a purposeful sample (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Weiss, 1994) of 20 individuals with five or fewer years of teaching experience. The selected participants represented elementary, middle level, and secondary school teachers. The pool of candidates also provided a representation of males and females, rural and urban schools, large and small schools, as well as schools located across the state of Iowa. This phenomenological study was conducted to allow the voices of new teachers, through their lived experience of having left the profession, to be heard.

A semi-structured interview format was used which included questioning that was flexible enough for the conversation to follow the path of the participant responses and yet structured enough to assure consistency across participants and provide ample data

for the study. All interviews were audio recorded and the transcripts were provided to each participant for verification of the accuracy of data.

The data from the transcripts was then coded by identifying the main concept in each of the individual responses. The codes were analyzed to seek common threads that emerged from the individual responses. The responses were organized into common themes and each common theme was again coded for potential subthemes (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). From the codes identified, definitions were developed to help clarify the themes (Weiss, 1994).

Every attempt was made to assure that all data included in this study correctly represented the participants' responses and the subsequent analysis of data accurately reflected the intent of individual responses. Efforts utilized to ensure confidence that the data and results were trustworthy included member checks and peer reviews of the coding process, the results, and the descriptions, analyses, and interpretation (Brantlinger, Jimenez, Klingner, Pugach, & Richardson, 2005).

During the writing of the analysis, careful attention was given to making sure the participants' voices were represented as accurately as possible. In any representation of the study, complete responses have been used whenever the integrity of the response could possibly be jeopardized by using only a portion of the response.

Findings and Results

Each new teacher in this study identified more than one reason for his or her decision to leave the profession. These reasons included school-related factors (external)—student issues/classroom management, parents, mentors or mentoring programs, administrative support, work load, and teacher pay—as well as personal

issues (internal)—personality, efficacy, and preparation. An outcome that emerged from the interviews is an understanding that regardless of the main reason given, at least one other reason was present that confirmed the decision to leave.

Any one of the personal characteristics may or may not have been enough for the new teachers to decide to leave. However, when school-related factors became a frustration, the teacher's decision to leave was confirmed. The individual's personal characteristics and how he or she handled frustrations were critical to the decision-making process.

The external factors might have been enough to instigate the decision, but most likely one of the internal factors provided the final impetus to leave. The external characteristics aligned with the causes most often cited in research as reasons for leaving. However, these reasons could possibly be most cited because they are factors that are easier for those outside of the situation to understand and accept.

Figure 1 is a visual representation of the school-related and personal characteristics in relation to a new teacher's decision of whether to remain in teaching or leave the profession. Personal characteristics could be considered central to a new teacher's decision regardless of whether these characteristics were identified by the teacher as a reason for leaving.

Most new teachers spoke of their frustrations with student behaviors. Although all participants had completed a preparation program that offered classroom management strategies, most cited a need for additional assistance with classroom management. One business teacher who decided to leave after her fourth year stated, "Classroom management has been a huge struggle for me, particularly with upper classmen." She

went on to share why the mentoring program and her administrator were not providing her with the help she needed. “For me, mentoring would be for somebody to come in every now and then . . . and give me some honest to goodness feedback. Instead, we have schedule meetings on topics that are not of interest to me.” But it was later in the interview when she shared, “But I still don’t feel like I’m a ‘good enough’ teacher.” Comments like this last one from participants revealed the potential for underlying causes (internal) to quite possibly have a greater impact on retaining new teachers than any of the external reasons provided.

Figure 1: Reasons Given for Leaving in Relation to the Decision-Making Process



Reasons shared for leaving were rarely the same combination between participants. The voices resonated with a frustration with both the skills they brought personally to the profession as well as the contextual factors of the school such as work load, support, personnel, and student issues. However, there was no single combination of factors that could be applied to all new teachers.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Multiple conclusions could be made from this study. The three main themes that emerged from the data included the following:

1. No single solution will correct the issue of new teacher turnover. For most new teachers who decide to leave the profession, it is a combination of factors that contribute to the ultimate decision to leave. Resolving one issue may be a temporary solution for some new teachers, but not for all. Other issues will continue to exist.
2. Not all of the factors that contributed to new teachers leaving are within the control of those who support new teachers. Some factors can be improved by external stakeholders, but some will depend on the teachers themselves. Each individual is responsible for his or her own self-efficacy. Helping new teachers to understand themselves and how they handle challenges may lead to developing better coping mechanisms and possibly greater satisfaction with their own performance.
3. Teacher preparation programs, mentoring programs, and school districts can make a difference in the new teacher retention rate, but there will always be turnover in the teaching force through natural attrition and normal life circumstances. In some instances, a new teacher leaving the profession is the right outcome for both schools and the students they serve.

Stakeholders can make a difference and potentially improve the retention rate. Teacher preparation programs have the ability to better prepare future teachers for the realities of the teaching positions that await them. It is during the preparation for a teaching

career when teacher candidates learn management strategies and classroom expectations. Teacher preparation programs can enhance the content of methods courses to better represent the multitude of potential situations teachers might encounter, including a more realistic representation of the work load expectations and the anticipated wages offered by schools.

Multiple field experiences where candidates are engaged with students can provide opportunities to practice implementing good teaching and classroom management strategies. These experiences expose candidates to the realities of the profession prior to being responsible for their own classrooms.

School districts can provide more individualized professional development for new teachers within their district. Teachers are asked to provide differentiation for their students; school administrators should also differentiate to meet the needs of individual teachers. In addition, administrators need to find time for scheduled observations and follow-up conversations that focus on mutually identified areas of need. This will vary according to the new teacher's preparation and perceived limitations. Support from school administrators should be flexible enough to allow relationship and trust building for individuals who are still seeking to establish themselves as a professional.

Mentoring, when offered, provides direct support for new teachers. If done well, new teachers can find support and resources to help resolve issues they encounter. However, if not done strategically, mentoring can fall short of its intended goals. Schools that provide a mentor need to do so with an understanding that new teachers need to see other teachers in their content area or grade level and should have multiple opportunities to both observe the mentor teacher and to have the mentor teacher

observe them. Time should be allotted during the school day to conduct both the observation as well as debriefings about the observations and goal setting for future progress.

New teacher retention should be a concern for all teacher preparation programs, school districts, and mentoring programs as it is the responsibility of each of these entities to produce highly effective teachers. Developing and nurturing new teachers can result in individuals who choose to remain in teaching long term. Teachers who remain in the profession have the capability to provide high quality instruction that makes a positive difference in student learning.

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ABSTRACTS

67 Years of Business Education Forum: A Historical Review

Stephen D. Lewis, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN

K. Virginia Hemby, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN

For 67 years, *Business Education Forum* (and its predecessor, *UBEA Forum*) has provided business educators with timely articles on a myriad of topics of vital importance to teachers from K-12 to post-secondary level classrooms. The evolution not those topics, however, has not been examined. Presenters will discuss the types of articles published in the 67-year history of Business Education Forum in relation to the timeframes in which specific shifts in topical areas were noted or observed.

A Comparative Analysis of the Business Education

Licensure Requirements in Mississippi

Pamela Bracey, Mississippi State University

Michelle Taylor, Mississippi State University

The purpose of this research study was to survey current teachers of business and technology courses in Mississippi to determine which route was taken to secure business and technology teacher certification, why that particular route was chosen, and whether or not the teachers felt adequately prepared to teach and manage a classroom upon gaining certification. All data and results will be presented in this session.

**A Qualitative Study with Online Collaborative Learning
in a Computer Literacy Course**

Kevin Engellant, University of Montana-Western

Sandra Williams, University of Montana

Collaboration is one of the four C's identified in the Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework. This study explored which type of learning instruction—collaborative learning in an online environment, or individual learning in an online environment—is the most effective in a beginning online computer literacy course. The problem underlying this study was that despite the popularity of collaboration in education, many educators are not properly implementing an environment that encourages and supports effective collaboration.

**Academic Achievement Gap: The Role of Ethnicity and Parent
Involvement in Predicting Reading Achievement***

Teri Marsha Primm Ricks, Anthony Middle School

The purpose of the study is to investigate the relative strength of parent involvement versus ethnicity and how they affect the academic achievement gap between racial backgrounds of Caucasian, African-American, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American as measured by the reading portion of the State Site of Research Comprehensive Assessments Series (SSRCA-II). Socioeconomic status (SES), control variable, was a significant predictor of student reading achievement.

***ARBE Doctoral Dissertation Award**

**African American Faculty Women Experiences of Under-
Representation in Computer Technology Positions in Higher Education**

Dolores King, Maricopa County Community College District, Phoenix College

African American women are underrepresented in computer technology disciplines in institutions of higher education throughout the United States. Although equitable gender representation is progressing in most fields, much less information is available on why institutions are still lagging in workforce diversity, a problem which can be lessened by hiring African American women in computer technology-related fields. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of African American female faculty about race underrepresentation in higher education. The critical race theory and Black feminist thought theory provided the conceptual framework of this study. Using a phenomenological approach, the primary data source was the interview. The sample was comprised of 8 African American faculty women from 1 southwestern state. Data were analyzed using a combined process of open coding, categorizing, and comparison for similarities and emerging themes. Nine themes emerged from the data: negotiating employment in higher education, academic preparation in technology, continuing education and professional advancement, race and gender discrimination, monetary and financial incentives, personal and informal support systems, mentoring and networking, recruitment and hiring practices, and leadership and administrative roles. This study illuminated the challenges that 8 African American women faculty in higher education faced on their career paths in technology related fields. The study can contribute to positive social change by raising awareness in teaching administrators of hiring, promotion, and tenure practices that can help to increase diverse female faculty in computer technology disciplines.

**An Exploratory Case Study of How Middle School Principals of
Small Rural Schools Address Cyberbullying and the Role of
Business Educators in its Prevention**

Christina Force, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania

This study examined how middle school principals of small rural schools address cyberbullying and its effect on school climate. Education was found to be key to the prevention of cyberbullying. Business educators work with technology and may be the first school personnel to identify cyberbullying. Business educators may be responsible for educating students about cyberbullying and Internet safety. Cyberbullying prevention programs and methods that may be utilized in the business educators' classroom will be discussed.

**Business Teacher Education Coursework: An Analysis
of Course Requirements**

Frederick W. Polkinghorne, Bowling Green State University

Preparing new business teachers is a unique challenge because they provide instruction related to courses that stretch across a broad spectrum of content and career pathways. However, many teachers are prepared through baccalaureate-level teacher education degree programs. These programs emphasize preparing in three domains: (a) subject matter, (b) contextual knowledge, and (c) instructional strategy. In this session, data will be revealed that illustrates the proportion and relationship of course content to selected institutional factors.

Collegiate Student Views of Teamwork by Gender

Melody W. Alexander, Ball State University

Rodney E. Davis, Ball State University

Allen D. Truell, Ball State University

Jensen Zhao, Ball State University

Developing highly coveted teamwork skills in college students continues to garner much attention and effort. For students studying business, developing teamwork skills is especially important. As recruiters for businesses are highly desirous of students with teamwork skills, most collegiate business programs incorporate teamwork as a major learning objective. Based upon the importance of teamwork, the purpose of this study was to determine if gender differences exist in the views of college students toward team learning.

**Comparing the Technology Offerings of Business Education Career Clusters
with all Career and Technical Education Career Clusters**

Timothy Thornton, Emporia State University

This session will present the findings of a study that examined the Information Technology (IT) career pathways and course offerings within each state's Career and Technical Education (CTE) program. The results indicated that within several CTE programs, there is a lack of clarity upon which career clusters should contain certain IT career pathways and courses. In fact, there were several states in which certain IT career pathways and courses were included in multiple career clusters.

Explorative Inquiry Concerns of Pre-Collegiate Urban Teaching Academy Students

Edward C. Fletcher, Jr., University of South Florida

Using Fuller's (1969) teacher concerns framework, we sought to address a gap in the literature related to concerns of a unique sample of pre-collegiate students within Fuller's model. However, we also found students who expressed non-concerns and concerns of an explorative inquiry nature based on introspective reflections and attempts to align their personal qualities with those needed to be effective teachers.

**International Trade Programs' Report Card: Do We
Teach What Students Need to Know**

Irina Weisblat, Ashford University

This research addresses a critical issue of educating a skilled workforce for global businesses. International Trade and similar programs serve students interested in entering the fields of import-export, global logistics, transportation, supply chain, and other areas where international business skills are needed in a fast-growing segment of the job market. There are concerns, however, that content of the programs—related to Import-Export or International Trade—is not keeping pace with the relatively rapid changes in the related professions in business (Carnevale & Desrochers, 2003; VanHuss & Schmohe, 2014; Weisblat & Bresciani, 2010). This study identified the skills that Import-Export curriculum currently teaches at the community college level and whether these skills are adequate to the needs of the global economy.

**Investigation of Business and Marketing Online/Virtual Course
Offerings in United States High Schools**

Elaine Adams, University of Georgia

Online education has impacted the way we teach. This research reports information about the types of online/virtual high school business and marketing courses being taught throughout the United States. A blended research design using quantitative and qualitative measures was used in this descriptive study. Common course titles are categorized based on state information. Teacher academic preparation and certification requirements are reported. Best practices applied in online/virtual business and marketing education courses are presented and discussed.

**K-12 Teacher Perceptions Concerning Their Knowledge of Personal
Financial Literacy and Dispositions to Teach Personal Financial
Literacy Courses in Illinois Public Schools**

Tamra S. Davis, Illinois State University

Kathy J. Mountjoy, Illinois State University

Rodger Singley, Illinois State University

Financial literacy is a required skill for lifelong success. In Illinois, students complete a course that teaches the concepts of financial literacy for high school graduation. The course can be taught by any discipline as long as the teacher has completed one specific university course. This study sought to determine the dispositions towards, knowledge of, and thinking about the importance of financial literacy of K-12 teachers in Illinois Public Schools.

**Manners Really Matter: A Comprehensive Overview of
Business Etiquette Practices**

Jacqueline Taggart, Pikes Peak Community College

In the world of business, etiquette means that you act professionally and exercise proper manners when engaging with others. Knowing proper business etiquette is a valuable skill-set that will make you stand out from others, enhance your chances at success, and help you land that well-deserved dream job or promotion. This interactive session will cover the following etiquette topics: telephone (office/cellular), office, dining, elevator, airplane, gender, attire, networking, netiquette, and much more.

Online Learning: Should Business Teachers Complete Advanced Degrees Online

Lawrence C. Kilgus, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania

Many business teachers consider earning advanced degrees for promotion into administration or moving into higher education. Numerous institutions offer such degrees online, which can be very convenient to any educator. However, some of the online degrees may not be considered credible by employers. This session will explore findings regarding the acceptability and credibility of online doctorates and make recommendations as to what business teachers should consider before pursuing an advanced degree.

Perceptions of Business Students About Workplace Fragrance Use

Carol Blaszczynski, California State University—Los Angeles

Diana J. Green, Weber State University

This session will report perceptions of business students about workplace fragrance use. Specifically, the study objectives included learning the (a) reported level of fragrance use other than in the workplace, (b) the reported level of fragrance use in the workplace, (c) the reported level of intolerance of fragrance use in the workplace, (d) the reported level of fragrance-free product use, (e) the perceptions of fragrance-free workplace policies, and (f) the perceptions of co-worker body odors.

Predicting Social Networking Site Usage Among Business Education

Pre-Service Teachers: A Case Study of Federal College

Of Education (Technical), Akoka Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria

Some factors influence the usage of various SNSs among pre-service teachers in Nigeria. This study investigated the interaction between some selected factors and the usage of the SNS tools among pre-service teachers. The study adopted a correlational design with usage of selected SNS as the dependent variable while course of study, gender, age, awareness, and accessibility of selected SNSs served as independent variables. Data collected were analyzed using PPMC.

**Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers: Instructional Strategy Lessons
for Educators Series (ISLES)**

Kurt Garner, D. H. Conley High School

Elizabeth Hodge, East Carolina University

Ashleigh Phillips-Wagoner, J. H. Rose High School

John Swope, East Carolina University

Scott Williams, East Carolina University

The world of business education has transformed greatly and staying abreast of emerging innovations is essential to the success of teacher education preparation programs. Conference attendees will receive an overview and access to the Secondary Career and Technical ISLES eBooks, which are comprised of instructional strategies at the declarative, procedural, and conditional levels. Teachers involved in the initiative will provide an overview of the development, implementation, and findings from the initial round of ISLES–S integration.

**Professional Development for Community College Business Faculty:
A Case Study**

Aaron Dean, Bowling Green State University

Frederick W. Polkinghorne, Bowling Green State University

Community college business faculty members play an important role in preparing individuals for entry into the workforce or further education. Course content responds to emerging issues and trends within the disciplines. However, strategies for instruction and contextual knowledge are widely applicable across the broad spectrum of business courses at community colleges. In this session, data is revealed that helps to better understand the professional development topics that community college faculty want and need to participate.

Reverse Mortgages: Blessing or Curse

David W. Leopard, Eastern Michigan University

In personal financial circles, little has been promoted more in the past few years than reverse mortgages. Celebrities no less than Fred Thompson and Henry (The Fonz) Winkler are often seen in television commercials touting the virtues of this somewhat new financial instrument. If one is to take these ads at face value, one would believe reverse mortgages are nothing less than newfound money in the street. A closer look, however, might reveal a less flattering picture. Is the reverse mortgage a wise financial move for you and your loved ones? It may be, but it may also be detrimental to the estate you leave behind for them. This presentation will attempt a fair and balanced report on this new financial instrument.

Role of Social Media in Small Business

Patrick Geho, Middle Tennessee State University

Sherry J. Roberts, Middle Tennessee State University

Susan Hall Webb, University of West Georgia

The purpose of this study is to examine what social media sites small businesses are using for external communication as well as to determine to what extent social media is being incorporated into their business practices. An empirical research design was used to collect quantitative and descriptive data through close-ended survey responses from small businesses in one Southern state. Two research questions guided the study. Findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further study will be provided.

Self-Regulated Learning in Online Secondary Education

Mary Jaglois Orr, University of Idaho

Allen Kitchel, University of Idaho

Are secondary students prepared and ready for online learning? This session reports the findings from a descriptive quantitative study of the readiness of secondary students to engage with asynchronous online education as self-regulated learners. Students (n = 121) enrolled in an online Economics course completed Pintrich's Motivated Strategies and Learning Questionnaire. Scores for self-regulation and motivation, and the subprocesses of control, self-efficacy, and test anxiety were calculated and their relationship to academic achievements analyzed.

**Sense of Belonging Among International Students Enrolled in
Graduate-Level Business Programs: A Case Study**

Rabab Darwish, Bowling Green State University

Frederick W. Polkinghorne, Bowling Green State University

More than 800,000 international students are enrolled in institutions of higher education in the United States, making education one of the country's largest economic exports. The international students serve an important role in the development of global competencies for social and economic development. However, what encourages the international students to persist in degree completion remains largely unexplored. In this session, findings that encourage international students to complete degree requirements are explored.

Status of Key Elements of the Business Communication Course

Marsha Bayless, Stephen F. Austin State University

Carol Wright, Stephen F. Austin State University

The purpose of this study is to examine key elements of the business communication course as indicated by members of the Association for Business Communication through a survey that will focus on class size, delivery modes of the course, types of assignments given to students, differences between online and face-to-face sections, and suggestions for perceived changes in the course. The findings will show trends in the course from an international perspective with a comparison to other studies within the last 15 years.

**Students' Perceived Improvement of Workforce Skill Competencies upon
Completion of Career and Technical Education Courses**

Geana Mitchell, Beville State Community College

Leane Skinner, Auburn University

Elisha Wohleb, Auburn University

This study was designed to determine the perceived improvement of workforce skills after students have completed CTE courses; the relationship between perceived workforce skill improvement and perceived workforce readiness; and whether or not demographic factors affect CTE students' perception of workforce readiness. This study may be beneficial to administrators and business teachers for planning, budgeting, and integrating soft skills across the curriculum.

Supporting New Teachers to Retain Them in the Profession

Dianna Briggs, University of Northern Iowa

New teacher retention has been identified as a critical issue as nearly half of all new teachers leave the profession by the end of their fifth year. This phenomenological study was designed to identify ways of providing better support for new teachers to retain them in the profession. Results of the study offer implications for teacher education programs, administrators who supervise new teachers, and those entering the field.

**Teaching Intercultural Communication Business Communication Classes
With a Focus on Intercultural Communication in Greece**

Raholanda White, Middle Tennessee State University

In the 21st century, students (as well as faculty) must learn how to best prepare for communicating with individuals from different cultures. This session will focus on the presenter's trip to several parts of Greece. After discussing the culture of Greece, a comparison and contrast of culture in Greece and the United States will be shared with conference participants. Lastly, the presenter will discuss applied teaching strategies for engaging students. These strategies can be used in business communication classes when covering cross-culture communication.

**Understanding the 2013 Version of the AACSB International
Accreditation Standards**

Jorge Gaytan, North Carolina A & T State University

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the 2013 version of the business accreditation standards developed and published by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) to document the new criteria required by these standards. A content analysis methodology was employed to examine the new business accreditation standards to develop a high-quality framework to assist business schools' leadership teams to more effectively and efficiently prepare for the accreditation/ reaffirmation of their business programs.

Using Interactive Supplements to “Flip” the Online Classroom

Ronda G. Henderson

The pedagogical movement of “flipping the classroom” is the latest trend in academia that involves shifting the ownership of learning from educator to student. This classroom model lends itself well to the online environment where the educator is more of a facilitator. While e-books are often used in this type of setting, the vast majority of e-books offered are merely traditional textbooks converted into pdf format with little, if any, interactivity. To stimulate authentic engagement in the online environment, interactive textbook supplements will be explored.

We Are Not Like Them. They Are Not Like Us.**

William J. Wilhelm, Indiana State University

Numerous research studies about cultural dimensions and moral reasoning have provided significant insights about Western organizational behavior. However, inquiry about these same constructs in non-Western trading partner nations has not provided comparable insights. The present study undertook the first translation and use of two widely used instruments to compare cultural dimensions and moral reasoning in Thailand and the United States. Findings indicate significant psychological and cultural differences that may affect moral reasoning.

****ARBE Research Award**

What Do We Need to Know About Return on Investment and Social Media?

A Literature Review to Develop Teaching Strategies on the Topic

Margaret O'Connor, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania

This presentation takes the instructor through a literature review on social media and how it can be applied in the business education classroom. It will explore how companies view and use social media and consider how the information correlates. Students are using social media now more than ever before. Why not learn more about the topic for your classroom?

For additional information about the Business Education Research Conference, please contact the following:

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