

行政院國家科學委員會補助專題研究計劃成果報告

[illegible]計畫類型：☒個別型計畫 ☐整合型計畫

計畫編號：NSC 89-2411-H-002-039

執行期間：88年8月1日至89年7月31日

計畫主持人：葉德蘭（國立台灣大學外國語文學系副教授）

共同主持人：郭玲妃

本成果報告包括以下應繳交之附件：

- ☐赴國外出差或研習心得報告一份
- ☐赴大陸地區出差或研習心得報告一份
- ☐出席國際學術會議心得報告及發表之論文各一份
- ☐國際合作研究計劃國外研究報告書一份

執行單位：國立台灣大學外國語文學系

中 華 民 國 八 十 九 年 十 月 三 十 日

國內研究所之師生互動溝通研究

Communication Concerns in Graduate Student-Advisor Relationship in Taiwan

一、中文摘要：

本研究藉由評估研究所師生雙方對研究生溝通行為所關切的議題來探討學術上的互動關係。受試對象包括國內 162位研究生及64位研究所教授進行問卷調查，收集並分析資料結果顯示：研究生對自我溝通層面最為關切，而教授對事務溝通層面最為關切，師生雙方皆對溝通之影響較不重視。研究生較關切自己於一對一情境中與教授之溝通，教授則較關切研究生上課時與教授之互動。師生雙方對研究生溝通行為所關切的議題並不一致。

二、英文摘要：

The present study investigated the academic interaction between graduate students and their advisors by assessing the communication concerns expressed by the two parties in their encounters. The participants in this study were 162 graduate students and 64 professors in Taiwan. Graduate students were most concerned with the Self domain, while their advisors, the Task domain. Both students and their advisors expressed less concerns about Impact related items. The graduate students revealed a significantly higher degree of concerns in one-on-one conferences than in class, yet their advisors were more concerned with the students' communication in class.

三、關鍵詞(Keywords):

- (1) 教學溝通 instructional communication
- (2) 溝通考量 communication concerns
- (3) 研究生 graduate students
- (4) 研究生與指導教授關係 advisor-advisee relationship

四、研究成果報告：

The nature of the graduate education necessitates a close co-working relationship between graduate students and professors with whom they join efforts in the pursuit of new knowledge in academic institutions. In this relationship, two-way communications, being essential in learning and instruction at all educational levels, plays an even more important role, since graduate students learn not only through formal classroom instruction but through hands-on experiences with faculty. Close, productive student-faculty interaction is, thus, considered a critical determinant of the extent to which desired outcomes occur (Jacob, 1990;

Kwong, 1992).

The importance of graduate student-advisor interaction has been recognized by scholars in a considerable amount of research dealing with the discovery of effective and mutually beneficial mode of interaction (Belcher, 1994; Brown et al., 1989; Moore, 1985). The subjects of the research came exclusively from western countries such as UK, Germany, and the U.S. The findings, though valuable to some extent, are not totally applicable in Taiwan where the conception of education and teacher-student relationship bears a set of rather different cultural meaning. With the recent growing of the higher education in our country, more and more promising students, instead of going abroad, stay in Taiwan for graduate level education. For the past decades, graduate faculty members and graduate advisors have long been accustomed to offering, supervising and evaluating learning experiences which are not in the usual classroom mode. Graduate study through faculty-supervised individual studies, research projects, internships, practicums, field work, and laboratory work has made great contribution to the academia in our country. Yet without due recognition by the public, the occasional outburst of individual tragedies has evoked unnecessary and illegitimate criticism against graduate student-faculty interaction. Moreover, a lack of systematic studies focusing on the post baccalaureate learning process as well as interactions between graduate students and professors in Taiwan makes the positive contribution of the academia even less known to the public.

The present study tends to investigate the academic interaction between graduate students and their advisors by assessing the communication concerns expressed by the two parties in their encounters. Based on the communication concerns model proposed by Staton-Spicer in 1983, at all academic levels, teachers and students have concerns about their communication in instructional processes. Such concerns refer to the feelings, thoughts, worries, or expectations of individuals probably rising from past experiences or anticipation for a future situation. The communication concerns have been conceptualized into three areas: (1) Self (the self as a communicator), (2) Task (the task of communicating), and (3) Impact (the impact of one's communication on others) (Staton-Spicer, 1983).

The participants in this study were 162 graduate students and 64 professors in Taiwan. All of them were citizens of ROC and none were naturalized. Both were currently affiliated with public or private universities in Taiwan.

Through the communication concerns identified in the data analysis, the findings of present studies presented as follows.

The major perceived communication concerns of graduate students and their advisors during interactions in educational settings in Taiwan were identified first in terms of mean

ratings of answers to the questions. Then they were grouped in terms of the domains of Self, task, Impact in the communication concerns model. Graduate students were most concerned with the Self domain, while their advisors, the Task domain. Among the Self-related concerns, students expressed the greatest concerns about appearing knowledgeable before (#1 and #17), and feeling nervous while talking to advisors (#27). These concerns were shared by their advisors in a similar rank, except that advisors were also concerned with students being silent in class (#15). Advisors however, expressed a less degree of the self-related communication concerns ($m=2.0568$) than their students ($m=2.3973$).

The greatest concerns of students regarding the Task domain involved appropriately answering the advisor's questions (#5 and #21) and correct interpretation of what their advisors say (#18). In comparison, their advisors were more concerned with the latter (#2 and #18) and students' ability to clearly express themselves (#4 and #20). Although advisors overall expressed slightly less task-related concerns than students, their concerns about making themselves understood by their students were remarkably strong as their responses to #2 and #18 ranked the highest in all the forty statements in the questionnaire.

Both students and their advisors expressed less concerns of Impact related items. The three highest ranking concerns identified by students and advisors were the same, with slight differences in ranking. Both parties were most concerned with accepting advisors' opinions without condition (#40), followed by whether students make themselves understood (#7 and #23).

A closer analysis of the student data revealed that the Task related concerns received a slightly lower rating than the Self related ones (2.3599 and 2.3973) though, they occupied 8 out of the top 10 concerns in an overall ranking of the forty statements. It seems, after all, students shared their advisors' greatest concerns about their ability to communicate with advisors. Which is vital to a successful graduate student-advisor relationship. That is, they were more concerned with using communication as a means to have the job done. The finding echoed those studies done in English-speaking countries (Ivy, 1988; Staton-Spicer & Bassett, 1979). Yet, as older and more mature than undergraduate students who were the subjects of those studies, graduate students seemed more anxious to assert themselves as a respectful scholar-to-be in front of their advisors. This is evident from the high rating of the Self related concerns of graduate students, especially in one-on-one conversation with their advisors. They wanted to appear knowledgeable and well-prepared, they felt nervous, and they don't feel comfortable joking with advisors. Compared with the American students completing an interpersonal communication course in Hiemstra & Staton-Spicer's study (1983), the strong Self concerns expressed by graduate students in Taiwan is in a contrast to

the other-oriented impact concerns prevalent in those American students.

A series of *t*-tests were employed to test the relationships among concerns in different domains and educational contexts. The result showed that graduate students reported a significant higher degree of language related concerns than culture related concerns, which indicated that graduate students are more concerned with their verbal ability, rather than cultural ability, to communicate with their advisors. They also expressed a significantly higher degree of concerns in one-on-one conferences than in class. This finding is not in accordance with the result in the literature. As revealed in the follow-up interviews with graduate students, it seems the traditional classroom communication pattern plays a role here. Since students are not required to participate to as great an extent as in American graduate classes, they are less concerned with their classroom communication than in one-on-one conferences with advisors.

The results of the study are supportive of the assumption that graduate students and faculty members have different foci in their communicative concerns. Hence the findings might contribute to better preparation of those students who plan to pursue graduate study in Taiwan. Also, the data accrued from the study provide the concerned public with much needed information that might shed lights on the nature and the process of graduate education in our country. Future studies should employ a larger sample and a better selection process, investigate the actual behaviors to supplement the self-reported data, and focus on the validity of the communication concerns model in non-western contexts.

References

- Belcher, D (1994). The apprenticeship approach to advanced academic literacy: Graduate students and their mentors. English for Specific Purposes, 13, 23-34.
- Brown, J., Collins, A., & Duguid, P. (1989). Situated cognition and the culture of learning. Educational Researcher, 18, 32-42.
- Cohen, S., Kamieniecki, S., & McGlen, N. (1988). Graduate student-faculty relationships: A classification scheme. Teaching Political Science, 7, 132-152.
- Ivy, D. K. (1988). Communication in the socialization process of nontraditional college students. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. The University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK.
- Jacob, M. (1990). Student services assessment: Report on graduate student problems. Los Angeles: University of California, the student Affairs Information and Research Office.
- Kwong, R. L. (1991). Graduate student-advisor relationships. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of California, Los Angeles, CA.
- Moore, J. W. (1987). Understanding, advising, and teaching international students: A handbook for faculty. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 289 427)

Staton-Spicer, A. Q. (1983). The measurement and further conceptualization of teacher communication concerns. Human Communication Research, 9, 158-168.

Staton-Spicer, A. Q., & Bassett, R. E. (1979). An investigation of the communication concerns of preservice and inservice elementary school teachers: A developmental conceptualization. Human Communication Research, 5, 138-146.