

IMPACT OF COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION WITH LECTURERS ON TEACHERS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

© Zeynep AKIN
(Eskişehir Osmangazi University, Eskişehir, Turkey)
zeynep26@gmail.com

© Didem KEPİR
(Sakarya University, Hendek/Sakarya, Turkey)
didemkepir@gmail.com

The aim of this research is to identify the problems that teacher candidates have while communicating with lecturers and to determine these problem's effect on the achievements of the teacher candidates. The research carried out in line with this purpose has been modeled in accordance with the descriptive model. The research data were obtained by applying Scale for Communication Apprehension with Lecturers developed by Gumus and Gecer to 230 teacher candidates and by addressing open ended questions to the teacher candidates. The quantitative data obtained from the research were analyzed by statistical analysis and the qualitative data were analyzed by content analysis. In accordance with the findings obtained from the research, it has been determined that there are problems that teacher candidates have in communicating with lecturers, and these problems do not affect the academic grade averages of the teacher candidates. In addition to this, in line with the opinions of teacher candidates, it has been concluded that the problems they have in communicating with lecturers lead to variety of problems like their having difficulties in learning, and decrease in their interest and willing for learning.

Keywords: Communication, Communication Apprehension

Communication is a term about which lots of studies have been conducted and which is described in different ways. Arican (2005:16) has described the communication as making the meanings common between people. Communication term is a process helping the individual to understand others and others to understand the individual; a process of transferring knowledge, emotions, thoughts and skills by using symbols like words, pictures, figures, graphs, etc. Communication term is a source's sending messages to a receiver to influence the behaviors of the receiver intentionally (Ergin & Birol, 2005:6). And, Cetinkanat (1996:225) has described communication as an interactive process carried out for making the meanings of knowledge, attitude, emotion and skills common and sharing them on the purpose of forming behavioral change between source and target.

Ergin and Birol (2005:30) who are treating learning as permanent marked behavioral change occurring in individual as a result of communication activities have stated that unless communication occurs, learning will not

occur also since new learning will occur by obtaining new knowledge and skills. The classes in which most of the teaching-learning process is carried out are the environments where teachers and students share knowledge and lives that they have in themselves and provide through various means of communication in order to achieve educational goals. This sharing carried out through communication makes also the education a communication event (Guclu, 2001:157; Bolat, 1996:75).

In communication process, which has an important role in learning to occur and which shapes the education activities, the message given by trainer to learner has a great importance. The person undertaking the role of trainer can cause learners to approach in an unbiased way to what he says, try to understand them, and make the ones who learn in this way know that their feelings are accepted and develop their confidence for expressing their feelings easily throughout the education activities (Dilekman, Başçı & Bektaş, 2010:224).

In teaching-learning process, a healthy communication between trainers and learners is required both to increase the academic successes of learners and for desirable behavioral changes in learners to occur (Dilekman, Başçı & Bektaş, 2010:225).

It is a desirable situation for communication on the basis of education and teaching activities to be positive and effective. And, in class, occurrence of communication in such a way is affected as much from learners as trainers. It is required for both of the trainers and learners to be willing to communicate and to make an effort for providing a positive and effective communication. However, it can be seen that learners are not all the time willing to communicate in class and they can even escape from communicating. This situation has led to the opinion that learners are afraid of communicating and resulted in emergence of the communication apprehension term.

Communication apprehension is a fear or anxiety level stemming from communicating with other person or people, or emergence of likelihood of communicating. Communication apprehension, as a significant problem had in class communication, can affect verbal communication, social skills and self-confidence of the learners to a great extent (Ergin & Birol, 2005:113). This situation can emerge in every level from primary education to higher education in individuals' education lives and affect their learning lives adversely. To be able to decrease or to eliminate the communication apprehension that individuals feel can be possible. However, for this to happen, first of all, the reasons of the communication apprehension are required to be determined. And, in this research, it is aimed to determine the problems that the teacher candidates have while communicating with lecturers and the impact of these problems on the academic successes of teacher candidates. In line with this basic aim, in this research, the questions to be answered are as follows:

1. What are the communication apprehension levels of the teacher candidates with the lecturers?
2. According to the teacher candidates':
 - a. academic achievements,
 - b. class levels,
 - c. gender.

Method

In this section, information about the model, population and sample, data collection tool and data analysis of the research is included.

Research Model

In this research, in which it is aimed to determine the problems that the teacher candidates have while communicating with lecturers in lectures and to determine the influence of these problems on the academic achievements of them, descriptive model has been used. Descriptive model is a research method in which a subject, event, or an object are tried to be described under their own conditions or as they are. In this model, the preexisting condition is tried to be described in a specific time frame (Karasar, 2009:77). And, in this research, the effect of the problems that teacher candidates have while communicating with lecturers is tried to be determined.

Population and Sample

Teacher candidates studying in Eskisehir Osmangazi University, Faculty of Education, in 2010-2011 constitute the population of the research. And, 230 teacher candidates studying in Eskişehir Osmangazi University, Faculty of Education constitute the sample of the research.

Data Collection Tool

In this research, Scale for Communication Apprehension with Lecturers developed by Gumus and Gecer (2008) on the purpose of collecting the required data was used. In the scale composed of a total 19 items, five-grading was used. In addition to this, two open ended questions are included at the end of the scale and the opinions of teacher candidates were taken as written through these questions. Moreover, in order to determine the demographical features of the teacher candidates, personal information form prepared by the researcher was used.

Findings

In this section, the findings obtained by the analysis of the data, collected to solve the research questions, by using various statistical techniques and the interpretation of these findings are included.

1. Total Point Differentiation of the Communication Apprehension of Teacher Candidates with Lecturers With Respect To the Academic Average.

Table 1. The results of the *Kruskal Wallis test* conducted to determine whether the total points of the communication apprehension of teacher candidates with lecturers differentiate or not with respect to the academic average.

Table 1

	Academic Ave.	N	Mean Rank	Chi-square	df	P
TOTAL	0-2.00	2	154.00	4.017	4	0.404
	2.01-2.50	31	111.65			
	2.51-3.00	76	117.11			
	3.01-3.50	100	119.79			
	3.51-4.00	21	91.29			
	<i>Total</i>	230				

As can be seen in Table 1, with respect to the results of Kruskal Wallis test conducted on the purpose of determining whether the points that teacher candidates take from the Scale for Communication Apprehension with Lecturers show significant differences or not with respect to academic averages of them, it was found that the points that teacher candidates had taken from the scale of communication apprehension with lecturers did not show significant differences with regard to the academic averages of the students.

2. Total Point Differentiation of the Communication Apprehension of Teacher Candidates with Lecturers With Respect To the Class Levels.

Table 2. The results of the Kruskal Wallis test conducted to determine whether the total points of the communication apprehension of teacher candidates with lecturers differentiate or not with respect to the class levels

Table 2

	Class Level	N	Mean Rank	Chi-square	df	P
TOTAL	1	62	125.14	14.836	3	0.002
	2	68	107.96			
	3	57	135.19			
	4	43	87.42			
	<i>Total</i>	230				

In reference to table 2, with respect to the results of Kruskal Wallis test conducted on the purpose of determining whether the points that teacher candidates take from the Scale for Communication Apprehension with Lecturers show significant differences or not with respect to their class levels, it has been found that the points that teacher candidates got from the scale of communication apprehension with lecturers shows significant differences with regard to class levels of the students. In order to determine from which groups this significant differences stemmed from, Mann Whitney-U was applied. With respect to the results of Mann Whitney-U test conducted to determine between which groups these differences are present, it has been determined that there is a significant difference between the first and the fourth; the second and the third; the third and the fourth classes.

3. Total Point Differentiation of the Communication Apprehension of Teacher Candidates with Lecturers With Respect To the Gender Variable.

Table 3. The results of the independent group t-test conducted to determine whether the total points of the communication apprehension of teacher candidates with lecturers differentiate or not with respect to the gender variable.

Table 3

Point	Groups	N	X	ss	Sh _x	t-test		
						t	sd	p
TOTAL	Female	171	41.47	13.208	1.100	-1.412	228	.159
	Male	59	44.22	11.980	1.560			
	Total	230						

In reference to table 3, as a result of independent group t-test conducted on the purpose of determining whether the points that teacher candidates take from the Scale for Communication Apprehension with Lecturers show significant differences or not with respect to the gender variable, it has been found that there are no significant differences between the group averages.

4. The Opinions of Teacher Candidates about the Problems That They Have in Communicating with Lecturers.

Table 4. The opinions of the teacher candidates about the problems that they have in communicating with lecturers

Table 4

Opinions	f
Exists	109
Not exist	119

Upon the question “Are there any problems other than the ones ranked in the items included in the scale for communication apprehension with lecturers? If there are, what kind of problems do you have?”, teacher candidates stated that most of the students did not have a problem different from the items included in the scale for communication apprehension with lecturers, in the analysis of their answers to the question. However, there are teacher candidates who expressed that they had a different problem other than the items included in the Scale for Communication Apprehension with Lecturers, also. In their answers of these teacher candidates, it was determined that they had difficulties in communicating with lecturers due to the reasons like “lecturers’ behaving to some students unequally, lecturers’ displaying an authoritarian attitude, directing questions to them at an unexpected time, class size’s being excess”.

5. The Opinions of Teacher Candidates about the Impact of the Problems That They Have in Communicating with Lecturers on Their Academic Achievements.

Table 5. The opinions of teacher candidates about the impact of the problems that they have in communicating with lecturers on their academic successes.

Table 5

Opinions	f
Affecting	124
Affecting negatively	43
Reducing the interest to the course	50
Making it difficult to understand	27
Causing prejudice to the course and lecturer	4
Not affecting	100
Indecisive	6

When the answers of teacher candidates to the question “How are the problems that you have in communicating with lecturers affecting your academic success?” directed to them were analyzed, it was determined that they had the idea that the problems which they had in communicating with lecturers influenced their academic achievements. The teacher candidates stated that the problems which they had in communicating with lecturers affected their academic achievements.

Some of the teacher candidates expressed their opinions that the problems they had in communicating with lecturers influenced their academic achievements adversely.

In addition to this, the problems that teacher candidates have in communicating with lecturers reduce the interest to the course. And, for this reason also, there are students with the opinion that their academic achievements are affected negatively. The following examples can be given to the opinions of these students:

“I do not want to attend classes.”

“This made us extremely reluctant to that course. We were thinking how the lecture could proceed one week before the lecture.”

“This decreases my motivation to the course.”

It has been seen that the problems that some of the teacher candidates have in communicating with lecturers make the topics covered in lectures difficult to understand and for this reason, their academic achievements are affected adversely. The following examples can be given to the statements of teacher candidates who have this opinion:

“I have difficulties in understanding some topics because I can not ask the parts that I can not understand.”

“As there are the things that I cannot say in the lecture, I am not able to learn whether they are correct or false.”

“I have to learn the lesson by myself.”

It has been determined that some of the teacher candidates states that they do not have problems in communicating with lecturers or their academic successes are not affected adversely. The following examples can be given to the opinions of teacher candidates who have this thought:

“I do not have much difficulty in communicating with lecturers.”

“I do not think that it will affect my success in the course.”

“I think that these two are different from each other. Therefore, it has no effect for me, at all.”

It was observed that some students did not answer the question “How are the problems that you have in communicating with lecturers affecting your academic achievement?” as affecting or not affecting and they were undecided.

Results

In this research, it is aimed to determine the problems that teacher candidates have while communicating with lecturers taking their classes and the impact of these problems on academic achievement. In the research, it has been concluded that the communication apprehensions of teacher candidates with lecturers do not show differences with respect to the academic success. Moreover, it has been determined that the communication apprehensions of teacher candidates with lecturers do not show differences with regard to gender variable, also. However, it has been concluded that the communication apprehensions of teacher candidates with lecturers show

differences with respect to class variable. In addition to this, it has been concluded that in line with the answers teacher candidates gave to open ended questions directed to them, they have various problems due to reasons stemming from lecturers, teaching environment, and themselves. And, they think that these problems affect their academic achievements negatively. Depending on the findings obtained from the study, it has been determined that teacher candidates has the idea that the problems teacher candidates have in communicating with lecturers lead to various problems like reduction in their desire for learning, their inaccurate or incomplete learning, and their not being able to ask questions.

References

- ARICAN, K. (2005). *İlköğretim okullarında sınıf içi iletişimde rol oynayan öğretmen davranışları*. Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi Bolu: Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi.
- BOLAT, S. (1996). Eğitim örgütlerinde iletişim: Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi uygulaması. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 12, 75-80.
- CETİNKANAT, C. (1996). İnsan ilişkilerinde iletişim. *Çağdaş Eğitim Dergisi*, 223.
- DİLEKMAN, M., BAŞCI, Z., & BEKTAŞ, F. (2010). Eğitim fakültesi öğrencilerinin iletişim becerileri. *Atatürk Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 12 (2), 223-231.
- ERGİN, A., & BİROL, C. (2005). *Eğitimde iletişim*. Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık.
- GUCLU, N. (2001). *İletişim*. Ankara: Nobel Yayıncılık.
- GUMUS, A. E., & GECER, A. K. (2008). Developing a Scale for Communication Apprehension with Lecturers. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 31, 55-74.
- KARASAR, N. (2009). *Bilimsel araştırma yöntemleri*. Ankara: Nobel Yayıncılık.