

# The Identification of Special Education Teachers' Performative Competence in Denpasar

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**Abstract** Teachers play very important roles in the teaching and learning process of special schools students who have limited ability and development. Learning process which utilizes communication means becomes an important aspect, thus, teachers must be able to communicate well. Therefore, good ability of verbal and non-verbal communication implemented through communication skill is highly needed. This research focuses on performative competence as a part of the communication competence model. This research employed a qualitative approach with constructivism paradigm. The approach enabled the researcher to investigate the social construction of special education teachers' performative competence in responding to the learning process of special need students at school. The data were collected through an interview by recording and observation. The results reveal that special education teachers show different performative competence and adjust the student's academic competence.

**Index Terms**— *identification, performative competence, special education teachers, special need students*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers play very important roles in the teaching and learning process of special schools students who have limited ability and development. This condition is difficult because it requires special treatment to teach the students. Thus, teachers can fairly implement their functions, and one of them is to communicate. Communication is an important aspect of the educational process because teachers become a communicator, and the learning process at class is a communication process. In an educational context, teachers should fulfill all effective communication requirements in delivering lessons. Otherwise, the learning process will difficultly achieve the maximum result. Azis (in Halim et al., 2005) asserts that various problems occur when teachers' and students' communication does not run optimally.

In students' learning process, though teachers utilize verbal and non-verbal communication, an obstacle in receiving message still occurs. Therefore, delivering information must include good communication management and teachers' competence to enable the students to completely receive the information. Special need students' difficulties in receiving the message can be an obstacle in the learning process. Therefore, teachers must have communication ability and competence to let the students completely receive the delivered information.

In 2014, the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport of Bali Province reported that there were 1,067 students with special needs studying in special schools. The number of students compared to the number of teachers leads to several challenges: students who suddenly show tantrums, special teaching methods, and difficulty in comprehending the students' thought and feeling. Consequently, teachers' good-

performative competence is highly needed during the learning process.

Performative competence is a model of personal communication competence consisting of comprehension (interpretive competence), adaptation (role competence), self-presentation (self-competence), planning (goal/target competence), and coding process (message competence) (Trenholm & Jensen, 1996). Performative competence is a communication competence focusing on empowerment and process aspect. Performative competence consists of interpretive competence, role competence, self-competence, goal competence, and message competence. By implementing communication competence, teachers will successfully create a communicative class for students with special needs by performing an appropriate action.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a constructivism paradigm to investigate the social construction description of special education teachers' performative competence in responding to the learning process special need students at school. Constructivism paradigm proposes that ontologically, social reality has various forms, based on social experience, local characteristic, and specific to the performer (Salim, 2006). This paradigm agrees with the research which constructs social reality of performative competence of special education teachers who deal with special need students at school.

The qualitative approach explains that the phenomenon, such as perception, motivation, behavior, etc. experienced by a research subject holistically, is presented descriptively in the form of words or language. Furthermore, the approach examines a particular context and utilizes various scientific methods (Moleong, 2007).

This research employed ethnography method which functions to collect data and investigate communication phenomenon (Jansen & Jankowski, 2003). The individual analysis unit of this research was special education teachers in Denpasar. The informants were not selected in a small number or representatively to create in-depth analysis (Moleong, 2006). Consequently, this research could gain the identified data of special education teachers' performative competence in Denpasar.

The data were collected through in-depth reporting and observing the research informants. In-depth reporting used interview guideline focusing on special education teachers' performative competence which could be developed through interview. Meanwhile, this research employed nonparticipant observation in which the researcher was not involved in the informants' activity.

To analyze the data, this research employed thematic coding or analyzed the data from interview and observation, and then the data were checked through reading and investigation. The next step was reducing the data by composing an abstract or summary and labeled. The following step was categorizing the data through coding. The final step was deciding the theme based on the category made.

## III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The respondents of this research were 4 special education teachers teaching at special schools. The results of in-depth reporting about the teachers' experience of teaching and guiding special education students categorized based on performative competence model are:

1. *Interpretive Competence*; the teachers' ability to understand class situation and condition including teaching and learning context;
2. *Role Competence*; the teachers' ability to perform their role as an educator in responding to the students with physical disabilities;
3. *Self-Competence*; identifying the teachers' methods and approaches and their effects, either affection or emotion, on the students;
4. *Goal Competence*; the ability to achieve the goal with several levels of difficulties and precise communication strategies to apply; and
5. *Message Competence*; the teachers' ability to identify the characteristics of the verbal and non-verbal message.

The results of performative competence are summarized in the following tables.

TABLE I  
INTERPRETIVE COMPETENCE

Quantity	Conversion from Gaussian and CGS EMU to SI <sup>a</sup>
Repeatedly verbal and non-verbal instruction	Giving repeatedly oral or body language instructions to the students to ensure that the students understand the information or material.
Using concrete objects	Giving concrete information during delivering the information or learning material at class, for example by using miniature and other learning aids
Discovery learning	A learning method which encourages the students to directly find the learning material (for example, if the students will learn a tree, they will be invited to directly see and observe the tree, then describe it)
Orientation	A learning method which introduces the concrete form of an object or learning material to the students', and allows them to investigate the form of the object through feeling or touching
Utilizing learning aids	Utilizing learning aids during the learning process; for example, in learning geometry, the students are given square-shaped objects, circle objects, etc. Thus, they have understood the concept of geometry before they learn the formula of calculating the geometry.
Induction-deduction method	The teachers will repeatedly explain an object by describing its characteristics or clarifying specific concepts, and then they will generalize the concepts.
Trial and error	Besides academic education, the students are allowed to learn all skills, and then the teachers will guide them to select an appropriate extra class based on their interest or talent.
Explaining by person to person method and giving individual tasks	The teachers prepare individual tasks for each student in one class. When the teacher personally explains a material to student A, the other students at class are doing their tasks

Adjusting the students' competence	<p>based on their competence. This process is done in turn.</p> <p>Special education has its own curriculum determined by the government. However, the teachers sometimes find inconsistency between the curriculum and the students' condition. Therefore, the teachers frequently modify the learning materials adjusted the students' needs. For example, based on the curriculum, there are several themes to teach in one semester. However, if the students are still unable to understand one theme in a given time, the teachers must modify the learning material. As a result, the students will easily understand the materials. Furthermore, the teachers usually compose learning material based on the students' IQ level.</p>
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Increasing insight/knowledge	<p>the students patiently, it means that no one will help and guide the students.</p> <p>The teachers usually find information about strategies to deal with special education students from the internet. Furthermore, the teachers participate in certain workshops for special education teachers. As a result, they will have the competence to communicate and interact with the students.</p>
Inviting parents to school	<p>Sometimes, when the students have problems, parents initiatives come to the school to ask the teachers' assistance. However, there some other parents who do not care and put the responsibility of teaching their children on the teachers.</p> <p>Therefore, the teachers need to invite the parents to the school and discuss the students' problems.</p>
Conducting routine meeting	<p>Every end of the semester, parents will receive a written report of the students' development. However, some parents are unable to attend the meeting because not all of them live in Denpasar. Therefore, the students' problems will be solved by the teachers.</p>

TABLE II  
ROLE COMPETENCE

Quantity	Conversion from Gaussian and CGS EMU to SI <sup>a</sup>
Repeatedly giving warning	The teachers will repeatedly warn the students, either in verbal or non-verbal forms, to remind them of the consequence for a long period
Suspension/dismissed	This consequence is applied if the students commit a serious offense.
Individual approach and perform direct examples	The teachers will use individual approach and explain dos and don'ts, and consequences to the students by performing direct examples.
Asking questions	The teachers usually ask the students if they understand the consequence given. However, the teachers do not completely recognize if the students totally understand the instruction and consequence. Therefore, the teachers still learn to understand the students' characteristics (because the students frequently say that they have understood, in fact, they do not)
Observing	The teachers usually observe the students' behavior after the students receive the consequence. If the students show behavior change for a long period, the consequence is considered as effective and is possibly reapplied. On the other hand, if the students do not show behavior change, the teachers will find another alternative consequence.

TABLE III  
SELF COMPETENCE

Quantity	Conversion from Gaussian and CGS EMU to SI <sup>a</sup>
Empathy	The teachers try to conceive and understand the students' development stages, and realize that special education students have an impairment and must be treated with special methods.
Building a sense of responsibility	The teachers will try to remember that their students are their responsibility. If they do not guide

TABLE IV  
GOAL COMPETENCE

Quantity	Conversion from Gaussian and CGS EMU to SI <sup>a</sup>
The characteristics of students' disabilities	The teachers apply different method adjusted to suit the characteristics of the students' disabilities. The students with one disability (for example blindness, or hearing loss) will receive different method from the students with two disabilities (for example hearing loss and autism)
Students' intelligence level	The teachers will apply different methods and approach adjusted to suit the students' intelligence level

TABLE V  
MESSAGE COMPETENCE

Quantity	Conversion from Gaussian and CGS EMU to SI <sup>a</sup>
Verbal communication, body language, and written language	All of these methods are applied interchangeably or simultaneously, and repeatedly.

From the result of an in-depth interview, it is interpreted that the teachers' educational background influences their performative competence in interacting with the special education students at school. The teachers' competence is determined by their interpretive competence, and it is correlated with the approach based on characteristics of the students with special needs. The teachers' role competence is shown by their working length experience as

special education teachers because it enables the teachers to precisely respond to psychological impairment of the students with special needs. The teachers' self-competence is shown by their ability to create a perception of the special need students. The students' impairment leads the teachers to perform their goal competence by identifying the characteristics of the students' special condition and using appropriate methods adjusted to suit the students' condition. As a result, the message competence is performed in the form of verbal communication, body language, and written language which are applied interchangeably or simultaneously, and repeatedly.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the role of special education teachers in educating students with special needs at school still becomes a constraint. Therefore, interpretive competence enables the schools and teachers to minimize the impairments of the students with special needs by observing the students' outstanding competence to develop. It is crucial that the teachers own competence to enable them to identify the characteristics and condition of the students with special needs. Consequently, teachers can precisely teach.

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