



# A study about recognition of middle school and high school students on teacher's communication skills

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**Purpose:** The process of education through the relationship between students is carried out through communication. This study is meaningful in that it provides information for improving the communication skills of teachers from the viewpoint of students and finds implications for improving communication skills.

**Methods:** The subjects of this study were 70 students enrolled in middle school and high school. A questionnaire was used that consisted of the communication skills emphasized in the specialized area of speech therapy and in the general communication process area.

**Results:** First, among the total factors, the most significant item was role playing ability (having good communication skills). Meanwhile, in the perception of teachers with poor communication skills, the lowest item that was most significant was the ability of others to understand. Second, for each sub-domain, the question that had the best perception of the teacher was "communicate smoothly with any student," which was question 3 of role performance. For each sub-area, the question with the least recognition of the teacher was "Ask the students how they felt about what the teacher said," which was question 3 of understanding others. Third, in the ranking of middle and high school students on the importance of the communication ability elements of teachers, most influence was from listening ability, language ability, fluency ability, and articulation ability.

**Conclusions:** There is a need for professional and intensive education or a support program that can satisfy the needs of teachers for communication elements.

**Keywords:** Communication ability, Communication skill



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## INTRODUCTION

The words of a teacher have an impact that can change the lives of students. Students spend most of their adolescence in school, where they form their values and character. Adolescence is a time when identity is formed, and it is considered a very important period for human psychosocial development. For students who spend this important period of their lives at school, teachers become meaningful others who affect not only learning but also values, identity, and character development. The process of education through the relationship between teachers and students is carried out through communication. Therefore, the communication skills of teachers act as an important factor related to the success or failure of educational activities.

Teachers realize education through communication that maximizes the potential of students and helps the students to lead a proper life. Education refers to how teachers

communicate so that students can change in a more desirable direction, rather than teachers simply conveying knowledge and values unilaterally. Communication skills are skills that everyone must have for a successful social life regardless of occupation [1]. As well as learning by students, communication skills of teachers affect broad areas of life such as the personality, emotional stability, and socialization of students [2,3]. Therefore, the communication skills of teachers are essential factors that must be enhanced for learning guidance, life guidance, and peer relationship guidance [4,5].

Research related to communication skills has been conducted in various fields and has helped experts to grow into better professionals in their field and in performing their duties by revealing areas of lack of communication and areas to be strengthened [2,6]. In the case of teachers, studies have shown that communication skills are closely related to school organizational effectiveness, teacher efficacy, problem-solving ability, job stress, job satisfaction, and school violence prevention and response ability [7,8], further emphasizing the need for specialization and quality improvement of teacher communication skills. Cultivating the practical communication skills of teachers can have a positive effect on improving job satisfaction by maintaining a trust relationship with students. The higher the communication ability, the higher the job performance ability and the lower the job stress [3]. As such, communication skills and interpersonal skills are in a mutually dependent cycle so that communication skills are included in the basic vocational skills required in higher education [9]. Nonetheless, despite the importance of communication skills, many teachers have difficulty and burdens in performing their duties [10,11].

A study was conducted on teachers to examine their communication skills including interpretation ability, goal setting ability, role performance ability, self-presentation ability, and message conversion ability in terms of the communication process for effective interaction between students and teachers in certain situations [12,13]. Research is also being conducted to examine communication skills by adding rhythmic changes, facial expressions, and gestures related to articulation, fluency, vocabulary, syntax, and literacy to these factors [14,15].

The roles of teachers include class progress, learning guidance and evaluation, student guidance and counseling, parent counseling, event planning and progress, administration, and office work. All of these roles are performed through communication. Given that lectures and counseling are the primary duties for teachers to perform their role, it is crucial

for teachers to learn how to convey and share knowledge and thoughts. Teachers must interact continually with students through communication to achieve educational purposes. During this process, teachers may experience long-term vocalization, high intensity, inappropriate pitch, excessive tension, incomplete vocal cord muscle condition, and communication difficulties [16,17]. Therefore, teachers should communicate based on appropriate vocabulary, clear pronunciation, speed, optimal pitch, and intensity for smooth class progression and interaction with students.

Shin [18] developed a multidimensional communication skill analysis profile (MCSAP) and examined the importance and performance of each item of communication ability for teachers. In the case of middle and high school teachers, it was found that they recognized and performed well in pronunciation, speech, language, non-verbal communication, and interpretation. Although fluent performance was necessary, the actual performance was low.

The perception of teachers, who play a leading role in education, about their communication skills is also essential, but how students being educated perceive the communication skills of teachers may be more critical in the school setting. In a study by Hong and Seo [19], which examined the perception characteristics of communication in social studies classes for middle school students and teachers, teachers perceived communication more positively than students, while the perception of courage and praise by students was significantly lower than that by teachers. In this way, through how students perceive the the communication behavior of teachers, it is possible to understand the communication ability of teachers.

The purpose of this study is to find out the perceptions of middle and high school students about the multidimensional communication ability profiles of teachers with good communication skills and teachers with poor communication skills. The results of this study are meaningful in that they provide information for improving the communication skills of teachers from the viewpoint of students and provide implications for improving communication skills. The study may also serve as a basis for creating a school site where student-centered communication takes place in consideration of the viewpoint of students.

## METHODS

### Research subject

The subjects of this study were 70 students in middle and high

schools in Daegu, Gyeongbuk, Gwangju, and Jeolla. The aim of the study was to find out how middle and high school students perceive the communication skills of teachers with good and poor communication skills. The general characteristics of the study subjects are shown in Table 1.

### Research tools

The survey tool used to determine the perception of middle and high school students about the communication skills of teachers consisted of the communication skills emphasized in the speech therapy area and communication skills used in the general communication process area. Research tools were produced by revising and supplementing communication ability-related elements [14,18] and general communication-related tools [12,15]. There were 13 questions related to communication ability, which consisted of 2 consonant questions, 2 phonetic questions, 3 fluency questions, 4 language questions, and 2 non-verbal questions. The general communication ability-related elements consisted of 30 questions, which included 5 questions on listening ability, 3 questions on role performance, 3 questions on self-presentation ability, 3 questions on goal performance ability, and 3 questions on other people's understanding.

### Research procedure

The questions for each element of communication ability were composed, and a questionnaire was commissioned for middle and high school students with a survey to be conducted from September to October 2021. A total of 75 students responded to the survey, of which 70 were analyzed and 5 excluded as unreliable responses.

### Results process

Descriptive statistics were processed using the IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows (ver. 26) program to establish the differ-

**Table 1.** Participants' general characteristics (n=70)

Category	Type	Number	%
Gender	Male	8	11.4
	Female	62	88.6
Education	Middle school	32	45.7
	High school	38	54.3
Area	Daegu-Gyeongbuk	40	57.1
	Gwangju-Jeolla	25	35.7
	Others	5	7.1

ences in communication ability elements and sub-items of teachers with good and poor communication skills. The ranking by students of essential factors in the communication ability of teachers was calculated by processing the frequency and converting this into 3 points for first, 2 points for second, and one point for third. We conducted a t-test test to determine whether there was a difference in the perception of teachers with good and bad communication skills in accordance with school level.

## RESULTS

The results of examining the differences in the communication ability elements of teachers with good communication skills are shown in Table 2. Among the total factors, role playing ability (having good communication skills) was the item that was most significant.

In addition, the rankings of the sub-elements of communication ability and general communication ability were as follows: communication ability was ranked in the order of articulation ability, fluency ability, vocal ability, and language ability; while general communication ability was ranked in the order of role performance ability, listening ability, and goal performance ability.

The results of examining the differences in communication ability elements of teachers with poor communication skills are shown in Table 3. Among the total factors, in the perception of teachers with poor communication skills, the lowest item that was the most significant was the ability of others to understand.

In addition, the rankings of the sub-elements of communi-

**Table 2.** Recognition of teachers with good communication skills

Type		M	SD
Communication	Articulation	4.48	0.686
	Voice	4.37	0.719
	Fluency	4.40	0.699
	Language	4.36	0.611
General communication	Nonlanguage	4.27	0.845
	Interpretation	4.46	0.617
	Role fulfillment	4.50	0.626
	Self presentation	4.31	0.718
	Goal setting	4.43	0.721
	Understanding other's	4.23	0.754
Total		4.38	0.595

**Table 3.** Recognition of teachers with poor communication skills

Type		M	SD
Communication	Articulation	2.32	1.003
	Voice	2.31	1.054
	Fluency	2.45	1.067
	Language	2.47	1.129
General communication	Nonlanguage	2.36	1.099
	Interpretation	2.30	1.099
	Role fulfillment	2.25	1.130
	Self presentation	2.54	1.094
	Goal setting	2.23	1.032
	Understanding other's	2.02	0.935
	Total	2.30	0.964

communication ability and general communication ability were as follows: the factors related to communication ability were ranked in terms of language ability, fluency ability, articulation ability, vocal ability, general communication ability, non-verbal ability, and listening ability.

For each sub-domain, the question that had the best perception of the teacher was “I communicate smoothly with any student,” which is question 3 of role performance, followed by “I listen carefully to understand what the student is saying,” “I answer questions clearly,” and “I convey information clearly and naturally.” For each sub-area, the question with the least recognition of the teacher was question 3 of understanding others, “Ask the students how they felt about what the teacher said,” followed by “Express the students’ feelings with words or gestures,” and “Speak with a clear and natural accent” (Table 4).

In the ranking of middle and high school students on the importance of the communication ability elements of teachers, listening ability, language ability, fluency ability, and articulation ability had the most influence.

The results of comparing the differences in perceptions of teachers with good and poor communication skills between school levels are shown in Tables 5 and 6. There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers with good and bad communication skills between middle and high school students.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Communication is the most important interpersonal relationship process. A relationship includes messages such as feel-

**Table 4.** Recognition of teachers communication skills by sub-item

Type		Good teacher		Poor teacher	
		M	SD	M	SD
Articulation	Item 1	4.45	0.75	2.37	1.06
	Item 2	4.51	0.73	2.27	1.04
Voice	Item 1	4.42	0.71	2.42	1.12
	Item 2	4.32	0.84	2.20	1.04
Fluency	Item 1	4.41	0.77	2.48	1.09
	Item 2	4.40	0.76	2.37	1.20
	Item 3	4.37	0.82	2.50	1.16
Language	Item 1	4.45	0.65	2.60	1.24
	Item 2	4.21	0.79	2.52	1.23
	Item 3	4.48	0.71	2.31	1.14
	Item 4	4.31	0.82	2.50	1.38
Nonlanguage	Item 1	4.24	0.99	2.31	1.14
	Item 2	4.30	0.84	2.41	1.22
Interpretation	Item 1	4.54	0.71	2.18	1.03
	Item 2	4.28	0.85	2.24	1.10
	Item 3	4.52	0.65	2.50	1.39
	Item 4	4.45	0.73	2.31	1.19
	Item 5	4.48	0.79	2.30	1.18
Role fulfillment	Item 1	4.48	0.73	2.21	1.16
	Item 2	4.42	0.77	2.24	1.20
	Item 3	4.60	0.66	2.31	1.19
Self presentation	Item 1	4.14	0.90	2.54	1.18
	Item 2	4.38	0.83	2.41	1.18
	Item 3	4.42	0.75	2.67	1.31
Goal setting	Item 1	4.45	0.79	2.21	1.01
	Item 2	4.53	0.79	2.18	1.14
	Item 3	4.30	0.87	2.31	1.14
Understanding other's	Item 1	4.45	0.71	2.17	1.03
	Item 2	4.40	0.76	2.15	1.13
	Item 3	3.86	1.11	1.96	.99

ings, thoughts, and attitudes. It is an interaction that has an impact. For the communication skills of teachers to be effective, they must be based on positive relations between teachers and students and be adapted to the individual characteristics and needs of students. However, communication in the field of class management is a process in which teachers only deliver messages to students unilaterally without human interaction between the teachers and students. This one-way interaction appears strongly. In this one-way communication, it is easy for students to give up even their role as passive re-

**Table 5.** Differences in perceptions of teachers with good communication skills among school levels

Type	Education		t
	Middle M (SD)	High M (SD)	
Articulation	4.45 (0.558)	4.51 (0.784)	-0.362
Voice	4.25 (0.538)	4.48 (0.834)	-1.381
Fluency	4.33 (0.602)	4.45 (0.772)	-0.723
Language	4.28 (0.503)	4.44 (0.688)	-1.088
Nonlanguage	4.32 (0.617)	4.22 (1.004)	0.512
Interpretation	4.45 (0.505)	4.46 (0.705)	-0.123
Role fulfillment	4.52 (0.463)	4.49 (0.742)	0.196
Self presentation	4.28 (0.568)	4.35 (0.830)	-0.401
Goal setting	4.50 (0.522)	4.36 (0.851)	0.783
Understanding other's	4.33 (0.606)	4.13 (0.878)	1.027
Total	4.37 (0.378)	4.40 (0.750)	-0.194

ceivers of messages. The absence of genuine communication in the school field deteriorates the relationship between teachers and students and causes maladaptive and problematic behaviors of students.

Although it is essential for teachers, who play a leading role in education, to recognize their communication ability, how the communication ability of teachers is perceived by students receiving the education may be more critical in the school field. Therefore, this study intended to investigate the good and bad communication factors of teachers as perceived by students. The highest role performance abilities in recognizing teachers with good communication skills were in the order of articulation ability, listening ability, goal performance ability, fluency ability, vocal ability, language ability, self-presentation ability, non-verbal ability, and understanding of others. This result is different from previous studies targeting speech therapy students in which interpretation ability, non-verbal ability, and message conversion ability were rated highly [15]. It can be seen that the students place more importance on the correct pronunciation of teachers and listening to the opinions of another party.

In the perception of teachers with poor communication skills, the ability to understand others ranked as the lowest item, followed by goal performance ability, role performance ability, listening ability, vocal ability, articulation ability, non-verbal ability, fluency ability, language ability, and self-presentation ability.

For each sub-domain, the factor that indicated the highest recognition of the communication skills of teachers was "I

**Table 6.** Differences in perceptions of teachers with poor communication skills among school levels

Type	Education		t
	Middle M (SD)	High M (SD)	
Articulation	2.32 (1.036)	2.31 (0.989)	0.051
Voice	2.35 (1.119)	2.27 (1.011)	0.306
Fluency	2.47 (1.084)	2.42 (1.067)	0.191
Language	2.46 (1.127)	2.47 (1.147)	-0.068
Nonlanguage	2.21 (1.121)	2.48 (1.081)	-1.016
Interpretation	2.26 (1.163)	2.34 (1.056)	-0.320
Role fulfillment	2.22 (1.248)	2.28 (1.038)	-0.189
Self presentation	2.41 (1.163)	2.64 (1.036)	-0.884
Goal setting	2.31 (1.151)	2.17 (0.932)	0.550
Understanding other's	2.05 (1.000)	2.05 (0.886)	0.015
Total	2.26 (0.998)	2.36 (0.946)	-0.321

communicate smoothly with any student," which is question 3 of role performance, followed by "I listen carefully to understand what the student is saying," "I answer questions clearly," and "I convey information clearly and naturally."

For each sub-area, the factor that showed the least recognition of the communication skills of teachers was question 3 of understanding others, covering "Ask the students how they felt about what the teacher said," followed by "Express the students' feelings with words or gestures" and "Speak with a clear and natural accent." Items related to general communication skills were included in the items that the students did not think were good in the perception of communication of teachers.

In the ranking of the importance of the element of the communication ability of teachers by middle and high school students, it was found that listening ability, language ability, fluency ability, and articulation ability had the most influence. There is a need for professional and intensive education or a support program that can satisfy the needs of teachers for these communication elements. In addition, when we looked at the differences in perceptions of teachers with good and poor communication skills between school levels, there was no difference between both good and bad perceptions. It is believed that there is no need to make a difference between programs aimed at teachers who teach middle and high school students.

The purpose of this study, which targeted middle and high school students, was to examine the perception of each item on the multidimensional communication ability profile of

teachers with good communication skills and teachers with poor communication skills. The results of this study are meaningful in that they provide information for improving the communication ability of teachers from the viewpoint of students and provide implications for the improvement of communication ability. In addition, the study can be the basis for creating a school site where student-centered communication takes place and where the perception of students is considered.

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