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# The Influence of Students Verbal Communication Skills on the Quality of Classroom Presentation in Biology Study Program Students Batch 2023 of Medan State University

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effect of verbal communication skills on the quality of presentations of students of the Biology Study Program, Stambuk 2023, State University of Medan. Verbal communication skills are considered an important component in the context of higher education, especially in the presentation process in class which is often used as the main method to measure students' understanding and analytical skills. This study uses a quantitative descriptive method with a research population of all students of the Biology Study Program, Stambuk 2023, totaling 124 people, and a sample of 95 respondents. Data collection was carried out through observation and questionnaires with a Likert scale to measure the level of verbal communication skills and presentation quality. The results of the study showed that there was a very strong positive correlation between verbal communication skills and the quality of presentations of Biology students, State University of Medan, with a Pearson Correlation score of 0.901. However, some students have low verbal communication skills and presentation quality. This study emphasizes the importance of improving verbal communication skills to improve the quality of student presentations. Especially Biology students, State University of Medan.

**Keywords:** Verbal Communication Skills, Presentation Quality

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Communication is the bridge that connects ideas, emotions and understanding between individuals. In an increasingly connected world, the ability to convey messages clearly and effectively is crucial. The etymology of the word “communication” comes from the Latin “cum” meaning “with” or “together” and “communio” meaning “unity” or “relationship” (Kusumawati, 2016). This emphasizes the importance of togetherness and understanding in the communication process. Communication can be divided into several forms, including written and oral communication, both of which play an important role in human interaction.

Verbal communication, which includes the use of words both written and spoken, is the most commonly used form of communication in human relationships (Aulia et al., 2023). Through words, individuals can convey experiences, feelings, ideas, facts, figures, and other information (Mulyani et al., 2022). This process involves not only conveying information, but also active listening to ensure productive two-way communication. However, for Generation Z, who tend to multitask and often use technology in communication, verbal communication skills are often a challenge. The habit of multitasking can reduce focus, while the more informal digital-based communication makes them less practiced in verbally communicating in a formal and structured way, as required in a presentation context.

Language plays an important role in verbal communication, enabling the exchange of meaning through a system of symbols that can be spoken, written, or generated electronically (Agus as cited in Pohan, 2015). Important elements in verbal communication include words and language. Words are symbols that represent various things such as people, objects, events, and circumstances. Since words are abstractions with predetermined meanings, verbal communication is intentional and requires mutual understanding among the parties involved. Therefore, verbal communication skills, especially in the context of formal presentations, require intensive practice and mastery of structured skills, making it more complex amidst the challenges of multitasking generations such as Generation Z.

One of the main factors that help verbal communication skills is self-confidence. Research by Novieyana et al. (2021) shows that students with high self-confidence are better able to communicate and make persuasive presentations. Students' self-confidence significantly affects their ability to speak in public, which in turn affects the quality of their presentations in class. However, for Generation Z, the challenges are not just limited to confidence. The habit of multitasking, which often characterizes this generation, can affect their ability to stay focused during presentations, reducing their effectiveness in delivering information in a clear and structured manner. This suggests that in addition to building confidence, it is also important to help students overcome their multitasking habits and get used to more formal communication patterns.

Speaking in front of an audience or individually requires more proficiency than a one-way speech, such as a presentation. According to Comfort as cited in Umi Anis R et al., (2020), there are four crucial factors in a presentation: introduction, substance, question and answer, and closing. The quality of a presentation largely depends on the presenter's ability to communicate and convey information clearly and effectively. Everyone, including those enrolled in biology courses, needs to have these skills to be successful in and out of the classroom.

In situations such as business, education, and everyday communication, the quality of presentation is very important. Communication theory by Shannon-Weaver as cited in Sukardin & Azanti, (2019) states that communication is a linear process involving sender, message, channel, receiver, and feedback. Visual design theory emphasizes the importance of visual perception in designing effective presentation slides (Gestalt as cited in Safitri et al., 2021).. Audience psychology theory states that information is processed more efficiently when presented verbally and visually (Aryanto, 2021)

Research by Angkoso et al., (2019) identified 11 indicators of presentation quality assessment, including material quality, completeness, clarity, media use, and confidence. Although the importance of verbal communication skills and presentation quality has been recognized, many students still face challenges in developing these skills. Factors such as lack of training, opportunities to practice, as well as public speaking anxiety can affect students' verbal communication skills.

The research therefore aims to explore the extent to which the verbal communication skills of Biology Study Program students class of 2023 at Medan State University affect the quality of their presentations in class. By understanding the factors that influence this ability, it is hoped that more effective strategies can be developed to improve students' verbal communication skills, which will ultimately improve the quality of presentations and understanding of the material among students.

## **2. METHODS**

In this study on the verbal communication skills of students in the biology study program and the quality of their presentations in class, the researchers used quantitative descriptive methods. This study was conducted at Medan State University, specifically at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Biology Study Program, Class of 2023.

According to Arikunto, (2013) the population is the entire subject of the study. If you are studying all the topics in the field of study, then that study is a demographic study. Accordingly, the subject of this study only included students of the biology study program, Class of 2023, Medan State University, a total of 124 people. The sample obtained in this study was 95 people, with random sampling technique.

The data collection technique used in this study is a questionnaire. According to Arikunto (2013), questionnaire is a data collection technique by asking questions or statements through a Google form to respondents with the aim of obtaining answers to the questions or statements. This study uses a Likert scale to measure the attitudes, opinions and views of individuals and people towards verbal communication skills with a scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree with value from 1 to 4.

A questionnaire validity and reliability test is the instrument analysis technique utilized in this study to ascertain whether the questionnaire is reliable and valid for use as research data.

Following the collection of all the data, the researcher conducted a classic assumption test with the stages of the normality test and the linearity test. A significant value  $> 0.05$  indicates that the data distribution is normal, and vice versa. The normality test is used to determine whether the residual data of the study variables is normally distributed. To determine whether each independent variable has a linear connection with the dependent variable, the linearity test is run in the interim. A linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables, and vice versa, is required for making decisions if the sig. Deviation from linearity value  $> 0.05$ .

Following the description of the conceptual framework, the following operational variables serve as the study's point of reference:

**Table 2. 1 Research Variables**

Operational Variables	Variable Indicators
<b>Independent Variable (X)</b> Verbal Communication Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to express thoughts</li> <li>• Pose inquiries to teachers and fellow students</li> <li>• Provide responses and be able to make inferences</li> </ul>
<b>Dependent Variable (Y)</b> Presentation Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of presentation media</li> <li>• Vocal expression including articulation, pace, intonation, pauses, and volume</li> <li>• The quality of presentation media</li> <li>• Confidence</li> </ul>

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

*Table 3.1 Correlation Results of the Relationship between Variables X and Y*

		Verbal Communication Skills	Presentation Quality
Communication Skills Verbal	Pearson Correlation	1	,901**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	95	95
Presentation Quality	Pearson Correlation	,901**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	95	95

Table 3.1 shows the correlation results between verbal communication skills (variable X) and presentation quality (variable Y). The Pearson Correlation of verbal communication skills and the quality of student presentations is 0.901. According to relationship guidelines, a Pearson Correlation value between 0.81 and 1.00 indicates a very strong or almost perfect correlation. The significance figure obtained ( $r_{\text{calculated}} = 0.901$ )  $>$  ( $r_{\text{table value}} (0.202)$ ), indicating a significant influence of verbal communication skills on the quality of biology students' presentations at Medan State University. This finding aligns with interpersonal communication theory, which posits that effective communication skills significantly contribute to success in various presentation contexts. Good verbal communication skills not only enhance perceptions of professionalism but also improve audience understanding, thereby enhancing the overall quality of the presentation.

Following the identification of the relationship between variables X and Y, the analysis proceeded with descriptive analysis to determine trends in the variables. This analysis aimed to examine the distribution of verbal communication skills and presentation quality among biology students at Medan State University, using the following range formula:

- $M_i + 1.5 S_{di}$  (Very High)
- $M_i$  to  $M_i + 1.5 S_{di}$  (High)
- $M_i - 1.5 S_{di}$  to  $M_i$  (Low)
- $< M_i - 1.5 S_{di}$  (Very Low)

Based on the trend formula and responses from 95 respondents, the results for the verbal communication skills variable are as follows:

*Table 3.2 Results of Trends in Verbal Communication Skills*

Interval Class	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Description
$>19,7$	14	14,7%	Very High
$15,5 + 19,7$	29	40,5%	High
$11,3 - 15,5$	40	32,1%	Low
$<11,3$	12	12,6%	Very Low

Based on the data in table 3.2, it shows that very high percentage (14.7%) and very low (12.6%) which shows that majority biology students of Class of 2023 at Universitas Negeri Medan have good verbal communication skills. While this reflects a significant level of proficiency, it also highlights that there is still room for improvement, especially among students with a low level of low skills.

*Table 3.3 Results of Presentation Quality Trends*

Interval Class	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Description
>27,6	24	35,3%	Very High
24 + 27,6	16	26,8%	High
20,4 - 24	21	22,1%	Low
<20,4	34	15,8%	Very Low

From table 3.3 the tendency quality students are very high (35.3%) and very low (15.8%) based on the data quality presentation by students biology from Class of 2023 includes in very high category.

The very strong positive correlation between verbal communication skills and presentation quality suggests that improving verbal communication skills is likely to have a positive impact on students' presentation quality. In addition, descriptive data showing a number of students with low verbal communication skills and presentation quality underscores the need for targeted training programs to improve these skills. To improve the quality of presentations, the use of media and the quality of media greatly influence. Good presentation media can be in the form of clear videos and images and present data in an interesting and credible way (Haedar, 2021). Understanding about good use of media and quality presentation each other relate in create presentation capable convey message optimally.

Skills good verbal communication allow student for convey draft in a way clear, maintain channel structured presentation, as well as build positive interaction with audience. When skills This supported by the use of appropriate media, presentations become more dynamic, interactive, and informative. Collaboration between skills quality verbal and media communication produce presentation that is not only captivating attention audience, but also increase understanding they to the material presented. With understand media usage and quality of presentation media message danide will delivered with good so that will create environment more learning productive and interactive.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Based on the data analysis in Table 3.1, there is significant evidence of a very strong positive correlation between verbal communication skills and the quality of presentations of biology students at Medan State University. With a Pearson Correlation value of 0.901, it can be concluded that the close relationship between the two variables is in line with the basic principles of interpersonal communication theory which emphasizes the importance of communication skills in successful

presentations. However, the descriptive analysis in Tables 3.2 and 3.3 shows that most students still have relatively high verbal communication skills and presentation quality. However, there are some that are low, therefore, further efforts are needed to improve both aspects among students. Recommended interventions include organizing training sessions, workshops, or developing special courses that focus on developing communication skills. By improving verbal communication skills, students will be able to convey their messages more clearly and effectively, and interact better with their audiences. This is expected to make a positive contribution to improving the overall quality of student presentations.

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