

ROLE OF TEACHING PRACTICE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS

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Abstract

Communication is an essential part of daily life. For a better relationship, some developed communication skills are presented as learned behavior that makes any person bring out positive responses from other individuals and establish satisfactory relations to assist social life. These behaviors are related to suitable and required speech, listening, and positive thoughts for another person which are share with different suitable verbal and non-verbal skills. The core objective of the research was to observe the performance of teacher educators and prospective teachers to investigate to what extend communication skills are developed during teaching practice and how much teacher educators provide guidance to prospective teachers in order to develop the communication skills during their teaching practice. The research was descriptive in nature and a quantitative approach was used. For the collection required data Observation method was used. Only female prospective teachers from IIUI were selected for the study. 100% population was taken as a sample. Through universal sampling, all 27 students who were enrolled in the M.A program named "Long Term Internship" were selected for observation of the study. These students were performed as prospective teachers in different educational institutions of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. A self-developed Observational sheet with a rating scale was used as a research instrument. Direct observation was conducted on the selected sample of teacher educators and prospective teachers. The observation was coded in thrice different sessions of the practice. Data were analyzed through the mean score. Major findings of the study were; prospective teachers perform gradual but slow improvement in their performance during teaching practice regarding verbal, non-verbal, and means of communication through instructional material. The conclusion of the study was, teacher educators give on the spot verbal and non-verbal feedback. The teacher educator monitored the prospective teachers and guide them regarding different verbal and non- verbal communication skills for improving their teaching methodology. Teacher educators guide them for the effective use of instructional material in the classroom. On the basis of findings and conclusion following recommendations were made teacher educators may guide the prospective teachers for the better and effective use of instructional material in class. Developing better teaching and class management teacher educator may guide the prospective teachers to adopt the professional culture and change the traditional teaching in the classroom.

Keywords: Teacher educator, Communication skills, prospective teachers, Observation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Effective communication with family, classmates, friends and co-workers are very necessary for lifelong and healthy relationships. There are some communication skills which have been developed and presented as the learned behaviors which enable any person to bring out positive responses from other individuals and establish satisfactory relations to facilitate social life. These behaviors are associated with effective listening, suitable and desirable speech, and positive feelings or thoughts for another person which are transferred

through verbal and nonverbal messages.

Good communication is a basic component of a good teacher, without which even the basic concepts cannot be effectively delivered. A teacher, who is able to communicate well with students, can build up their interest in lectures and can inspire them to learn and participate in class. But it is said that the importance of communication skills has been heavily discounted in any kind of formal education that we undergo. (Krueger. 1997).

The main purpose of developing the prospective the teacher's communication skills is to enhance the five behaviors called "key behaviors", among them or the target group as they are considered essential for effective teaching. These key behaviors include

1. Lesson clearness
2. Instructional diversity
3. Task orientation
4. Commitment to the learning procedure
5. Student achievement (Hansford.1988).

As new university students are from different educational background with different mediums of instructions so they have to face a lot of problems during their practical teaching session such as model teaching, teaching practice, and teaching internship programs. The main problem is the lack of proper communication skills among prospective teachers. There is a great need for developing good communication skills, among prospective teachers during their teacher training programs, as they can be helpful for them in their professional career outside the university. El-Astal, I.H. (2004)

The purpose of this research is to examine the existence and improvement of communication skills in prospective teachers, also to observe the role of teaching practice and to what extent it helps for the development of communication skills.

The course of Long Term Internship has been developed for M.A Education program of the Department of Education of International Islamic University. It provides the concept, need, and scope of the teaching-learning process at different levels.

The duration of a Long-term Internship is three months. Its Course Code is ED-047 and its total Credit Hours are 15. Before actually going in the schools the student teachers/ prospective teachers use to practice lesson delivery in the classroom along with the feedback for improvement provided by the teacher educators. The students are evaluated formally on the basis of teaching and performance in the schools

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this research was to look at the existence and improvement of communication skills in prospective teachers, also to see the role of teaching practice for the development of communication skills (both verbal and non-verbal).

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to investigate that to what extend teaching practice is effective for the development of communication skills of prospective teachers.

1.3 Research Question

To what extend teaching practice effects communication skills of prospective teachers?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Main concern of study was to investigate the role and involvements of teaching practice for the development of communication skills of prospective teachers. This study would be helpful to investigate to what extent prospective teacher developed the conceptual understanding regarding subject and to what extent prospective teachers improves their verbal communication and non-verbal communication skills in teaching practice. The results of this research will be helpful for the teacher educators to understand that up to which level the communication skills will be enhanced through teaching practice.

1.5 Delimitations of the Study

This study was delimited to all female students of 4th semester of Master of Education of long internship

program.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Good communication is a basic component of a good teacher, without which even the basic concepts cannot be effectively delivered. A teacher, who is able to communicate well with students, can build up their interest in lectures and can inspire them to learn and participate in class. But it is sad that importance of communication skills has been heavily discounted in any kind of formal education that we undergo. (Krueger. 1997).

Communication for the Classroom Teacher covers a wide range of classroom communication issues, including interpersonal and small group communication; listening skills; verbal and nonverbal communication (from both the teacher's and student's perspective); instructional strategies such as lecturing, discussions, and storytelling; teacher influence; ethical considerations; and racism/sexism in the classroom. (Pamela J. Cooper, Cheri 2006)

2.1 Internal and External Barriers of Communication

Mainly two types of barriers an individual faced while communicating in daily life.

2.1.1 Internal Barrier

Different internal hurdles includes fatigue, restlessness, insufficient listening voice, attitude towards getting information, absence of attention, instantaneously features like misinterpretations, anxiety, confusion, undesirable feelings, earlier practices, internal issues, expressive strains and absence of mutual practices.

2.1.2 External Barriers

The different forms of external barriers consist of a variety of distractions such as noisy atmosphere, slow network, computer not working, wrong calls, and specific day work load, wrong or unnecessary communication from the sender or inappropriate environment or technical terms.

These obstacles seize the memorandum from receiving. Due to these unforeseen hurdles, we have to be very careful while communicating. During this communication the response of the receiver should also be considered. Sometimes the specific body language also helps us to receive or send the messages. We have to make sure that the recipient has received the same message we want to convey. So we should communicate by sending most important questions repeatedly and to respond we have to listen carefully. (Diggins, 2004)

2.2 Preparation for teaching practice

Preparation of teaching practice is very essential part for the students and it is a core part of the student teaching program. Student must have mentally prepared before any kind of teaching practice. Nature of practice is different from one institute to another. Number of tasks is given according to the resources given by institutions.

Different approaches for preparation of teaching practice re given below:

- 1) Enhancement of objectives of the subject
- 2) Evaluation of the class room teaching and proper use of instructional material
- 3) Learn to arrange, check and score all test made by teachers
- 4) Prepare the portfolio of the students
- 5) Maintenance of the result cards and health cards of the students
- 6) Preparation for parents teachers meetings
- 7) Organized the school functions
- 8) Planning and maintain the teacher's dairy
- 9) Preparation the syllabus
- 10) Organization of the seminars and debates competitions etc. (Mohanty.2009)

2.3 Importance of teaching practice

Teaching practice is the main part of teacher education. It is very much necessary element for teacher preparation. Because it delivers best chance to trainee teachers or student teachers to become more professional in career. (Furlong, Hirst & Pocklington, 1988). In teacher education programme the more outgoing reputation and centrality of teaching practice is an essential causal feature towards the excellence of teacher training programme. It gives a very much emotional and positive attachment with the students. Most of teachers and students are connected into an atmosphere of teaching profession and both develops together through their experiences. Student and teacher feel satisfied and authorized in power. (Gujjar, Naoreen, Saifi & Bajwa. 2010)

3 RELATED RESEARCHES

Saunders and Mills (1999) wrote a research article about “The knowledge of communication skills of secondary graduate student teachers and their understanding of the relationship between communication skills and teaching”. The main objective of this article was to investigate the importance of communication skills for teaching and how much these skills were obtained and incorporated during a course of teacher education. The study revealed that student teacher not only perceived themselves as a better teacher with communication skills but they also clarified their reputation by communicating with the variety of the students. Student –teacher compared their theoretical and practical demonstrations in their teaching practice and how much it was beneficial for the development of teaching skills.

Vicki and Spicer (2003) presented article about the “Importance of communication skills for youngster interaction with their teachers”. The main purpose of this article was to investigate the point of view of high school teachers about the importance of communication skills for their students’ communication and investigated if the comfortable areas, in which the teachers taught or the amount of high school teaching practice they had, were associated with their point of view. The research proved that the trainee teacher always tried to adopt the communication skills which were approved by the management. The result of this research showed that the facilitated communicative interactions between the teachers and the students were more helpful in learning.

Siddiqui (2010) conducted research on “Teacher Competencies and Teaching Practices for School Effectiveness in Workers Welfare Model Schools”. The result of this research was based on the observation of classroom teaching. This research proved that teachers used traditional method of teaching. Proper trained teachers did not exploiting in Workers Welfare. Mostly teachers gave on the spot positive feedback to encourage the students who gave right answers. Most of the teachers did not follow the proper evaluation procedure in classroom teaching. Most of the teachers properly ready and followed the course contents, also used personal A.V.Aids for effective teaching.

4 METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

4.1 Design of Study

This research used quantitative research design. Survey method was used to observe the performance of prospective teachers in teaching practice.

4.2 Population & Sample

The population of the study was all female students of IIUI whom were enrolled in “Long term Internship program” in Department of Education, were selected as a population of the study. This was an observational study in which through universal sampling technique all 27 prospective teachers were selected as a sample of the study from Department of Education in IIUI.

4.3 Instrument

For the collection of data an observational sheet with four point rating scale (seldom, often, frequently, and always) according to the variable like: verbal and non-verbal communication skills. To rate the observation of prospective teachers’ communication skills during teaching practice and its contribution towards the development of these skills.

4.4 Data Collection & Analysis

Researcher collected data personally, through observing the prospective teacher’s performance during classroom. Observation was recorded on the observation sheet. The observation was coding on self-developed observational sheet by the researcher. Researcher observed the prospective teachers thrice. Data were analysed according to the results of observation sheets. The data were analysed through mean scores.

5 RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Table: 1 Results related to the Verbal skills

A	Verbal skills	Mean scores & Remarks	1 st observation	2 nd observation	3 rd observation
1	Greeted the students warmly	Mean scores	1.77	2.29	2.92
		Remarks	Below average	Below average	Average
2	Use a loud and clear voice	Mean scores	2.03	2.40	2.62
		Remarks	Below average	Below average	Average
3	Adequate volume	Mean scores	1.81	2.11	2.51
		Remarks	Below average	Below average	Average
4	Good pronounce	Mean scores	1.88	2.66	2.37
		Remarks	Below average	Average	Below average

Result of table 1 showed the calculated mean score of prospective teachers in observation of three sessions. The mean value shows the performance of prospective teachers while greeting the students (mean value in first session 1.77, second session 2.29 in third session 2.92), prospective teachers used loud and clear voice (first 2.03, second 2.40 and third session 2.62). Mean score of first session (1.81), second (2.11) and third session (2.5) showed that they always used satisfactory volume during lecture while prospective teachers perform in teaching practice. Observation regarding the pronunciation skills of prospective teachers was 1.88, 2.66 and 2.37 for three sessions respectively.

Table: 2 Results related to the Verbal skills

Verbal communicational skills used by the prospective teachers					
A	Verbal skills	Mean scores & Remarks	1 st observation	2 nd observation	3 rd observation
5	Speed of talking	Mean scores	2.03	2.33	2.55
		Remarks	Below average	Below average	Average
6	Pleasant pitch and tone	Mean scores	1.62	2.40	2.22
		Remarks	Below average	Below average	Below average
7	Good vocabulary	Mean scores	2.00	2.40	2.40
		Remarks	Below average	Below average	Below average
8	Good reading power	Mean scores	2.11	2.37	2.59
		Remarks	Below average	Below average	Below average

Results of table 2 shows the mean scores of prospective teacher's performance regarding speed of talking (first 2.03, in second 2.33 and in the final session 2.55), pleasant pitch and tone (first 1.62, second 2.40 and in the final session 2.22) and Good vocabulary (first 2.00, second 2.40 and third session 2.40) results showed weak improvement of prospective teachers in three sessions. And results regarding good reading power (first 2.11, second 2.37 and in last session 2.59) showed that prospective teachers enhanced their reading power up to the satisfactory level during teaching practice.

Table: 3 Results related to the Non- verbal skills

Non - verbal communicational skills used by the prospective teachers					
B	Non-Verbal skills	Mean scores & Remarks	1 st observation	2 nd observation	3 rd observation
		Mean scores	1.85	2.07	2.44

9	Hyper-activity	Remarks	Below average	Below average	Below average
10	Size of handwriting variable	Mean scores	2.14	2.44	2.74
		Remarks	Below average	Below average	Average
11	Faces class while speaking	Mean scores	1.81	2.40	2.55
		Remarks	Below average	Below average	Average
12	Facial gestures	Mean scores	1.62	2.25	2.44
		Remarks	Below average	Below average	Below average
13	Movement in class	Mean scores	1.81	2.29	2.07
		Remarks	Below average	Below average	Below average
14	Proper standing posture during & after writing of White Board	Mean scores	1.96	2.37	2.33
		Remarks	Below average	Below average	Below average

Results of table 3 shows the performance of prospective teachers regarding non-verbal skills, mean scores first 1.85, second 2.07 and third session 2.44) regarding hyper-activity Mean value (first 2.14, second 2.44, third session 2.74) regarding style of hand writing, mean score (first 1.81, second 2.40 and third session 2.55) regarding faces class while speaking, calculated mean value (first 1.62, second 2.25, third session 2.44) showed that they presented best facial gestures during teaching. Calculated mean value of the observation of prospective teachers (first session 1.81, second 2.29, final session 2.07) showed the movement in class while teaching. Mean score (first 1.96, second 2.37, third session 2.33) showed that they did not use proper standing posture during and after the writing on white board as required. All results showed slightly slow improvement in performance of prospective teachers.

6 FINDINGS

1. The calculated results of prospective teachers of verbal and non-verbal communication skills in the observation of three sessions showed definite progress regarding Greeted the students warmly, reading skills, hyper activity.
2. The calculated mean scores regarding use a loud and clear voice, adequate and satisfactory volume, speed of talking, vocabulary related to subject matter showed slightly slow improvement of prospective teacher in teaching practice.
3. The results of prospective teachers regarding non-verbal communication skills i.e. size of handwriting. Faces class while speaking, facial gestures showed gradually positive improvement in teaching practice.
4. The calculated mean scores regarding pleasant pitch and tone, pronunciation skills, Movement in class, Proper standing posture during & after writing of White Board showed less improvement till third session of observation. They need to improve their performance in this regard.

7 CONCLUSIONS

1. Prospective teachers have improved their performance during the teaching practice regarding both verbal as well as non-verbal communication to great extent.
2. In verbal skills they are facing some problems related to tone of voice and pronunciation skill.
3. While in non-verbal their standing postures and movement in class is not up to the mark

8 DISCUSSIONS

The study is mainly focused on the role of teaching practice for the development of communication skills. The aim of the study was to investigate the presence of communication skills and effectiveness of teaching practice for the development of communication skills.

Finding of this study supports with the study which conducted by Zia Ullah, Farooq and Memon (2008) as it revealed that the prospective teachers were not effectively utilized the verbal and non-verbal skills. Skills which related to task orientations were designed in pre-service teacher to a realistic level. Mainly appropriate instructional materials of skills were not always developed for effective teaching learning process. It was found in the present that prospective teachers performed verbal, non-verbal and means of communication through instructional material during teaching practice. In teaching practice prospective teachers did not perform well at the starting of their training session after practice in class room, they faced problems while using grammar, proper pronunciations or reading power, did not use pleasant pitch and tone. Whereas non-verbal communications like hyperactivity, facial gestures, movement and standing in the class, use of instructional materials, and appropriate use of A.V.Aids. The results of the study are related with the findings of the study conducted by Vicki and Spicer (2003) as they revealed that the trainee teacher always tried to adopt the communication skills which were approved by the management. The result of this research showed that the facilitated communicative interactions between the teachers and the students were more helpful in learning. Gujjar, Naoreen, Saifi and Bajwa (2010) revealed in their research regarding problems and issues of teaching practice, that rules and regulations were not specify before teaching practice and also cooperative teacher and supervisor were not identify the weakness or loophole in lesson presentation. Supervisor was not given any verbal or non-verbal feedback to the trainee that why they could not get enough guidance regarding the worth of teaching practice. Findings of the study conducted by Malik and Ajmal (2017) described that to what extent student- teacher handle and tackle their stress and adopt coping technique during teaching practice. It indicated that appraisal process, management, lesson preparation and workload of job were the main causes of student- teacher stress and its effects on their professional development during teaching practice. It was also found in this study that prospective teachers were facing problem while they are coming in class and starting their lesson. It also effects on their voice while announcement of the lesson.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

On the bases of findings and conclusions of prospective teachers it is recommended that:

1. On the bases of performance of the prospective teachers, teacher educator may guide the prospective teachers before teaching practice about the proper use of verbal communication skills and also practice during the model lesson presentations in class.
2. With the proper guidance of teacher educators, prospective teachers can follow the instructions regarding teaching and its rules and regulations during teaching practice. With the help of teacher educators, prospective teachers may perform well and satisfactory in verbal and non-verbal communication skills such as pronunciations, use pleasant tone in class, appropriate volume and good vocabulary.
3. Teacher educator may helpful for the use of appropriate teaching instructions and also guide them for the use of instructional material frequently during teaching practice.

10 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

On the bases of results following suggestions for further researches:

1. A research may be conducted to see the gender wise comparison regarding the performance and development of teaching skills of prospective teachers.
2. An experimental research may be conducted on prospective teachers and check their professional development before and after teaching practice.

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