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ABSTRACT

To suggest future research directions in the assessment area, a review was conducted of literature concerning teachers' classroom communication. Focusing first on the large body of research identifying behaviors or skills that lead to perceptions of teaching effectiveness and increased learning, the review then examined a smaller group of studies that describe measurement devices of communication skills of teachers and potential teachers. Results indicated that methods of identifying skills include job analysis, expert consensus, and correlation studies. In addition, the review showed that research examining teachers' daily activities consistently produces lists of behaviors, that the ideal but least practical method of assessment is naturalistic observation over long periods, and that research could address accounting for interpersonal skills and affective style, among other concerns. Assessment instruments identified in the review were self-evaluation forms, written exams in various subject areas, evaluations of teaching performance by students and superiors, and assessment of communication performance by means independent of methods classes or student teaching situations. The findings suggest that assessment instruments are in the developmental stage, and that some of the areas future research could focus on include standardizing assessment criteria of student teachers, the validity of student assessment of teachers, and the availability of valid and reliable performance assessment techniques. (CRH)

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT OF THE COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES OF TEACHERS?

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Hurt, Scott and McCroskey (1978) once suggested that communication was the difference between teaching and knowing. Indeed, a great number of studies have demonstrated the interface between a teacher's communication and successful instruction in the classroom (see, for instance, Daly & Korinek, 1980). Recent societal concerns about improving instruction have revived the interest of school districts and state agencies in assessing the skills of teachers. However, it has not always been clear which communication skills are important for successful instruction. This essay will not attempt to review all the literature on classroom communication, but will focus on those qualities of teachers' communication which have been previously assessed and will suggest future research directions in the assessment area.

A comprehensive review of the literature examining skills necessary in classroom settings and methods of observing and evaluating these skills reveals two major research foci. First, a large body of research has identified those behaviors or skills that lead to perceptions of teaching effectiveness and increased learning. These studies include an implicit assumption that these particular skills are important in classroom situations and that they provide a core for future assessment. Second, a smaller group of studies describe measurement devices for assessing communication skills of teachers and potential teachers. This paper will detail the research in each of these areas.

Effective Communication Skills for Teachers

The research reviewed in this section will focus on methods of assessing and identifying teacher communication skills (that lead to teaching effectiveness and increased student learning) and the elements of teacher communication which need to be assessed. Examination of the research literature has uncovered three major methods of identifying these skills:

Job Analysis

One method of determining what to assess is by job analysis. The specific behaviors or performances that constitute a teacher's communication domain are identified through a complete analysis of the teacher's daily activities. This is often accomplished by asking teachers to keep a diary of their everyday behaviors or by following a teacher throughout the day and recording percentage of time lecturing, asking questions, leading discussion, and so forth.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (as reported by McKenna, 1981) developed one paradigm that attempted to define the performance domain for teachers. What is notable about this paradigm is that, except for subject matter knowledge (for teachers other than speech communication teachers), the skills listed relate to or are components of speaking and listening needed by all teachers. The domain includes the following skills: (1) Subject Matter Knowledge; (2) Cognitive Strategies (classifying, analyzing, and synthesizing); (3) Affective Strategies (interpersonal skills, group process skills, and humaneness); (4) Psychomotor Strategies; and (5) Adjunct Activities (planning, evaluating, and community relations).

Expert Consensus

A second method of determining pedagogical communication skills is through expert consensus. One such group of experts (Moore & Markham, 1983) identified teacher competencies that are thought to produce pupil learning. The evaluation instrument that resulted consisted of 5 main competencies (subject matter competency, methodology and instruction competency, classroom management and control, human relations competency, and professional competency), each rated on perceived degree of competency and amount of emphasis the competency should receive in teacher training programs. Most of the competencies (and the 10 sub-competencies for each) related to communication skills.

Another group of experts (the combined forces of the Speech Communication Association and the American Theatre Association) prepared a set of competency models for elementary and secondary teachers (SCA/ATA Joint Task Force on Teacher Preparation, 1978). The skills that were identified for teachers in all content areas were grouped into six main competency areas: (1) Preparation of messages appropriate to various audiences and purposes; (2) Delivering messages appropriate to various contexts; (3) Selecting and managing communication processes; (4) Demonstrating effective listening skills in a variety of contexts; (5) Demonstrating values which promote communication processes and artistic experiences appropriate to a multi-cultural, democratic society; and (6) Recognizing the role of mass communication in American society. These were further reduced to specific skills and behaviors. For example, under the competency of delivering messages appropriate to various contexts, one of the two skill areas was:

> Demonstrating appropriate use of verbal and non-verbal language by:
>
> (1) delivering messages for a variety of communication purposes and audiences.
>
> (2) demonstrating a sense of drama in story telling or reading aloud.
>
> (3) enhancing listener comprehension and interest through facial and bodily expressions that are congruent with meanings.
>
> (4) demonstrating enthusiasm in relating with others.

Another paradigm (Lynn, 1976, p. 12) concisely grouped communication skills into two categories, message-sending and message-receiving skills. The message-sending skills included:

1. Analyzing students to determine initial guidelines for message construction--most suitable presentation channels, most engaging delivery techniques, etc.;

2. Selecting, organizing, supporting, and clearly expressing ideas in a verbal and nonverbal manner appropriate to the students, e.g., giving directions lecturing, explaining, questioning, stimulating discussion; and

3. Exercising a variety of ways to solicit feedback, express approval or disapproval, or criticize or evaluate student communication.

The basic message-receiving skills for teachers were:

1. Identifying central ideas and supporting arguments;
2. Weighing evidence and logical validity;
3. Listening for different levels of meaning in messages;
4. Listening and responding with empathic sensitivity; and
5. Interpreting nonverbal messages.

Recently, Swinton and Bassett (1981) reported the use of the Delphi Technique with teachers to determine basic competencies necessary in the classroom. The forty specific skills were grouped into eight categories:

Personality Characteristics
Interpersonal Skills and Relationships
Planning Skills
Professional Attitudes and Activities
Educational Background and Training
Teaching Strategies
Evaluation Abilities
Management Skills

The authors suggested that these be used in the screening phase where teacher applicants would be interviewed about these competencies.

Correlation Studies

The third method of determining the criteria for evaluation and the skills needed by teachers is through correlation studies. Various aspects of communication and teaching style are examined in relation to perceptions of teaching effectiveness or success in the classroom. The five main foci of this research are: (1) teacher communicator style; (2) communication apprehension; (3) teacher credibility; (4) effectiveness or success in the classroom; and, a broader category, (5) elements of teacher communication. Most of these studies have evolved as support for the particular research interest of the researcher rather than growing out of the teaching field.

The line of research focused on teacher communicator style has attempted to discover behaviors that correlate with perceptions of effectiveness. Norton (1977) first examined communicator style variables and found five that were useful in predicting teacher "effectiveness" (which, by the way, was not defined for the subjects). These five (attentive, impression leaving, not dominant, precise, and communicator image) helped explain fifty percent of the variance in general perceived teaching effectiveness. Norton concluded: "Teacher effectiveness is shown to be intrinsically related to the way one communicates" (1977, p. 526).

Later investigations have found communicator style to be significantly related to affective and behavioral learning, but not with cognitive learning. Specifically, Nussbaum and Scott (1979) found a significant positive canonical correlation between perceptions of teacher self-disclosure, teacher communica-

tor style and teacher-student solidarity to student learning. The associations were negatively correlated with cognitive learning. Scott and Nussbaum (1981) later found that students' evaluations of the general performance of the instructor were highly related to perceived teacher adeptness at verbal and nonverbal communication along with style and self-disclosure elements. This line of research (Norton & Nussbaum, 1980; Nussbaum, 1982) has also discovered that teachers perceived as more effective were perceived as more entertaining and did more double-takes; competence did not seem to be an issue.

Research has also examined components of nonverbal expressiveness in relation to affective learning. Andersen, Norton and Nussbaum (1981) found that teachers who were perceived as more effective demonstrated more interpersonal solidarity and were perceived as more dramatic, open, relaxed, impression-leaving and friendly; no clear connection to cognitive learning emerged. Andersen and Withrow (1981) also found that nonverbal expressiveness improved ratings of affective learning; the students liked the lecturer more but there were no effects observed for intent to behave differently or in cognitive learning. Because affective learning is seen as so closely related to students' perceptions of teacher effectiveness, a scale to measure affective communication (McLaughlin, Erickson, & Ellison, 1980) was devised which was useful in identifying dysfunctional communication. The fourteen-statement index provides feedback on student perceptions of teacher affect.

Another line of research has examined communicator style in relation to communication apprehension. Kearney and McCroskey (1980) found an interaction between perceptions of teachers (as evidenced in the teacher communication style measure) and state communication apprehension levels. Another study (McCroskey, Andersen, Richmond, & Wheeless, 1981) reported that teachers preferring to teach grades K-4 were higher in communication apprehension than those who preferred higher grades. However, Staton-Spicer (1983) found that teacher communication concern (comprised of self, task and impact dimensions) was not correlated with anxiety but with attitudes towards teaching. This research points to future needs of assessing both communication concern and apprehension (state and trait) to help teachers understand potential classroom apprehensions they might have. Teacher anxiety, as opposed to communication apprehension in teaching situations, has also received a good deal of attention in the past (Coates & Thoresen, 1976; Keavney & Sinclair, 1978; Parsons, 1973).

A third line of research has focused on perceptions of credibility of teachers. McCroskey, Holdridge and Toomb (1974) found five dimensions of source credibility for teachers: Character, Sociability, Composure, Extroversion, Competence. From these dimensions, a teacher credibility measure was devised. Credibility has received recent attention by Beatty and Behnke (1980) who examined the interaction of vocal and verbal messages as they relate to teacher credibility. They found two general credibility factors, sociability and competence. Sociability depended on consistency between vocal and verbal messages, although competence was related only to positive vocal expression. This line of research appears to be moving in the area of skill identification and perceptions of competence.

The fourth line of research focused on teacher success and skills necessary for perceptions of effectiveness. One study (Daly, Spicer, & Bassett, 1979) reported seven aspects of communication competence that were equated

with "teacher success": social communication, skill adaption, clarity, teacher-parent communication, communication with peers, ethnic group communication, and communication with aides. Another study (Powers & Lowry, 1980) attempted to predict teacher success from a measure of technical communication competence that was based on similarity between mental images of initiators and respondents to communication (i.e., accuracy). Recently, Daniel (1983) factor analyzed behaviors that differentiated effective from ineffective graduate teaching assistants; the three factors contributing significantly to student perceptions of teaching effectiveness were organizational stability, instructional adaptability, and interpersonal inflexibility.

Finally, elements of teacher communication summarizes research that attempts to identify major categories of effective communication skills. Communication and education research over the past ten years has identified several clusters of communication variables thought to be important in teacher evaluation.

Interpersonal Relations. This cluster of interpersonal relationship variables includes several studies that have been reviewed in the preceding section. Factors such as teacher warmth, openness, self-disclosure, supportive/defensive climate, empathic listening, and solidarity have been examined in studies cited above, as well as in other research efforts (e.g., Boser & Poppen, 1978; Wasserman, 1982; Rosenfeld, 1983). As noted above, interpersonal relationship factors have been associated more with learner attitudes and motivation or affective learning than with the learning of objective content. Although the importance of this cluster frequently is stressed in student perceptions and underlined by expert consensus, the effect of interpersonal skills upon specific learning objectives remains unclear.

Lectures. A second area of teacher communication which has been researched extensively is that of lecturing. The SCA annotated bibliography by Weaver & Michel (1983) presents a listing of many studies including such variables as mediated lectures, mass lectures, organization, nonverbal code use, and training teaching assistants. This topic area, which is akin to formal public speaking, obviously is central to instructional communication and it has not been neglected. However, factors such as limited attention spans of learners, demands for variety and excitement (to compete with TV's pace or visual appeal), and bad lecturing practices have led to the need for innovative approaches using alternatives to lectures like discussions, games, simulations, small group, independent study and field projects. This trend shifted research emphasis to a broader examination of teacher verbal and nonverbal skills relevant to many types of classroom communication.

Verbal communication. A third general, eclectic research cluster is frequently indexed as "teacher verbal behavior." This label encompasses much research on several variables of verbal communication about all aspects of teacher talk, not simply lecturing. Variables which have been examined include praise, attention, approval, and feedback; however, many of these studies have focused only on elementary learners. A teacher's use of humor is another interesting research line that has received only slight attention; Bryant (1979) identified patterns of humor in college teachers that may have an influence on learning. Teacher clarity has been another major, promising line of research focus over the past five years (see, for instance, Land, 1981). In McCaleb and Moore's (1983) review of teacher clarity, patterns of

explanations, vagueness terms, vocal hesitations, and checking for understanding apparently have potential for positive influence on both student achievement and perceptions, but this research needs to be further refined. Language variables in teacher verbalization have received attention in the areas of ethnicity and sexism but other factors (such as language intensity or probability words) have been largely neglected.

Questioning skills. Another cluster of research, which is closely related to verbalization, is questioning. Although it overlaps the verbal cluster, questioning is treated here as a separate cluster because research focused on this area has been conducted and indexed independently from the above categories. Much research has focused on the questions teachers use. One review of published "teacher talk" research in the last five years revealed over 25 studies covering variables such as types and levels of questions, phrasing, probes, response duration, wait time, and leading discussions (Feezel & Faix, 1983). Still there are unanswered questions about questioning behavior. For example, a major researcher in this area found that only half the responses of high school students were on the same cognitive level as the teacher's question (Dillon, 1982). This finding and the conflicting findings of several studies on the efficacy of higher order questions represent at least two points for further research.

Nonverbal communication. Much research has examined the cluster of nonverbal behaviors exhibited by teachers. Smith (1979) presents an extensive and detailed review of almost 250 articles and books covering environment, proxemics, kinesics, haptics, physical characteristics, paralanguage, and artifacts. From this, Smith concludes that paralanguage is a neglected set of variables in teaching research. Although Stern (1980) discussed the teacher's voice in relation to acting and Anderson and Withrow (1981) studied the effect of nonverbal expressiveness, little paralanguage research has been done since 1979. In should be noted that few workable systems for analyzing nonverbal cues in teaching have been developed and widely used. Only two systems integrate the nonverbal with verbal categories for a more complete communication analysis (see Galloway in Simon and Boyer, 1967, and Cambra's VAN system in Feezel, 1983). Further research could test these systems and work towards a theoretical synthesis of verbal and nonverbal skills in teaching.

It should be noted that a large research area dealing with classroom interaction analysis was omitted from review here to focus on teacher communication skills rather than the broad domain of teacher-learner interaction processes. Much research and development, though uneven in substance and method, has been indexed under class interaction analysis (see Simon & Boyer, 1967, and the Journal of Classroom Interaction).

Conclusions

It appears that the research examining daily activities of teachers consistently produces lists of behaviors, most of which involve communication skills. If all daily activities involve communication, then the most appropriate, but least practical, method of assessing competence is by naturalistic observation over long periods of time. This, unfortunately, is not always possible. Also, it is likely that lists will differ for teachers in different contexts (e.g., a K-4 music teacher and a 10-12 history teacher).

The research based on expert opinion also produces consistently long lists of behaviors and skills. These lists appear to have content validity, but also are impractical if one is concerned with assessment. As detailed below, performance assessment measures are a likely method of evaluating these skills.

Research focused on correlations among variables has been somewhat inadequate in predicting teaching competence. In particular, the research that examines communicator style has potential use in identifying specific behaviors leading to student perceptions of effectiveness. However, it seems that cognitive learning, generally seen as the goal of education, is unrelated or negatively associated with these style dimensions. The affective dimensions are much more related to style components. The study by Roberts and Becker (1978) helped to explain why this is so. Students, in forming their perceptions of effectiveness, are much more concerned with positive affect expressions. Experts (e.g., supervisors) are more interested in actual behaviors that can be quantified. The research on teacher credibility comes to the same conclusion: competence and sociability are separate constructs. More research should focus on the communication behaviors and skills that influence cognitive learning.

From examination of prior research in the broader category of effective teacher communication, the following additional research questions emerge:

1. What are the relationships among the apparently distinct factors of teacher communication concern and both state and trait apprehension? Although research has shown concern and apprehension to be statistically independent, there may be a conceptual association or overlap. Also, state communication apprehension has not been examined in specific teaching situations. Both aspects of this question are being explored in a current study of student teacher communication skills (Rubin & Feezel, 1984).

2. What specific communication skills contribute to cognitive learning and learner behavior change?

3. How can we account for the importance of interpersonal skills and affective style especially in student perceptions of teaching? Can a positive affective style be theoretically integrated with the factors of teaching for cognitive and behavioral learning? Why is non-affective behavior related to cognitive learning? Does this hold for students of different ages? Is sociability more important with younger children, for example?

4. For teacher clarity, is there an optimal level for long-term achievement? High clarity may aid immediate recall but moderate clarity may foster greater student effort for retention and application of the information. Also the role of vagueness terms and probability terms needs to be examined in relation to teacher clarity, credibility and other student perceptions.

5. What are the conditions under which higher order questions effect learning? How do levels of questions relate to the factors of response duration and wait time? What techniques can be used to close the gap between the cognitive level of the teacher's question and that of the students' responses?

6. Do certain factors of paralanguage affect learner achievement or are they only relevant to teacher dynamism or the Dr. Fox effect? How do these interact with verbal communication variables for effective teacher communication?

Assessment Instruments

Pedagogical skills are traditionally assessed in a variety of ways. Self-evaluation methods include self-reports, self-study materials, self-rating forms, observation of colleagues' teaching, and the use of audio or videotape for evaluation and feedback (Carroll, 1981). These self-evaluation methods are often helpful in discovering teaching strengths and weaknesses, but are not frequently used by students until they enroll in teaching methods courses.

McCaleb (1983c) has identified four modes of assessing oral communication of teachers: written examinations, communication performance (non-teaching), simulated teaching performance, and teaching performance. These fall into the category of other-evaluation methods. To simplify analysis of these methods, simulated teaching performance and teaching performance measures are collapsed into one general categories, teaching performance.

Written exams

Written examinations of oral communication are expedient, but not necessarily valid methods of examining skills. Many states require prospective student teachers to show proficiency in speech communication skills (McCaleb, 1983a). All too often this demonstration takes the form of a basic required course or a speech proficiency test comprised of articulation drills (Rubin, Sisco, Moore, & Quianthy, 1983). For instance, students at Hardin-Simmons University have three options for certifying their proficiency in speech communication. They can take the basic course (Interpersonal, Group and Public Communication), the course "Communication for Teachers," or take a speech screening test consisting of a speech/hearing evaluation and a 6-8 minute speech performance. At Northern Kentucky University there are two options: Completion of the Principles of Communication class or the Oral Competency Exam (comprised of a listening test, a 2-3 minute oral presentation and an oral reading).

Students seeking certification at the University of Nebraska have two options; they can take and pass their speech communication fundamentals class or test out of the course through a written examination on speech principles and an oral presentation. At Western Illinois University, all students are required to take the Introduction to Public Speaking course where, from written exams and speeches, instructors judge the student as "Education Approved" or "Education Not Approved." Teachers need a variety of speech communication skills, and written exams are not the most valid method for assessing performance. Most universities having testing requirements have already realized this.

Proficiency exams are also used to assess skills. However, as Pottinger (1979, p. 30) noted, "Proficiency examinations are intended to demonstrate job related abilities rather than academic skills (the latter being assessed by equivalency tests)." These job-related abilities, not assessable when students are not really employed by a school system, are usually assessed with a

teacher certification examination where actual teaching performance is not observed. The National Teacher Examination (Vlaanderen, 1982) is a popular proficiency test that has just added a listening component to traditional areas of reading and writing. Prospective teachers will be asked to process affective and cognitive messages heard on a tape recording. Speaking skills will not be observed directly.

Teaching Performance

Evaluations by Students. Although many research studies have measured teaching effectiveness from the perspective of the student, little data exists on the concurrent validity and reliability of these scales. Student ratings have been positively correlated with achievement (Centra, 1977; Frey, 1976; Marsh, 1977; McKeachie, Lin & Mann, 1971), but it is not possible to identify specific teaching qualities leading to increased achievement. As discussed earlier in this paper, students have evaluated as more effective (affective learning) those teachers who show more interpersonal solidarity and nonverbal expression, and who are more dramatic (Andersen, Norton & Nussbaum, 1981; Andersen & Withrow, 1981; Norton & Nussbaum, 1980; Nussbaum, 1982).

Another student evaluation method from the speech communication field examines communication climate. Rosenfeld (1983) created a questionnaire consisting of 17 supportive and defensive teacher behaviors; liked and disliked classes were distinguished mostly by the differences in teacher supportiveness.

Evaluations by Superiors. Although many articles and books deal with models, theories and forms of teacher evaluation (see, for instance: Levin, 1979; Millman, 1981), they do not focus specifically on communication skills. The most prominent method of skills assessment is the use of a superior (e.g., a supervising teacher) to evaluate classroom behavior on various dimensions. Sometimes students are asked to role-play or simulate teaching in methods courses. However, it is not clear from the literature if role-playing skills correlate highly with teaching skills.

Evaluation of teaching effectiveness by supervising teacher observation is another common method of assessing skills. Usually the rating forms used for such an assessment reflect the characteristics of teaching that are believed to be most effective in motivating learning. For instance, the Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories system has been used in many investigations of teacher-student relationships (see Brophy & Good, 1974, for a comprehensive review of this literature). Methodological problems and contradictory results, however, make the utility of this measure questionable. In addition, Hattie, Olphert and Cole (1982) found two main factors that supervising teachers use when rating student teachers--preparation and presentation. The variables that loaded highly on the preparation factor were: Preparation of lessons, objectives, content, development and class management. These skills are typically taught in content-area methods courses. Presentation variables included: Strategies and aids; voice, speech, language competence; introduction; conclusion; varying the presentation; exposition; using examples; questioning; demonstrating; encouragement of students' questions; discussion; listening encouragement of student activity; and flexibility. These communication skills are not always taught but are often assessed during student teaching.

Some studies have focused on differences of perception in evaluation and have found that the individual evaluating the teacher can make much difference in the evaluation of effectiveness. Roberts and Becker (1978) attempted to predict effectiveness and found differences between supervisor and student ratings. Ratings done by supervisors were more closely related to the teacher's delivery skills and the amount of time the teacher spent in direct contact with the students. Ratings by students were more influenced by how dynamic the teacher was and how much the students liked the teacher.

In addition, not all supervising teachers always use the same criteria. This lack of agreement has led Natriello and Dornbusch (1982, p. 4) to suggest: "Administrators should devise systems for the evaluation of teachers in which the procedures are sufficiently specific to result in general agreement among different evaluations. This may be accomplished by clarifying task allocations and the criteria used for assessing performance." Such a system has been proposed for educational administrators by Valentine (1981) who suggests that communication skills cannot be overlooked.

Several states [in particular Georgia; Florida (1981), and South Carolina] have moved to performance assessment of teachers' communication skills. McCaleb (1983a) provides a succinct overview of the specifics of these programs and concludes that the measurement of the behaviors is imprecise. "The rater is asked to judge the presence/absence of behaviors and processes with minimal consideration for either quantity or quality" (p. 8). Behavioral assessments are also a function of the students behaviors in the situations where the assessment takes place. Therefore, these assessments may be imprecise.

Communication Performance

A more recent trend in assessment is to evaluate prospective teachers' communication skills independently of methods classes or student teaching situations. For instance, West Virginia is searching for an instrument to use during the first two years of college so that communication problems can be detected and remedied before acceptance into the education program (Andrews, 1983). Research at the University of Maryland (McCaleb, 1983b) has examined the Snyder Speech Scale (SSS) (Snyder, 1981) and the Communication Competency Assessment Instrument (Rubin, 1982a, 1982b) in relation to teacher clarity (McCaleb & White, 1980). Both measures were significantly correlated with clarity. As McCaleb concludes:

> The study supported the use of both measures for screening the oral communications of candidates for teacher education programs. The SSS had higher correlations with the performance measures but this was interpreted cautiously because the component measures of performance emphasized a particular dimension of communication, clarity of explanations. Other measures of performance might relate higher to the CCAI. Although further analyses were recommended, these findings of the predictive validity of the CCAI and the SSS supported their use in assessing the oral communications of prospective teachers. (1983b, p. 2)

The SSS is a 100-point scale containing six categories (organization and development, adaptation to audience, language use, ability to motivate audience, delivery, and overall impression) used to evaluate a five-minute speech

given to a small group of peers (presumably in a methods course). Each category is weighted in relative importance (inferred from the literature). Specific behaviors are identified for each category and the number (no judgment of quality) of indicators observed are summed and weighted.

The CCAI is an assessment instrument that addresses a variety of college-level communication skills. This instrument, designed to tap the skill levels of college students in the areas of speaking, listening, and human relations, was based on an expert-derived list of competencies that all students should possess to interact with professors and peers and in classroom settings in college (Rubin, 1982a). The list of competencies assessed by the CCAI closely resembles the lists generated for teachers. In effect, the competencies are those necessary in an educational context. Research examining the predictive validity of the CCAI in student teaching contexts is currently underway (Feezel & Rubin, 1983; Rubin & Feezel, 1984).

Of course, a variety of other methods of assessing speaking and listening skills is available for use in college classrooms (Backlund, 1983). However, research is needed on the ability of all these measures to predict successful communication in the classroom.

Conclusions

Assessment instruments to tap the communication skills of teachers or prospective teachers are in the developmental stage. Teachers have rebelled against performance assessment in the past, and probably with good reason. The observations made by others often follow no consistent pattern and may be invalid. Newer instruments are more concerned with detecting skill deficiencies early in students' college careers so that remediation may take place before the student teaching experience. This line of research is constructive; aid in skill development is available on most college campuses.

Assessment just before student teaching or at graduation (to be eligible to be certified) is not as constructive. Institutions and states that now assess prospective teachers are using instruments as screening devices with little hope for student improvement prior to graduation. Often states that mandate this form of assessment (e.g., Florida) seek written examinations. They are much easier to administer to large groups of people, yet they are not valid when the goal of assessment is the evaluation of communication behavior.

Therefore, research into assessment instruments for teacher communication is needed to address the following questions:

1. How may the criteria for assessment by supervising teachers be standardized to produce reliable evaluations of student teacher communication?

2. To what extent and on what factors are student assessments of teacher communication valid?

3. What assessment instruments best predict effective communication by teachers? What communication factors predict successful teaching at various grade levels?

4. What performance assessment techniques are valid and reliable, yet are efficient?

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