

The Degree of Practicing Effective Communication Skills among Teachers of Learning Disabilities in English Language from their Point of View

Mohamad Ahmad Saleem Khasawneh¹ 

¹Assistant Professor, Special Education Department, King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia

**Corresponding Author: Mohamad Ahmad Saleem Khasawneh*

Received: July 12, 2021

Revised: August 5, 2021

Accepted: August 19, 2021

Abstract

The study aimed at identifying the degree of practicing effective communication skills among teachers of learning disabilities in English language from their point of view. The study used the descriptive approach and designed a questionnaire to collect data. The study population consisted of all (60) teachers of LDs in English language in public schools in Irbid Governorate. The sample of the study was (20) teachers, who were chosen by the random method. The results of the study showed that the degree of practicing effective communication skills by teachers of LDs in English language was high from their point of view. In light of the results, the researcher recommended increasing the activation of the use of effective communication skills for teachers and school administrators.

Keywords: Effective Communication, Learning Disabilities in English Language, Teachers

Introduction

The communication process is one of the most important functions that employees and managers perform in any organization. In the educational system, the teacher is the element of communication and the main pillar upon which the effectiveness of communication is based. In the process of communication, there is transferring of information, data, ideas, instructions, and suggestions from one person to another or a group of persons, informing and exchanging among them by one or more possible means (Abdeen, 2001).

The importance of communication in the educational field is due to the inability to perform any effort, activity, or any aspect of educational or administrative matters in the school without making contact and communicate. Teaching in its essence depends on communication, and administration also needs communication. Therefore, without a communication system, there can be no administrative or educational process within the school (Al-Ajmi, 2000). Communication is an important element of the success of the educational process, and an efficient teacher must take into account the use of his communication skills in dealing with the administration and students (Loy, 2006).

Communication is an essential and vital process and an important requirement for the administration to succeed in exercising its other functions. Planning, organizing, supervising, following up, controlling, evaluating, and other functions in the administrative process do not take place without effective communication. (Sagheer, 2003). The manager, with his personality and ability to communicate, can face problems and develop appropriate solutions.

He will not be able to achieve success and effectiveness in his leadership unless he has competencies in effective communication skills (Wood, 2015).

Effective communication and its skills in improving the progress of the educational process within schools are very clear. It is also important in strengthening the forces of communication between departments and their workers within the administrative organization and the resulting positive climate and working to increase productivity.

The communication process plays an effective role in the educational process, and it has become indispensable in any company, institution, organization or school, because of the time and effort it saves. It has received great attention because it is one of the main components of educational and administrative processes (Al-Anati, 2003).

The main role that the teacher plays in the educational process prompts researchers to study the factors that affect the teacher's job satisfaction and thus affect his motivation. The emergence of signs of dissatisfaction among teachers indicates that they have unsatisfied needs. Therefore, investigating the situation is of great benefit. The sound administration is the one that tries to discover the needs of the teacher and seeks as much as possible to satisfy them. Bastrick (2002) recommended searching for the components and elements of teachers' motivation, to ensure the availability of qualified teachers and not to drop out of the profession. This is done through the multiple aspects of motivation at the beginning, from the material and social motive to the moral motive. Because of the importance of communication skills, the researcher found that these skills were not examined by teachers of LDs in English language, and thus came the idea of this research.

This study aimed at identifying the degree of practicing effective communication skills by teachers of LDs in English language from their point of view by answering the following question; (1) What is the degree of practicing effective communication skills by teachers of LDs in English language from their point of view?

The subject of effective communication in educational organizations is of great importance because it is the means through which communication takes place between the organization and its employees. Communication skills are the important element in the communication process that school teachers must possess in their dealings with students. The researcher hopes that the results of this study will benefit the Ministry of Education to identify the extent to which teachers of LDs in English language need effective communication skills and to provide them with training and educational courses.

However, the study was limited to the teachers of LDs in English language in public primary schools in Irbid Governorate for the first semester of the academic year (2019-2020). The generalization of the results of this study depends on the validity of the responses of the sample of the study.

Literature Review

Communication plays an important role in our daily life. Through communication, we understand what others around us say of information, and we also express to others what we want to convey to them of information or needs as well. Elements of the success of any organization, and in the educational organization, communication represents the backbone of educational work in the educational administration. Through communication, information, proposals, and educational plans are transferred from higher administrations to school administrations for implementation. Inside schools, the role of communication appears in the

way principals deal with teachers in directions, plans, and educational goals on the ground. The successful and effective school principal is the one who constantly tries to be aware of his level of adequacy and effectiveness in performing the communication process in the organization, as well as his full conviction of the importance of the effective communication process in achieving the goals of the organization.

The concept of communication has been used in many fields and at different levels. It denotes speech or listening. It also has general connotations and academic and cultural connotations. This has enriched the field of communication on the one hand and the diversity of meanings associated with the word communication on the other hand. Communication overlaps with all fields of knowledge and human activities, which has led to multiple definitions of the term communication (Makki and Muhammad, 2018). Communication has been defined as "the transmission and transformation of information between two or more people" (Al-Arfi and Mahdy, 2011). Al-Taweel (2001) also defined it as "the dynamic process that affects a person's perceptions, whether intentionally or unintentionally, through resources or media used in various forms and symbolic ways." Communication is also defined as "a continuous process that involves one party converting certain ideas and information into an oral or written message transmitted through a medium to the other party (Nashwan and Nashwan, 2004).

The communication process includes several basic components that exist in any position for communication. Nasr (2001) argued that these components are first, the sender, which is the individual/group who has what he wants to convey to one or more people. Second, the message, which is the idea/information that the sender prepares and puts in symbols that are understandable to the target person or people. Third, the receiver, who is the individual/group who receives the message, deciphers it and understands it. Fourth, the medium through which the message is transmitted from the sender to the receiver. This medium may be the language of face-to-face communication, and it may be the newspaper, magazine, radio, or television set, as in mass communication. Fifth, the feedback, which is the message in the opposite direction of the communication by which the receiver responds to the sender's message, and it is in itself a new message. Finally, the noise, which is an expression intended to describe the obstacles to communication and the factors that prevent the message from being sent by the sender to the receiver, and thus leads to the failure to complete the communication process or distort the meaning intended by the sender.

Communication has many functions, which differ according to the nature of the communication situation. Abu Arqoub (2007) identified some of these functions as the following. first, the information function provides people with information useful to them in all aspects of their different lives, including health, social and political. Second, educational Function. Communication represents a social interaction process between the teacher and the student in which taking, giving, doing, reacting, teaching, and learning aim to change behavior. Communication is concerned with transferring knowledge, information, and heritage from one generation to the next, which helps to communicate experiences in the community. Third, ideological Function. Communication has an effective and significant role in spreading ideas, values, and intellectual calls in various fields. It has contributed to building civilizations and cultures and passing them on from generation to generation until the present. Fourth, the political Function. Communication contributes to political education as it contributes to shaping public opinion in understanding and peace through conscious and intelligent diplomacy (Makki & Muhammad, 2003).

The main goal of communication is to convey the meaning. People are busy throughout their lives trying to understand others and to allow them to understand it. During the communication process, it not only leads to a failure to establish an appropriate type of social adjustment but may be accompanied by a disintegration of personality (Al-Anati, 2003).

Previous Studies

Filiz (2020) examined the relationship between effective communication skills and verbal intelligence levels of Faculty of Sports Sciences students according to variables of gender, department, age, and (GPA). The study used the correlational survey method. The sample included 230 university students, who were selected using the simple random sampling method. The findings showed a clear difference in favor of female students in terms of effective listening by gender. The students aged 21-23 had better knowledge in self-recognition/self-disclosure. The results also showed a positive and significant relationship between students' effective communication skills and verbal intelligence levels.

Al-Sharif (2019) explored the degree of using effective communication skills in teaching the developed English language Textbooks in the Intermediate stage. The study used the descriptive method and applied it to 30 English language teachers. The results revealed the degree of using verbal communication skills by the sample was medium in the skill of speaking. The listening, reading, and writing skills were weaker. The degree of using nonverbal communication skills by the sample was medium. The degree of use was weak for the skills in general, and there were no statistically significant differences in the degree of using the sample of the verbal and nonverbal communication skills due to the variables of years of experience and educational level.

Al-Juman (2019) investigated the level of practicing effective communication skills by Social Studies teachers in Mafraq perform from their point of view. The researcher has used the descriptive method and applied the study to a sample of (56) female teachers and (71) male teachers. The findings revealed that the degree of effective communication skills practice by Social Studies teachers at the Directorate of Mafraq perform from their point of view is medium. It also shows that there are no statistically significant differences related to gender, qualification, or years of experience.

Al-Ryallat (2018) explored effective communication and its positive impact on the educational process. The study dealt with language and idiomatic communication, and the elements of effective communication, including the sender, the receiver, the message, feedback, persuasion, and understanding, as well as the importance of effective communication, and effective communication methods. Then the paper touched on the obstacles to successful communication, including the lack of acceptance of the idea of communication between the parties to the communication or their unwillingness in the way presented to them. The paper concluded that there must be a cure for these obstacles that hinder successful communication and reflect their negative effects inside and outside work and on human relations in general.

Ahmed (2016) evaluated the Effective Communication Skills coursebook as a pilot project implemented in 2011 by the Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia. The study developed a questionnaire to collect data. The sample of the study included 214 students and 3 instructors. The results show that despite some shortcomings, there is a general satisfaction about this textbook as it is exclusively produced by the local experts for the tertiary level. The study concludes with suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of Effective Communication Skills

Methods

This study used the correlational survey method. The population of the current study consisted of all (60) male and female teachers of LDs in English language. The study sample consisted of (20) male and female teachers from Irbid governorate, Jordan.

Instrument of the Study

The instrument of the study was the Effective Communication Skills Questionnaire. The researcher prepared this questionnaire by referring to the theoretical literature and previous studies related to the subject of the study, such as Al-Asmar (2000), Al-Sagheer (2003), and Al-Anati (2003).

To ensure the validity of the Effective Communication Skills Questionnaire, it was presented to judges with experience and competence to judge the degree of appropriateness of the paragraphs under each of the fields prepared in the questionnaire and the accuracy of the wording, integrity of language, and clarity of meaning. The judges add what they deem appropriate of paragraphs in any field of the questionnaire. After reviewing the opinions of the judges and their observations, the amendments they referred to were made. Thus, the number of paragraphs of the questionnaire in its final form reached (30) paragraphs.

To verify the reliability of the study instrument, the test-re-test method was used by applying it to a sample of (15) teachers from outside the study sample, and two weeks after the first application, it was re-applied again on the same sample. The value of the Pearson correlation coefficient between the two applications was calculated, which was (0.86), and this value is considered acceptable for this study.

Results and Discussion

Results related to the study question, "What is the degree of practicing effective communication skills by teachers of LDs in English language from their point of view?"

To answer this question, the mean scores and standard deviations of each communication skill were extracted, as shown in Table (1).

Table 1. The mean scores, standard deviations, and ranks of the respondents' answers to effective communication skills, arranged in descending order.

Skill	Mean score	Standard deviation	Rank	Degree of practice
Writing	4.29	0.62	1	High
Speaking	4.20	0.66	2	High
Reding	4.18	0.65	3	High

It is clear from Table (1) that all effective communication skills came with a high degree of practice. The writing skill ranked first, with a mean score of (4.29) and a standard deviation of (0.62). The speaking skill came in second with a mean score of (4.20) and a standard deviation of (0.66), while the reading skill came in the last rank with a mean score of (4.18) and a standard deviation of (0.65).

To find out the degree of practicing effective communication skills by teachers of LDs in English language according to each skill, the results were as follows:

Writing Skill

The mean scores and standard deviations of the (8) items related to the writing skill were extracted in descending order, Table (2) shows the results of the analysis.

Table 2. The mean scores, standard deviations, ranks, and the degree of the practice of the writing skill items arranged in descending order

No.	Paragraph	Mean score	Standard deviation	Rank	Degree of practice
1	The teacher communicates information to others through available means of communication.	4.33	0.72	1	High
2	The teacher uses a simple style of writing instructions.	4.29	0.79	2	High
3	The teacher presents written ideas in a logical sequence.	4.26	0.81	3	High
4	The teacher uses words familiar to teachers when addressing them in writing.	4.19	0.93	4	High
5	He encourages teachers to provide him with written reports on their work.	4.18	0.95	5	High
6	He uses an interesting and exciting style in his writing.	4.01	0.89	6	High
7	He uses the abbreviation style in his writing.	4.01	0.92	7	High
8	He takes notes in teachers' notebooks.	3.76	1.13	8	High
Total		4.29	0.64	High	

Speaking Skill

The mean scores and standard deviations of the (6) items related to the speaking skill were extracted and arranged in descending order, according to the rank of each paragraph. The general mean score of this skill was (4.20), and Table (3) shows the results of the analysis.

Table 3. The mean scores, standard deviations, ranks, and the degree of the practice of the speaking skill items arranged in descending order

No.	Paragraph	Mean score	Standard deviation	Rank	Degree of practice
9	He speaks fluently and without hesitation.	4.31	0.79	3	High
10	He is good at dialogue when he speaks.	4.29	0.88	4	High
11	He uses a short sentence style related to the topic.	4.27	0.77	5	High
12	He raises and lowers his voice while speaking depending on the situation.	4.24	0.86	6	High
13	He chooses words accurately while speaking.	4.18	0.97	7	High
14	He is good at delivering speeches.	4.16	0.95	8	High
Total		4.20	0.64	High	

Reading skill

The mean scores and standard deviations of the paragraphs related to the reading skill (9) were extracted and arranged in descending order according to the rank of each paragraph. The general average of this skill was (4.16), and table (4) shows the results of the analysis.

Table 4. The mean scores, standard deviations, ranks, and the degree of the practice of the reading skill items arranged in descending order.

No.	Paragraph	Mean score	Standard deviation	Rank	Degree of practice
15	He reads information to teachers in sound and clear language.	4.30	0.71	1	High
16	He choose keywords that express the intended meaning of the material being read.	4.24	0.8	2	High
17	He reads information to teachers in a clear voice.	4.23	0.72	3	High
18	He respects teachers' opinions when they are expressed while reading.	4.20	0.99	4	High
19	He makes sure that the letters come out from their correct exits while reading.	4.13	0.85	5	High
20	He interacts with teachers when information is read to them.	4.12	0.91	6	High
Total		4.18	0.62	High	

The study concluded that the degree of practicing effective communication skills by teachers of learning disabilities in English language from their point of view was generally high. The researcher attributes this result to the bias of most teachers in responding for fear of embarrassment that they may fall into if they are given lower grades. However, there might be a lack of effective communication skills among teachers that need to be addressed and investigated

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, the researcher recommends the following; (1) The use of effective communication skills by teachers, subordinates, and managers in the Ministry of Education, especially within schools, has a positive impact on improving the educational process; (1) Conducting studies and research on the role of effective communication skills in improving the educational process in other educational stages, in which the variables of gender, age, place of residence, and the source of the certificate are included.

Acknowledgments

The authors extend their appreciation to the Deanship of Scientific Research at King Khalid University for funding this work through Big Research Groups under grant number (RGP.2 /103/42).

References

- Abu Arqoub, I. (2007). *Human communication and its role in social interaction*. 11th edition, Amman: Dar Majdalawi.
- Ahmed, S. (2016). An evaluation of effective communication skills coursebook. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 7(3), 57-70.
- Al-Anati, K. A. (2003). *Building a proposed model for administrative communication in the light of communication motives in the Ministry of Education in Jordan and recent global trends* (unpublished doctoral thesis). Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies, Amman, Jordan.
- Al-Arifi, A. & Mahdi, A. A. (2011). *Introduction to Educational Administration*. Benghazi: Garyounis University Publications.
- Al-Asmar, H. B. (2000). *Availability of effective communication skills for principals of public and private primary schools in Irbid Governorate* (unpublished master's thesis), University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan.
- Al-Juman, F. A. (2019). The Degree of Effective Communication Skills' Practice that Social Studies Teachers at the Directorate of Mafrq Perform from their Point of View. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Sciences*, 3(12), 166-150.
- Al-Ryallat, Z. A. (2018). Effective communication and its positive impact on the educational process. Teacher's Message: Ministry of Education - Department of Educational Planning and Research, 55(12), 115 - 118. <http://search.mandumah.com/Record/923996>
- Al-Sagheer, K. A. (2003). *Building a training program to develop administrative communication skills for public secondary school principals in Irbid Governorate in the light of their training needs* (unpublished master's thesis). Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies, Amman, Jordan.
- Al-Shari, F. M. (2019). The Degree of Using the Effective Communication Skills in Teaching the Developed English Language Textbooks in the Intermediate Stage. *Umm Al-Qura University Journal of Educational and Psychological Sciences*, 11(1).
- Al-Taweel, H. A. (2001). *Educational Administration Concepts and Prospects*. 2nd Edition, Amman: University of Jordan Publications.
- Filiz, B. (2020). The Relationship between Effective Communication Skills and Verbal Intelligence Levels of Faculty of Sport Sciences Students. *International Journal of Educational Methodology*, 6(3), 603-612.
- Loy, K. J. (2006). *Effective teacher communication skills and teacher quality* (Doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University).
- Makki, H. & Muhammad, A. (2018). *Introduction to Communication Science*. Amman, Dar Al-Fikr Publishers and Distributors.
- Muhammad, M. J. (2004). *Introduction to General Psychology*. 1st Edition, Amman: Dar Al-Thaqafa Library.
- Nashwan, Y. H. & Nashwan, J. O. (2004). *Organizational Behavior in Educational Administration and Supervision*. 3rd Edition, Amman: Dar Al-Furqan.
- Nasr, M. H. (2001). *Introduction to Mass Communication*. 1st Edition, Kuwait: Al Falah Library.

Wood, J. T. (2015). *Interpersonal communication: Everyday encounters*. Cengage Learning