Shaping instructional communication competence of preservice teachers

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Shaping instructional communication competence of pre-service teachers

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Abstract. This study aims to understand the process of shaping communication competence. Participants were pre-service teachers in the primary school education teacher who conducted teaching program internship programme. Observations and interviews found that culture, experience, and education were the components that developed the communication competence within the instructional context. The former two components dominantly shape communication instructional competencies, whereas the latter contributes insignificantly. Education emphasizes on teacher’s pedagogy and professional competences. In the future, educational institutions for pre-service teachers could use this research results to Determine the process of developing communication competence.

1. Introduction
There are three competencies that teachers required to implement effective instruction, namely pedagogy, content, and communication. These three competencies are the intact integrated competencies needed to carry out the instruction. In the last two decades, the discussion of instructional communication competence as one of the important competencies that must be mastered by the teacher emerges. Important because the competence of pedagogy and professional will not be useful if on the implementation of an instructional process can not show communication competence. Two competencies, namely pedagogy and professional competence are taught and become part of the curriculum, while communication competence is not. Instructional communication competencies will be obtained implicitly from the other two competencies[1].

Some research has been done in relation to instructional communication competencies, such as the low of nonverbal immediacy, relevance, and clarity of teacher behaviour will trigger student boredom[2]; Teacher self-disclosure, nonverbal immediacy, and credibility can reduce the incivility of students in college[3]; low communication competence will degrade the quality of learning[4]; Teacher socio-communicative style will have an impact on students' perceptions of credibility and decreased motivation[5–9]; as well as being a teacher presenting a past memory and identity and hope to become a teacher[10].

It is important to understand how prospective students shape communication competencies. As competence that is not explicitly taught, this competence was shaped from their own understanding[1]. The purpose of this research is to know the shape of pre-service teacher instructional communication competence. Pre-service teachers are selected because it is an important moment to establish a complete competence prior to undergoing a profession as a teacher. By knowing the shape of this competence will provide information for the development of teacher education programs to form a complete teacher competence.
2. Method
This study conducted a descriptive analysis with observations and interviews [11]conducted on seventeen informants. The majority of informants came from two provinces of East Java and East Nusa Tenggara. The informants were students of an apprenticeship program of teaching practice in a real school. Observations were made on the instructional behavior in the classroom. The results of the observations were analyzed to obtain important information about their instructional communication practice. The observation note is for interviews to get confirmation about instructional communication behavior. Observations and interviews were analyzed to obtain an instructional communication construct model.

3. Results and Discussion
Instructional communication is a communication event in the context of instruction. Communication events can be interpreted as interactions between the components involved in the same communication background. These components are teachers, topics discussed, tools used, media and students, and take place on the same communication norms. These components are combined with a common goal, in which case the goal is to create an atmosphere that allows students to learn. the setting of communication is the physical and psychological space in which communication takes place. Physically, instructional communication is in the classroom. However, the classroom is not enough, because in the same space there can be a conversation between teachers and students in a non-instructional process context. Teachers and students are also in the same psychological condition, which is an instructional process. So, the classroom can be moved to school yard, library or laboratory, but still, with the same psychological condition and communication purpose, that is learning.

Instructional communication of teachers and students takes place in a typical norm. Teachers are superior to students. In that sense teachers are more dominant in taking the initiative of communication. The teacher determines what will be done and the student obeys. The teacher also determines verbal and nonverbal symbols used to convey messages. Students as a communication participant receive every act of teacher communication and responses.

This study aims to understand the construction of instructional communication competencies of pre-service teachers, about how knowledge and communication skills are practiced and how the formation of such instructional communication competencies. Observations on the implementation of instructional processes, there are three typologies of instructional implementation with a point of view of communication skills. Three typologies are arranged based on the teacher's orientation of an instructional process. The typology is the orientation of students' understanding, orientation on material, and orientation on teaching.

Typology of students' understanding orientation is the category of teacher candidates that make students' understanding the primary goal to be achieved. They use all the elements of communication to meet that goal. Spoken verbal sentences are easy to understand because they are arranged in simple, motivating sentences. This type also seeks to explore students' understanding. They use non-verbal symbols to support the delivery of verbal messages. Friendly facial expressions, varied voice intonation, eye-to-eye and friendly touch and gesture support for message delivery. They always adapt in every condition to build psychological closeness with students.

The second typology is the orientation of the material, the category of teachers who prioritize the achievement of instructional objectives. This type ignores the psychological closeness with the students, whose main concern is the material has already been conveyed. They use language that is informative but without exploring students' understanding. Similarly, nonverbal symbols are used. The intonation is monotonous and boring sound, less use of eye gaze and touch that can build closeness, so some students become bored and start doing their own activities in the classroom.

The third typology is the teaching orientation. The main concern is teaching, without paying attention and care whether students understand the material delivered or not. Participants are less adaptive to the ongoing communication conditions. If encountered students who lack material knowledge, teacher-type teaching repeats sentences that are almost the same, without forming in different sentences and more easily understood. They are more busy to organize students so that the goals for carrying out teaching tasks are achieved. Students become unenthusiastic and unmotivated.
Three typologies of teacher orientation in teaching form the basis for the development of in-depth interviews with the participants. The result of the interview shows that the establishment of instructional communication competence does not just happen, spontaneously during the instructional process. But through a complex process and become a process of life journey participants.

The pre-service teacher does not enter the classroom with 'empty' condition. That they enter the classroom with three things: the experience as they were students; a learning theory that determines how a material should be taught; and the beliefs about how a material should be taught[12]. Previously, they had been students in elementary school to high school. This experience gives an idea of how the material is taught by their teacher, and they will imitate it as they play the role of teacher. In the process of educating prospective teachers, students of this program also gain knowledge about the best strategies and methods of teaching. Such knowledge and experience constitute a decisive belief in a choice of how a material will be taught and achieve maximum results[13]. This condition becomes a reference in the process of planning and implementation of an instructional process.

Figure 1 is a construction model of instructional communication competence. This model formed from the observation and interview about communication competence from the participants teaching’s practices. They have practiced a teaching, and perform communication skills. Skills are not completely obtained from teacher education programs, but also inferred from culture. Culture, in this case, does not mean related to ethnicity, but rather on social behavior and social norms that embraced by a group of people, such as family, community and even society.

![Figure 1. Model of construction of instructional communication competence](image)

Cultural factors become an important component of the formation of instructional communication competence. Culture provides a reference to families that also impact on participants' perceptions and understanding of teachers and teaching behavior. The majority of participants have family members who work as teachers, and this family affects the decision to choose the profession as a teacher.

Participants of this study the majority came from two different regions, namely East Java and East Nusa Tenggara. Both regions have different cultures in view of the teaching profession. In East Java, public awareness of the meaning of education and schooling is high. In the classroom, teacher behavior tends to motivate students with fun activities. However in East Nusa Tenggara, awareness of education and schools is lower than in East Java. So the teacher uses a more compelling approach so
that students will learn. These different cultural conditions also provide different preferences about classroom management and teacher immediacy, both verbally and nonverbally[14]. As participants are students from elementary to high school, teacher communication behaviors provide experience and role models, so that when they become teachers they will behave in the same way.

Participants stated that communication skills were obtained not from the teacher education process, but the majority were obtained from the culture. But they have not fully understood that their communication behaviour as a whole competence. Because knowledge, they have not understood the impact of communication behavior on students. With the practice of teaching, participants are able to hone communication skills and also build knowledge about instructional communication. Knowledge and instructional communication skills form the instructional communication competence intact.

4. Conclusion
Instructional communication is a communication event in the context of instruction. In the instructional communication behavior, culture becomes the component that gives impact to the development of instructional communication competence. Consequently, this influences teacher’s preference in perceiving the concepts of teachers and education as well as influencing how she/he communicates in a classroom. Instruction practices form the understanding and communication skills of instruction as a component of instructional communication competence.

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