

English Language Constructs Preceding Communication Effectiveness

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Abstract - *Educational managers transport information, thoughts and attitudes through a system of verbal and nonverbal language. What differs across diverse personalities is the level of communication effectiveness which ascertains the success in the flow of messages not only at the organizational level but also in the classroom where learning takes place. This study, which aimed to disclose correlations between language constructs and communication effectiveness, puts the light to the randomly selected educational management students of a state university in Cagayan Valley. Using a language test and a questionnaire, it was revealed that the level of language proficiency of the respondents as to correct usage, presentation and writing is very satisfactory, and as to subject-verb agreement, vocabulary, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and action research, satisfactory; while their level of communication effectiveness along using non-verbal language, transmitting messages and receiving messages is high. At 0.05 level analysis, significant correlations exist between communication effectiveness (along using nonverbal language and receiving messages) and language proficiency along reading. These findings provided insights in enhancing communication in classroom management, organizational management as well as in communication management instruction..*

Keywords – *communication effectiveness, educational management, English language constructs*

INTRODUCTION

Facility of the English language provides enormous opportunities for the educational leaders and followers. It makes them opportune in various aspects of life as in education, employment, promotions and in carrying out tasks in a chosen profession. Language skills open a broader horizon to the learners especially in this age of borderless communication.

In the light of educational management along communication, personal and professional experiences are requisites to effectively putting into proper perspective each of the elements of an organization. Some of these factors include effective leadership skills, social skills, educational qualifications, attitude toward work and preferences among others. To draw one factor from this cluster, communication effectiveness takes a great deal in enhancing management skills of educational leaders. Collaborating through use of language to meet deliverables of a leader is essential to being able to download messages from his desk to the various departments or sectors of the organization.

Communication effectiveness according to Chambers [1] extends the concept of communication

to require that transmitted content is received and understood by someone in the way it was intended. This communication involves verbal, nonverbal, and paraverbal components. To point out the importance of communication effectiveness to educational managers, Adams [2] averred that there is a close relationship between communication skills and personal, professional and intellectual growth.

One of the methods through which communication effectiveness could be honed is the leveling up of language proficiency into a considerable extent that an educational leader may efficiently deliver information, standpoints and even attitudes to the whole organization. Examples of language constructs that could be put into scrutiny are correct usage, subject-verb agreement, vocabulary, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, presentation, writing and action research among others. Others may include speaking, spelling, linguistic and sociolinguistic competence, illocutionary skills, language learning strategies and discursal competence. All of which partly make up the constellation of constructs that characterize English language proficiency.

Motivated to improve educational management skills among graduate students especially through the use of effective communication, the researcher hence embarked into the study to unveil language factors characterizing communicative prowess of the prospective educational leaders and develop their attitude of longing to learn how to communicate effectively by mastery of the various language skills. This hence will enable them become more efficient teachers and managers in their respective workplaces to surface not only in the local but also in the global management community.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims in general at ascertaining if proficiency in selected language constructs correlates significantly with communication effectiveness in the case of Master of Arts in Education (MAED) students of Nueva Vizcaya State University (NVSU)-Bambang campus, Philippines

Specifically, it sought to unveil the level of language proficiency of MAED students of NVSU-Bambang campus along correct usage, subject-verb agreement, vocabulary, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, presentation, writing and action research; the level of the respondents' communication effectiveness along using nonverbal language, transmitting messages and receiving messages; and the relationship of the language constructs with communication effectiveness of the respondents along using nonverbal language, transmitting messages and receiving messages.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed the descriptive research design to aptly characterize the language proficiency of the respondents along correct usage, subject-verb agreement, vocabulary, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, presentation, writing and action research, as well as their communication effectiveness along using nonverbal language, transmitting messages and receiving messages. The correlational approach was used to divulge extent and significance of relationship between the dependent and independent variables of the study.

The study which was conducted at the graduate school of NVSU-Bambang under the College of Teacher Education, first semester of SY 2015-2016, involved 41 randomly selected respondents representing 53.25% of the enrolled MAED students of the said academic unit. Of the 77 enrollees under

the graduate program, 41 respondents were identified using a fish bowl sampling technique. The said number satisfies the provisions of the central limit theorem that 30 respondents could suffice a correlational study.

Data were gathered from the respondents through a language proficiency test with parts categorized as correct usage, subject-verb agreement, vocabulary, reading comprehension, listening comprehension and writing. The test which was expert validated was subject to analysis of internal validity under the Classical Test Theory using the Kuder-Richardson Formula 20, or K-R20 [3].

A non-test instrument was used to gauge the respondents' skills in presentation and action research. The respondents were asked to present their action research outputs and were evaluated by research professors in the graduate school.

The following scales/ranges were used to interpret the data:

Table A. Correct usage, subject-verb agreement and reading

Score	Qualitative Description
7.75-10.00	Very Satisfactory (VS)
5.50-7.74	Satisfactory (S)
3.25-5.49	Poor (P)
1.00-3.24	Very Poor (VP)
Vocabulary	
Score	Qualitative Description
11.50-15.00	Very Satisfactory (VS)
8.00-11.49	Satisfactory (S)
4.50-7.99	Poor (P)
1.00-4.49	Very Poor (VP)
Listening, writing and presentation	
Score	Qualitative Description
37.75-50.00	Very Satisfactory (VS)
25.50-37.74	Satisfactory (S)
13.25-25.49	Poor (P)
1.00-13.24	Very Poor (VP)
Action research	
Rating	Qualitative Description
1.195-1.000	Outstanding (O)
1.380-1.196	Very satisfactory (VS)
1.565-1.381	Satisfactory (S)
1.750-1.566	Good (G)
Communication effectiveness	
Weighted mean	Qualitative Description
4.20-5.00	Very High (VH)
3.40-4.19	High (H)
2.60-3.39	Average (A)
1.80-2.59	Low (L)
1.00-1.79	Very Low (VL)

Statistical tools used to unveil answers to the research questions were means, percentages and correlational procedures using 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After careful handling of the data collected pertinent to the preceding research problems, the following results were derived.

The level of language proficiency of the respondents as to correct usage, subject-verb agreement, vocabulary, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, presentation, writing and action research, is disclosed in tables 1-8.

Table 1 Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of their Language Proficiency along Correct Usage

Score	f	%	Qualitative Description
7.75-10.00	32	78.05	VS
5.50-7.74	6	14.63	S
3.25-5.49	3	7.32	P
Total	41	100.00	
Mean	8.22		VS

The mean of 8.22/10 was computed to describe the language proficiency of the MAED students along correct usage as presented in table 1. This figure is qualitatively categorized as *very satisfactory* which is attributed to the greatest frequency of scorers between 7.75-10.00 with 32 or 78.05% of the total respondents. It could also be noted that 9 respondents (21.95%) scored either poorly or satisfactorily.

Table 2 Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of their Language Proficiency along Subject-Verb Agreement

Score	f	%	Qualitative Description
7.75-10.00	17	41.46	VS
5.50-7.74	15	36.59	S
3.25-5.49	9	21.95	P
Total	41	100.00	
Mean	7.10		Satisfactory

Subject-verb Agreement. In terms of language proficiency along subject-verb agreement (SVA) as unveiled in table 2, the respondents pegged a mean of 7.10/10 which is qualitatively described as *satisfactory*. Majority or 17 (41.46%) of the respondents though had a very satisfactory score in

the SVA component of the language test. On the other hand, 9 or 21.95% of the test takers registered a poor performance. This proves a better performance in correct usage than SVA skills among respondents as presented in the previous table.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of their Language Proficiency along Vocabulary

Score	f	%	Qualitative Description
11.50-15.00	10	24.39	VS
8.00-11.49	19	46.34	S
4.50-7.99	10	24.39	P
1.00-4.49	2	4.88	VP
Total	41	100.00	
Mean	9.07		S

The vocabulary test could be considered one of the toughest parts of the test as the respondents incurred a mean of 9.07/15 as shown in table 3, qualitatively described as *satisfactory*. Majority or 19 of them, obtained scores between 8.00-11.49 taking 46.34% of the total respondents. Conversely, 12 or 29.27% of them registered poor or very poor proficiency in vocabulary having scored between 1.00 and 7.99.

Vocabulary expansion can be one of the most challenging things for teachers to do well [4]. In learning English as a foreign language, vocabulary plays a significant role. It is one of the most important elements that link the four macroskills: reading, and writing, speaking and listening all together. To make a good communication, one should acquire an adequate number of words and know how to use them accurately. Knowing language helps to communicate effectively in reading and writing.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of their Language Proficiency along Reading

Score	f	%	Qualitative Description
7.75-10.00	24	58.54	VS
5.50-7.74	9	21.95	S
3.25-5.49	5	12.20	P
1.00-3.24	3	7.31	VP
Total	41	100.00	
Mean	7.44		S

Disclosing the results of the language proficiency test along reading as seen in table 4, most of the

respondents or 24 of them (58.54%) garnered scores between 7.75-10.00. Notable however in the findings that 8 or 19.51% of the respondents performed poorly or very poorly in reading; while 9 or 21.95% of the test takers scored between 5.50-7.74 or qualitatively categorized as satisfactory. Observing the overall mean, the respondents posted an average score of 7.44 for reading, qualitatively described as *satisfactory*.

Galang [5] asserted that reading is another big challenge for communicators in English. Vocabulary building through reading has traditionally been a boring task. It is hard to get motivated to drag out a weighty dictionary every time one comes across an unfamiliar word when one is reading.

Further, Galang recognizes the importance of knowledge of word meanings and the ability to access that knowledge efficiently as important factors in reading and listening comprehension which competencies can improve communication skills.

Table 5. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of their Language Proficiency along Listening

Score	f	%	Qualitative Description
37.75-50.00	20	48.78	VS
25.50-37.74	20	48.78	S
13.25-25.49	1	2.44	P
Total	41	100.00	
Mean	36.95		S

Chambers [1] expressed that good listening is essential to effective communication. Listening is a combination of hearing what another person says and psychological involvement with the person who is talking. Investigating the listening skills of the respondents as displayed in table 5, the respondents attained the mean score of 36.95/50 qualitatively described as *satisfactory*. Twenty respondents or 48.78% of them obtained scores within the range of 37.75-50.00 which is qualitatively described as very satisfactory. Another 20 respondents (48.78%) got scores within 25.50-37.74 or satisfactory. Only one respondent or 2.44 percent performed poorly in the listening component of the test, having a score within 13.25-25.49 or poor.

The finding that respondents performed equally satisfactorily in the areas of vocabulary, reading and listening runs parallel with the assertion of Hutchinson and Waters [6] that knowledge of word meaning and the ability to access that knowledge efficiently are

recognized as important factors in reading and listening comprehension, especially as learners progress to middle school and beyond.

Table 6. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of their Language Proficiency along Presentation

Score	f	%	Qualitative Description
37.75-50.00	22	53.66	VS
25.50-37.74	19	46.34	S
Total	41	100.00	
Mean	40.12		VS

One of the strengths of the respondents along language proficiency is their presentation skills which basically require public speaking activities to succeed in conveying information to a group of audience. In this domain, the respondents pegged a mean of 40.12/50 which is qualitatively categorized as *very satisfactory* as displayed in table 6. Most or 22 of them (53.66%) scored between 37.75-50.00, very satisfactory; while the remaining 19 other respondents or 46.34% obtained scores between 25.50-37.74 qualitatively described as satisfactory. The very satisfactory presentation skills of the respondents could be attributed to the ample time given them to prepare their topics for their delivery respective oral presentation.

Presentation skill among the MAED student respondents is overwhelmingly observed as unveiled in this study. Communication effectiveness along this domain hence is expected to be high thus ensuing communication success. This competency is one in a set of complete functional and behavioral qualities that, when fully realized, can help lead to professional success [7].

Writing. The writing proficiency of the respondents is captured through the mean of 41.39/50 qualitatively characterized as *very satisfactory* as shown in table 7. Most of the respondents (35 or 85.37%) obtained scores between 37.75 and 50.00 which cohort is qualitatively described as very satisfactory. Six (6) or 14.63% of the samples were registered under 25.50-37.74 or satisfactory.

Writing is uniquely challenging for it requires the mastery and concurrent use of a complex array of language skills - from vocabulary and spelling to the ability to organize and convey ideas [8]. In this study, remarkable skills in the vocabulary of the respondents could be attributed to their very satisfactory skills in writing.

According to Myles [8] writing is considered a complex process. It allows writers to explore thoughts and ideas and make them visible and complete. It encourages thinking and learning for it motivates communication and make thoughts available for reflection. When thought is written down, ideas can be examined, reconsidered, added to rearrange and change.

Table 7. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of their Language Proficiency along Writing

Score	F	%	Qualitative Description
37.75-50.00	35	85.37	VS
25.50-37.74	6	14.63	S
Total	41	100.00	
Mean	41.39		VS

Action Research. Writing action research is an essential skill that an educational leader needs to nurture for sound decision and policy making. In this light, the respondents garnered a mean rating of 1.40 or *satisfactory* as unveiled in table 8. This finding is accounted on the most number respondents who garnered a mean rating of 2.565-1.381 taking 18 respondents or 43.90%; 11 or 26.83% of them had ratings between 1.195-1.000 or outstanding; 3 or 7.32% had rating between 1.380-1.196 or very satisfactory; and 9 or 21.95% obtained ratings between 1.750-1.566 or good.

Table 8. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of their Language Proficiency along Action Research

Rating	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Qualitative Description
1.195-1.000	11	26.83	O
1.380-1.196	3	7.32	VS
1.565-1.381	18	43.90	S
1.750-1.566	9	21.95	G
Total	41	100.00	
Mean	1.40		S

Note: Respondents were rated using 1.00 as the highest and 2.00 as lowest

The proficiency of the respondents in action research gives them the mechanism to face educational management issues. Barsaga [9] asserted that applied on the school level action research investigates human actions which are experienced by teachers, supervisors or administrators as

unacceptable, in some respects problematic or susceptible to change, and requiring practical response. As such its results are only valid for a particular case and are not meant to apply to any situation.

Table 9. Level of the Respondents' Communication Effectiveness

Variable	Mean	Qualitative Description
Using non-verbal clues	3.92	High
Transmitting message	4.08	High
Receiving the message	4.15	High
Overall Mean	4.05	High

The communication effectiveness of the MAED students was investigated along three areas, namely using non-verbal language, transmitting messages and receiving messages using the Likert Scale (1-5). Means as displayed in table 9 were used to represent descriptions of the respondents along the domains under investigation.

The respondents along this area display high communication effectiveness with an overall mean of 3.92 which is attributed to activities they perform when they communicate specifically observing their use of non-verbal clues like gestures, intonation, emotions and other paraverbal factors.

Among those which showed high evaluation are watching people's facial expressions and hand movements very carefully (4.37 or always); adjusting communication style if they feel that they are losing the person's attention (4.32, always); and quickly noticing changes in one's tone or pitch (4.27, always).

Conversely, least among indicators of using non-verbal clues are being good at "reading" other people (3.29, often); picking up on and understanding non-verbal clues and signals (3.61, often); and being good at sensing a negative atmosphere when walking into a room (3.68, often).

With these marks to represent respondents' communication effectiveness along using nonverbal clues, this area is rated least among the three aspects of communication effectiveness but with same qualitative category as the two other areas. In this domain, the ideas one wants to convey through artificial language are symbolized or represented, not by words, but by bodily movements, paralanguage (e.g. pitch, voice and actions), space, time, physical appearance and object language.

Using nonverbal clues to communicate effectively increases potentials of desirable relations in this case within an organization. Segal [10] claimed that good

communication is the foundation of any successful relationship, be it personal or professional. He further said that it is important to recognize, though, that it is nonverbal communication - facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, posture, and tone of voice - that speak the loudest. The ability to understand and use nonverbal communication, or body language, is a powerful tool that can help one connect with others, express what he really means and build better relationships.

The respondents have high communication effectiveness in terms of transmitting messages with an overall mean of 4.08. This could be accounted on experiences they go through when they communicate with others specifically in communicating feelings as well as ideas and facts (4.37, always); finding that they can lift team spirit and morale through effective communication (4.32, always); and changing and varying their communication style according to situations (4.28, always).

On the other hand, least rated indicators are being able to get complicated ideas across clearly (3.66, often); avoiding using jargon, "gobbledegook," and inappropriate language (3.88, often); and using multiple channels to get messages across to people (3.95, often). The weakness of the respondents could be extracted through such indicators that they find it challenging to pick technical terms which could best bring their thoughts out and the channel through which they could course these thoughts. This finding is supported by the assertion of Kannan[11] that learners of second language find difficulty in expanding their English lexicon because of less engagement in application-oriented experiences in the school.

This finding suggests that respondents do not only essentially convey written information or facts but also their feelings and attitudes which take a great part in empathizing with other members of their organization in a manner that they are able to appropriately address the diverse needs of their educational stakeholders.

In addition to the exposition of Grinberg [12] that communication can be defined as a process through which a person, a group or an organization (sender) transmits a kind of information (message) to another person, group or organization (recipient), thoughts, ideas, feelings or attitudes are likewise being communicated.

Grinberg [12] further said that communication process starts when one party has an idea which it

wants to transmit to another party, both parties being an individual, a group or a whole organization. The sender's task is to transform that idea into a form which can be transmitted to the recipient who will be able to understand it. This process is called the coding process, and it represents translating an idea into a form, e.g. written or spoken language, which the recipient can recognize.

This area takes the most remarkable mean characterizing the communication effectiveness of the respondents, at 4.15 or very high. Such mean is preceded by experiences which the respondents perform with utmost incidence like looking at people in the eyes and regularly nod in order to demonstrate that they have understood them (4.60, always); focusing attention to the speaker and concentrate on what is being said (4.53, always); and listening enthusiastically and positively (4.50, always).

On the contrary, the indicators which were given least ratings are the respondents' experiences in communicating like making their body language conducive to attentive listening (3.80, often); avoiding trivializing of ideas or views expressed by people they are talking to (3.80); and avoiding interrupting while the other person is speaking (4.00, often).

Receiving messages is basically a visual and auditory process but there's more to listening and reading to effectively grasp meanings in a communicative activity. Listening could be made active so that it becomes useful in counseling, training, and conflict resolution which are all inevitable in an organization. Worthington [13] posited that it requires that the listener must fully concentrate, understand, respond and then remember what is being said. Another listening type is reflective listening where the listener repeats back to the speaker what they have just heard to confirm understanding of both parties.

Table 10. Analysis of correlation between respondents' language proficiency and communication effectiveness

Var	Sta	CU	SVA	Voc	Rea	Lis	Pre	Wri	AR
NVL	R	0.16	0.05	0.23	0.31	0.09	0.03	0.09	0.17
	P	0.32	0.74	0.14	0.04*	0.60	0.87	0.58	0.30
TM	R	0.08	0.17	0.06	0.14	0.15	0.05	0.09	0.17
	P	0.60	0.29	0.71	0.37	0.35	0.73	0.58	0.29
RM	R	0.16	0.11	0.11	0.34	0.18	0.04	0.10	0.03
	P	0.33	0.51	0.47	0.03*	0.47	0.82	0.55	0.84

*Legend: NVL=Nonverbal language; TM= Transmitting message; RM= Receiving message Sta=Statistics; CU=Correct usage; SVA=Subject-verb agreement; Voc=Vocabulary; Rea=Reading; Lis=Listening; Pre=Presentation; Wri=Writing AR=Action research; *Significant at 0.05 level of significance*

To realize the main objective of this study which is to investigate possible relationship between respondents' language proficiency and communication effectiveness along using nonverbal language, transmitting messages and receiving messages, correlational procedures were carried out using Pearson r and corresponding probability values along the 0.05 level of significance as revealed in Table 10.

Statistical processes to unveil correlations between language proficiency (along correct usage, subject-verb agreement, vocabulary, comprehension, listening comprehension, presentation, writing and action research) and communication effectiveness (along using nonverbal language, transmitting messages and receiving messages), yielded p -values which are all greater than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypotheses are accepted correspondingly. This means that there are no significant correlations between communication effectiveness and language proficiency in terms of the foregoing language constructs.

On the other hand, analysis of correlations between communication effectiveness (along using nonverbal language and receiving messages) and language proficiency along reading yielded correlation coefficients of 0.31 ($p=0.04$) and 0.34 ($p=0.03$) respectively. Hence, the null hypotheses along these areas are not accepted correspondingly. This implies that there are significant correlations between communication effectiveness (along using nonverbal language and receiving messages) and language proficiency along reading.

Reading relatively determines the respondents' level of effectiveness in using nonverbal language and receiving messages as forms of communication indispensable in daily living and in work. Hoss[14] expressed the importance of reading by saying that whether one is engaged in a novel, pouring over a newspaper or a just looking at a sign, reading skills allow him to interpret and become engaged in the world around him.

Reading helps develop empathy. Charles W. Elio once said that books are the quietest and most constant of friends; they are the most accessible and wisest of counselors and the most patient of teachers

Wong [15], who divulged that communication is the most important tool which can be transmitted through reading, supports the findings of this study. As one communicates through reading, he understands more, and thus he can communicate better with

people. Through reading, one builds a more solid foundation for communication. It is one of the most important tools used every day to connect with others.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The level of language proficiency of the MAED students of the graduate school of the College of Teacher education, NVSU-Bambang campus, as to correct usage, presentation and writing is *very satisfactory*, while as to subject-verb agreement, vocabulary, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and action research, *satisfactory*.

The level of communication effectiveness of the respondents along using non-verbal language, transmitting messages and receiving messages is *high*.

There are *no significant correlations* between language proficiency (along correct usage, subject-verb agreement, vocabulary, comprehension, listening comprehension, presentation, writing and action research) and communication effectiveness (along using nonverbal language, transmitting messages and receiving messages); while *significant correlations* exist between communication effectiveness (along using nonverbal language and receiving messages) and language proficiency along reading.

It is recommended that the competencies develop among graduate school students will eventually cascade in their classrooms. At the teacher's level, communication management is important since transfer of knowledge, ideas, thoughts, information as well as emotions and behaviors is a common educational activity. It is the duty of the classroom teacher to effectively communicate her lesson not only in a manner that she can educate the learners at cognitive level but at other levels like affective and psychomotor that can ensue holistic learning thereby preparing the learners for their role in the real world.

The competencies that the graduate school students develop will likewise be applied in their respective organizations not only as a member but also as future leaders. As such, they are equipped with awareness that language proficiency along constructs with emphasis on reading could precede their communication effectiveness. The results of this study would also proffer the graduate school students a better mechanism to manage quality of communication in their organization by developing desirable skills in language.

Teaching communication among prospective educational managers could be enriched by a revisit of language constructs that would enhance their language

proficiency. To empower them, these themes could be improved by having authentic learning and assessment wherein the graduate students are subject to experiential learning which focuses and uses “glocal” communicative activities that they may first-handedly perform their management skills in a cutting-edge educational setting.

Since this study divulged only reading as language factor relating significantly with communication effectiveness, other researches may be conducted to find out influence or relationship of other language factors on communicative effectiveness such as speaking, spelling, linguistic and sociolinguistic competence, illocutionary skills, language learning strategies and discursual competence. Further studies may be conducted using same variables investigated in this study but considering another set of respondents and another setting.

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