



EVALUATION OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' COMMUNICATION SKILLS

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Abstract:

The study aimed to evaluate pre-service teachers' communication skills. Research Faculty of Education University of Bartın Class Teacher Education, Science Teacher Education, Mathematics Education and Social Studies Education Department made over 175 pre-service teachers studying in the field. The questionnaire used in the collection of the data by Ersan and Balcı (1998) developed by communication skills inventory. This inventory is a likert-type 5 measurement tool consisting of 45 items, the scale of mental, emotional and behavioral measures in terms of communication skills. It contains 15 questions each of them size-related. In research pre-service teachers' communication skills have investigated according to their genders and the science branches whether does not change. In research, it was tried to be answered the following questions:

1. What are communication skill levels of the senior students at the Faculty of Education, Bartın University?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference between communication skills of the senior students studying at the Faculty of Education, Bartın University with regard to their genders?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference between communication skills of the senior students studying at the Faculty of Education, Bartın University with regard to their departments?

The research universe constitutes the final year students of 2015-2016 studying at Bartın University Faculty of Education Department of Primary Education. Sampling is compose by 175 students from selected the final year students at Department of Elementary Education. The survey model was used in the research. In the analysis of data used the statistical processing of the data from independent groups t-test and one-way ANOVA. As a result of the research pre-service teachers in communication skills

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was found a significant difference in favour of females. Pre-service teachers' in communication skills was found significant difference in science branches. This difference is in favor of Class Teaching include Class Teacher Education, Science Teacher Education, Mathematics Education and Social Studies Education Department.

Keywords: pre-service teachers, communication skill, student, evaluate

1. Introduction

Changes in social structure have made some skills such as communication, entrepreneurship, using information technologies, productivity, etc. compulsory. Especially recent developments in mass media have caused obligatory changes on communication skills. Today, social structure needs individuals whose entrepreneurship and communication skills are strong. Those skills were handled in accordance with recent changes in primary school program, and constructivist approach was employed. According to the constructivist approach, students are in the center of instruction, they take part in classes actively, and teachers and students work in communication. This is what makes it necessary for individuals to be capable with regards to communication. For achieving this, pre-service teachers need to have sufficient communication skills. This is because of the fact that teachers initiate communication during instruction. As a result of the role they have, teachers have to communicate with their students, colleagues, school administration, parents and society. That is why they should have effective communication skills vocationally.

Communication is the process in which information, feelings and ideas are conveyed with power for the receiver. According to Baltaş (1992), communication is conveying feelings, thoughts and information through any way. Aim of communication is enabling the message to be conveyed to the receiver in the most clear and comprehensible way. Communication is very important for an individual's education, family and work life. Inabilities in communication skills may lead an individual to be introvert during his education and to be unsuccessful in solving the problems he faces in his family and work life. Communication increases the possibility of agreement on ideas, behaviours and values via interaction ensured among individuals (Yatkın, 2003). It can be said that we owe our thinking and behaving in groups and our roles in social relations to communication (Demiray, 2007). It was suggested in a study that people spent about 75% of their time remaining from sleep for verbal communication. This means that we either speak or listen for 12 hours a day on average. Additionally, 60% of communication period is spent for listening, and 40% of it is spent for speaking (Kırmızı, 2006). Temizyürek, Erdem and Temizkan (2007) stated that speaking skill is one of the factors affecting an individual's success in his school or work life. Speaking

skill is important both for individual and society because it is an important activity arranging interpersonal relations.

Schools are the places where speaking skill is improved. Local dialect characteristics coming from the children's family and environment convert into a formal language structure there. Teachers have very important roles at that point. They should change children's informal language structure into formal one. If it is not handled on time, it will be really difficult for children to correct their spoken language. According to Özbay (2005), aim of speaking skill in educational institutions is helping students gain accurate and effective expression of feelings, ideas, observations, dreams and requests. The most appropriate method for a teacher to correct speaking in local dialect is being a model for the students (Öz, 2003; Kavcar and et al., 2005). Eloquence is a skill gained through education. Everybody can have elocutionary skill if they are trained sufficiently.

On the other hand, the quality of communication in the classroom impacts on student achievement. Teachers understand the student's interests and needs, deal with student is very important. The researches reveal that there is a direct relationship between communication skills teacher's class and student achievement (Weis and et al., 1990; Davies ve Igbal, 1997). Teachers' communication skills must be developed for gain the knowledge and skills to students and be able to understand them (Poyraz ve Dere, 2001; Köksal Akyol ve Koçer Çiftçi, 2005). Communication skills can be summarized in the form of verbal / nonverbal messages to sensitivity, effective listening and effective responsive (Baker ve Shaw, 1987; Egan, 1994). To have effective communication and social is one of the qualifications of teachers (Yüksel, 1997; Çilenti, 1998).

It is aimed to raise entrepreneur individuals whose communication skills are strong in regard to recent changes in curriculums. This task has been given to the teachers. Teachers need to have sufficient communication skills in order to achieve this task. This depends on good pre-service vocational training. Secondly, teachers should raise individuals whose communication skills are sufficient. These skills can be obtained via teachers' encouraging them to be entrepreneur, to think critically and creatively in democratic class environments.

The following results were found as a result of literature survey related to communication skills:

Dilekmen, Başçı and Bektaş (2008) carried out a study on 283 students at Atatürk University Faculty of Education, and found significant difference in communication skills of the students in different departments. The difference was among departments of Primary School Education, Science, Mathematics Education, Psychological Counseling and Guiding, and it was in favor of departments of Primary School Education, Science and Psychological Counseling and Guiding.

Pehlivan (2005) conducted a research on 592 pre-service teachers studying at Primary School Education Department of Hacettepe University, and revealed that pre-service teachers' perception of communication skills was high, there was no difference in their communication skills in terms of gender, there was significant difference between 1st and 4th graders – in favor of the latter – in terms of their perception of communication skills. Çetinkanat (1998) expressed in his study that pre-service primary school teachers and supervisors thought that teaching communication skills consisted of empathy, transparency, equality, effectiveness and sufficiency elements. Çulha and Dereli (1987) pointed out communication problems in their study. They specified communication problems as inability to express feelings and ideas clearly, to open up and to join social circles. Ceyhan (2006) claimed in his study that depending on their communication skills, social and general adaptation levels of university students were high. Saracaloğlu, Yenice and Karasakaloğlu (2009) conducted a research on 184 pre-service primary school teachers, and concluded that their communication skills were satisfactory.

It is a known fact that communication is crucial for human life. Our age necessitates individuals whose communication skills are strong. As it is teachers who will raise these individuals, it is necessary for them to have adequate communication skills. From this point of view, communication skills of pre-service teachers were evaluated in this study.

1.1 Aim of the Research

Aim of the study was determining if communication skills of the senior students (pre-service teachers) studying at the Faculty of Education, Bartın University differed in terms of their gender and departments. The following sub problems were tried to be answered for achieving this general aim:

1. What are communication skill levels of the senior students at the Faculty of Education, Bartın University?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference between communication skills of the senior students studying at the Faculty of Education, Bartın University with regard to their genders?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference between communication skills of the senior students studying at the Faculty of Education, Bartın University with regard to their departments?

2. Method

The survey model was used in the research.

2.1. Population and Sample

Population of the research included students studying at the departments of Primary School Education, Social Studies, Mathematics and Science Education at the Faculty of Education, Bartın University. Sample of the study consisted of 175 students, 51 of whom were male and 124 of whom were female, and they were randomly selected among senior students.

2.2. Data Collection Tools

Personal Information Form and Communication Skills Inventory which was developed by Eranlı and Balcı (1998) were employed as data collection instruments. The inventory is a 45-item, five-point, Likert-type scale. It gauges communication skills from cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects. There are 15 items for each dimension. Reliability of the scale was calculated as a result of the study conducted and Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was found .85.

Items limitations:

- I totally agree: 4.20-5.00;
- I agree: 3.40-4.19;
- I undecided: 2.60-3.39;
- I do not agree: 1.80-2.59;
- I never disagree: 1.00-1.79.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data obtained were analysed via SPSS package program. Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests were employed in order to determine if variables showed normal distribution. The data were regarded to be in a normal distribution since p value was more than .05 as a result of the tests. Independent samples t-test and one-way variance analysis were applied.

3. Findings

Table 1: Independent samples t-test results of pre-service teachers' scores related to cognitive sub dimension of communication skills evaluation scale in terms of gender

Gender	N	\bar{x}	sd	df	t	p
Male	51	57.57	7.564	173	-3.021	.003*
Female	124	60.93	6.291			

According to the results showed in Table 1, there was a statistically significant difference between the scores the pre-service teachers received from cognitive sub dimension of communication skills evaluation scale and gender variable. The difference was in favor of the female students [$t_{(173)} = -3.021$; $p < .05$].

Table 2: Independent samples t-test results of pre-service teachers' scores related to affective sub dimension of communication skills evaluation scale in terms of gender

Gender	N	\bar{x}	sd	df	t	p
Male	51	56.33	8.079	173	.112	.911
Female	124	56.20	6.575			

Table 2 shows that there was not a statistically significant difference between the scores the pre-service teachers received from affective sub dimension of communication skills evaluation scale and gender variable [$t_{(173)} = -.112$; $p > .05$].

Table 3: Independent samples t-test results of pre-service teachers' scores related to behavioral sub dimension of communication skills evaluation scale in terms of gender

Gender	N	\bar{x}	sd	df	t	p
Male	51	53.59	7.859	173	-2.859	.005*
Female	124	56.92	6.627			

It can be understood from the Table 3 that there was a statistically significant difference between the scores the pre-service teachers received from behavioral sub dimension of communication skills evaluation scale and gender variable. The difference was in favor of the female students [$t_{(173)} = -2.859$; $p < .05$].

Table 4: Independent samples t-test results of pre-service teachers' overall scores of communication skills evaluation scale in terms of gender

Gender	N	\bar{x}	sd	df	t	p
Male	51	167.49	20.767	173	-2.271	.024*
Female	124	174.05	15.763			

According to the results illustrated in Table 4, there was a statistically significant difference between overall scores the pre-service teachers received from communication skills evaluation scale and gender variable. The difference was in favor of the female students [$t_{(173)} = -2.271$; $p < .05$].

Table 5: One-way variance analysis results of pre-service teachers' scores related to cognitive sub dimension of communication skills evaluation scale in terms of departments

Variance Source	Sum of Squares	df	Sum of Squares	F	p
Inter-groups	721.493	3	240.498	5.546	.001*
In-groups	7415.044	171	43.363		
Total	8136.537	174			

According to the results showed in Table 5, there was a statistically significant difference between the scores the pre-service teachers received from cognitive sub dimension of communication skills evaluation scale and their departments [$F_{(3,171)} = 5.546$; $p < .05$]. Scheffe test was used in order to determine between which groups there was difference. It was found out that there was significant difference among primary school education, social studies education and mathematics education, and the difference was in favor of primary school education.

Table 6: One-way variance analysis results of pre-service teachers' scores related to affective sub dimension of communication skills evaluation scale in terms of departments

Variance Source	Sum of Squares	df	Sum of Squares	F	p
Inter-groups	802.134	3	267.378	5.877	.001*
In-groups	7779.786	171	45.496		
Total	8591.920	174			

According to the Table 6, there was a statistically significant difference between the scores the pre-service teachers received from affective sub dimension of communication skills evaluation scale and their departments [$F_{(3,171)} = 5.877$; $p < .05$]. Scheffe test was used in order to determine between which groups there was difference. It was found out that there was significant difference among primary school education, social studies education and mathematics education, and the difference was in favor of primary school education.

Table 7: One-way variance analysis results of pre-service teachers' scores related to behavioral sub dimension of communication skills evaluation scale in terms of departments

Variance Source	Sum of Squares	df	Sum of Squares	F	p
Inter-groups	519.495	3	173.165	3.537	.016*
In-groups	8371.042	171	48.953		
Total	8890.537	174			

According to the Table 7, there was a statistically significant difference between the scores the pre-service teachers received from behavioral sub dimension of communication skills evaluation scale and their departments [$F_{(3,171)} = 3.537$; $p < .05$]. Scheffe test was used in order to determine between which groups there was difference. It was found out that there was significant difference among primary school education, social studies education and mathematics education, and the difference was in favor of primary school education.

Table 8: One-way variance analysis results of pre-service teachers' overall scores of communication skills evaluation scale in terms of departments

Variance Source	Sum of Squares	df	Sum of Squares	F	p
Inter-groups	5704.772	3	1901.591	6.778	.000*
In-groups	47973.936	171	280.549		
Total	53678.709	174			

According to the results illustrated in Table 8, there was a statistically significant difference between overall scores the pre-service teachers received from communication skills evaluation scale on the whole and department variable [$F_{(3,171)} = 6.778$; $p < .05$]. Scheffe test was used in order to determine between which groups there was difference. According to Scheffe test results, there was significant difference among primary school education, social studies education and mathematics education, and the difference was in favor of primary school education.

Table 9: Mean and standard deviation related to pre-service teachers' overall scores of communication skills evaluation scale

	N	Min. Score	Max. Score	\bar{x}	ss
Whole Scale	175	1.00	5.00	3.82	.390

According to Table 9, the lowest score received from pre-service teachers' communication skills was 1.00, and the highest was 5.00. Pre-service teachers' receive the arithmetic mean of the scores is 3.82 that from communications assessment scale. This point corresponds to "I Agree" option. In this situation, it can be said that pre-service teachers' overall communication skills are high.

4. Results and Discussion

As a result of the study it was revealed that overall communication skills of pre-service teachers were sufficient. There was a statistically significant difference between the scores pre-service teachers received from cognitive and behavioral sub dimensions of communication skills evaluation scale and gender variable. The difference was in favor of the female students. No significant difference was observed between affective sub dimension of the scale and gender. It was also concluded that there was a statistically significant difference between overall scores that the pre-service teachers received from communication skills evaluation scale and gender variable, and the difference was in favor of the female students.

There was a statistically significant difference between the scores that pre-service teachers received from cognitive, affective and behavioral sub dimensions of the scale

and their departments. The difference was between primary school education, social studies education and mathematics education, and the difference was in favor of primary school education. There was also a statistically significant difference between overall scores that students received from communication skills evaluation scale and their departments. The difference was between primary school education, social studies education and mathematics education, and the difference was in favor of primary school education.

When the findings of this and previous studies are compared, it can be seen that the results are similar. As a result of the study it was revealed that overall communication skills of the primary school education students studying at Education Faculty of Bartın University were sufficient. Saracaloğlu and others (2001), Pehlivan (2005) also suggested in their research that communication skills of pre-service primary school education teachers were sufficient. In this respect both studies reveal similar results. In researches on pre-service teachers' communication skills have reached similar conclusions (Gürşimşek, Vural and Demirsöz, 2008; Yılmaz and Çimen, 2008; Saraçaloğlu, Yenice and Karasakaloğlu, 2009; Çetinkaya, 2011, Piji Küçük, 2012).

Results of the study show that there was a significant difference between communication skills level scores and gender variable in favor of female pre-service teachers. The study conducted by (Biehler, 1978; Kerr, 1991; Fenson, 1994; Sensebaugh, 1995; Jones, 1995; Korkut, 1996; Korkut, 1999; Reed, McLeod and McAllister, 1999; Şeker, 2000; Black, 2000; Saracaloğlu, Özkütük and Silkü, 2001; Güven and Akyüz, 2001; Özerbaş, Bulut and Usta, 2007; Çetinkaya, 2011; Erigüç, Şener and Eriş, 2013) suggested similar results. But, it has been reached not effective the gender variable in communication in some studies (Bozkurt Bulut, 2004; Yılmaz, 2007; Dilekman, Başçı and Bektaş, 2008; Çiftçi and Taşkaya, 2010). Koşay (2013) and Özokuçu and Sucuoğlu (2005) revealed that there was significant difference between social skills and gender variable, and the difference was in favor of female children. The study conducted claimed that communication skills of female pre-service teachers were higher than the males. From this aspect, Koşay, Özokuçu and Sucuoğlu's researches presented similar results.

Another result of the study was that there was a significant difference between communication skills of pre-service teachers and department variable. According to the findings obtained, there was significant difference between communication skills of pre-service teachers and departments of primary school education, social studies education and mathematics education, and the difference was in favor of the department of primary school education. This finding was similar with Dilekmen, Başçı and Bektaş's (2008) findings because they concluded significant difference between departments in favor of Primary School Education. But, it was no significant difference between the variable department with communication skills in some studies (Erigüç and Eriş, 2013; Acar, 2009, Akyurt, 2009).

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