

## English Teachers' Instructional Communication in Implementing Finnish-Based Innovative Learning: A Case Study

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### Abstract

Instructional communication plays a central role in shaping meaningful learning experiences, particularly within student-centered and dialogical educational paradigms. This study aims to explore the forms and implementation of instructional communication in English learning based on the Finnish educational approach at Mutiara Insani Junior High School, Purwakarta. Employing a qualitative case study design, the research focuses on English teachers and eighth-grade students as the main subjects. Data were collected through classroom observations, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and document analysis, and analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing with triangulation to ensure credibility. The findings reveal that instructional communication in English learning is implemented in multimodal and contextual forms, including verbal-bilingual communication, nonverbal communication, media-supported communication, hands-on activities, collaborative interaction, and affective communication. Teachers position themselves as facilitators who encourage dialogue, provide constructive feedback, and create a psychologically safe learning environment. The integration of Finnish-based learning principles emphasizes student-centeredness, joyful learning, contextual relevance, and minimal exam orientation. Supporting factors include positive teacher-student relationships, flexible teaching strategies, and the use of varied media, while inhibiting factors involve differences in student proficiency, emotional readiness, time limitations, and vocabulary constraints.

## Introduction

Education is essentially a communication process that involves the exchange of messages, meanings, and values between teacher and students in order to achieve learning goals (Priadi, 2020; Navickienė et al., 2019). From the perspective of communication science, the educational process cannot be separated from communication activities because learning occurs through symbolic interactions that allow for mutual understanding, attitude changes, and the development of knowledge and skills (Samudra et al., 2026; Rahmah & Hanif, 2026; Al Wasim et al., 2026).

As the 21st century educational paradigm develops, learning is no longer understood as a one-way process of transferring information, but as a dialogical process that places students as active subjects (Kumar, 2008). This paradigm shift demands more humanistic, reflective, and participatory educational communication practices, where teacher play the role of facilitators who build relationships, create a safe classroom climate, and encourage active student engagement.

In this context, educational communication is the main foundation in creating meaningful learning (Hsbollah & Hassan, 2022). Communication not only functions as a means of delivering material, but also as a medium for forming pedagogical relationships between teacher and students. The quality of communication built in the classroom will affect the level of student involvement, learning motivation, and the effectiveness of achieving learning goals (Firdaus & Katili, 2025). Therefore, learning failures are often not solely caused by a lack of materials or facilities, but by weak communication practices that occur during the learning process.

One of the important dimensions in educational communication is instructional communication (Morreale et al., 2014). Instructional communication is understood as the process of delivering learning messages that are systematically designed to influence learners' knowledge, attitudes, and skills. In instructional communication, teacher does not only act as conveyors of information, but also as strategic communicators who design messages, choose media, organize interaction flows, and provide meaningful feedback.

Instructional communication includes the use of verbal and nonverbal language, the management of emotions, the use of learning media, and the creation of dialogues that allow students to actively engage in the learning process. Instructional communication refers to the process of designing, delivering, and managing learning messages in a systematic manner to facilitate changes in learners' knowledge, attitudes, and skills (Bishop, 2013; Wheelless & Thomas, 1979). In this framework, teacher plays the role of instructional communicators who not only deliver material, but also manage interactions, build a classroom climate, provide feedback, and motivate students to be actively involved in learning.

Previous studies have shown that teacher clarity, teacher communication behavior, instructional message design, and student motivation are the four key components of effective instructional communication (McCroskey et al., 2006; Myers et al., 2014). English language learning is one of the fields that is very demanding for the effectiveness of instructional communication (Lie, 2007). As a communicative subject, English language learning requires intensive two-way interaction between teacher and students.

Bozorgian (2012) said that, English language proficiency cannot be achieved through theoretical explanations or written exercises alone, but requires continuous communication practice through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, in the context of English learning in Indonesia, the practice of dialogical instructional communication still faces various challenges. In many schools, learning is still dominated by a teacher-centered pattern that places teacher as the center of activities, while students tend to be passive and act as receivers of information (Hoidn & Reusser, 2020; Nurpahmi, 2017).

The urgency of instructional communication is increasingly felt in English language learning in Indonesia (Ibrahim, 2001). As a subject that requires real communication practices that include listening, speaking, reading, and writing. English relies heavily on the quality of two-way interaction between teachers and students. However, studies have shown that English learning practices in Indonesia are still dominated by a teacher-centered pattern, which limits the space for dialogue and active participation of students (Qoiriah & Febrianto, 2025; Nurpahmi, 2017; Wungu et al., 2024).

This condition contributes to the low English proficiency of Indonesian students, as reflected in the EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) 2023 which places Indonesia in the Low Proficiency category. The low level of student participation in class interactions causes communicative skills not to develop optimally. The dominance of teachers in learning limits students' opportunities to practice using English actively, so that the learning process is less

able to encourage students' confidence and language competence (Diaz et al., 2016). From the perspective of instructional communication, this condition shows an imbalance in the communication flow, where the learning process is more one-way than dialogical.

Various previous studies in the realm of instructional communication have shown that the effectiveness of learning is greatly influenced by the communication patterns that teacher build in the classroom. However, the study of instructional communication in English learning in Indonesia still shows a number of limitations. A number of studies have placed more emphasis on policy, curriculum, or outcomes aspects, without delving deeply into how teacher build and practice instructional communication in the classroom to create meaningful learning (Goldman & Pellegrino, 2015; Timperley & Alton-Lee, 2008).

In fact, from a communication perspective, the success of learning is largely determined by how instructional messages are designed, delivered, and negotiated through teacher-student interactions. Research that in-depth examines the instructional communication practices of English teacher in creating deep learning and active participation of students, especially at the junior high school level, is still relatively limited.

On the other hand, the dynamics of globalization encourage the emergence of a need for a more adaptive, dialogical, and holistic learning model oriented to develop students' potential (Tiwow et al., 2025; Adeoye et al., 2024; Bakar, 2021). One of the international learning models that has attracted attention is the Finnish approach to education (Nissinen et al., 2019). This approach places students as active subjects of learning, emphasizes deep learning, reduces the pressure of exam-based evaluation, and prioritizes a dialogical relationship between teacher and students.

In the Finnish approach to education, teachers are positioned as facilitators who accompany the learning process of students through humanistic, reflective, and collaborative communication (Lakkala et al., 2021; Ferreira et al., 2025; Aarto-Pesonen & Piirainen, 2020). In a global context, the interest in educational models that emphasize dialogical interaction and deep learning is driving the adoption of Finnish educational approaches in various countries. The Finnish education system is known to place students as active subjects of learning, emphasizing deep learning, dialogical relationships, collaboration, and a psychologically safe learning climate (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016; Fullan et al., 2018).

Teachers are positioned as facilitators who guide students' thought processes, not as information centers. These principles align with instructional communication theory that emphasizes two-way communication, continuous feedback, and the use of multiple communication channels to support meaningful learning. Finnish educational principles are closely related to instructional communication theory in communication science (Ahmad et al., 2024; Fullan et al., 2018).

In addition, the practice of instructional communication in learning can also be understood through the framework of Conditions of Learning put forward by Loua (2023), which emphasizes the importance of systematically designing learning events through the stages of attention, goal delivery, memory stimulation, presentation of materials, tutoring, feedback, and strengthening retention and transfer of learning. This framework is relevant to the dialogue-based and reflection-based learning that characterizes Finnish educational approaches.

Deep learning-oriented learning demands communication practices that allow students to actively construct meaning, reflect on learning experiences, and relate material to real-life contexts. Therefore, the successful implementation of the Finnish educational approach is highly dependent on the quality of instructional communication that teacher build in the classroom.

In Indonesia, the adoption of the Finnish education approach is still limited and is generally applied to the early childhood education or elementary school level. The application of this approach at the junior high school level is still relatively rare and has not been studied empirically, especially from the perspective of instructional communication. This condition indicates that there are research gaps that need to be filled, especially to understand how teachers' instructional communication practices take place in the context of Finnish-based learning.

SMPS Mutiara Insani Purwakarta is a relevant and unique research context because it is one of the private schools that adopts Finnish educational principles and integrates them in English language learning. The school blends such a global approach with Islamic spiritual values and local cultures, creating contextual and meaningful learning practices. Teacher not only act as material presenters, but as facilitators who build dialogical interactions, foster students' confidence, and encourage deep understanding through reflective instructional communication.

Based on this description, this study is designed to examine the instructional communication of English teacher in implementing learning based on the Finnish educational approach (Krofkors et al., 2011). This research focuses on efforts to describe instructional communication patterns built by teacher, understand students' experiences of these communication patterns, and identify factors that support and inhibit the effectiveness of instructional communication in creating deep learning.

This study uses a qualitative approach with case study methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of instructional communication practices in the context of real learning. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the study of communication science, especially in the field of instructional communication, by presenting an empirical perspective on teachers' communication practices in English learning based on the Finnish approach.

Practically, this research is expected to contribute to teacher, schools, and education policy makers in designing communication-based learning models that are dialogical, humanist, and relevant to the local context. Thus, this study positions instructional communication as a bridge between learning theory (Gagné) and Finnish-based educational practices in the local Indonesian context. The focus of the research is directed to describe the forms and patterns of instructional communication of English teacher, understand students' experiences of such communication, and identify supporting and inhibiting factors that support and inhibit the effectiveness of instructional communication at SMPS Mutiara Insani Purwakarta.

Although education is essentially a communication process, empirical studies that specifically examine instructional communication of English teacher as a communication practice are still relatively limited, especially at the junior high school level in Indonesia (Zein et al., 2020). Most previous research has placed English learning in a pedagogical framework, such as teaching methods, curriculum, and learning outcomes, without examining in depth how instructional messages are constructed, delivered, negotiated, and interpreted in teacher-student communication interactions.

In addition, studies on the application of Finnish educational approaches in Indonesia generally discuss aspects of the education system and learning strategies, while the dimensions of instructional communication include communication patterns, dialogical relations, verbal and nonverbal communication, and two-way and multi-directional communication flows have not been widely analyzed from the perspective of communication science.

These limitations show that there is a research gap in understanding the role of instructional communication as the foundation for the implementation of dialogical learning and deep learning. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining the instructional

communication patterns of English teacher and students' experiences of such communication practices in the context of learning based on the Finnish educational approach.

## Methods

This research employed a case study method. A case study is a method that specifically investigates social conditions through a single case (Stake, 1978). Case study research is a qualitative research method used to investigate complex phenomena in real-life contexts. This approach involves collecting detailed and in-depth data on one or more cases deemed representative or relevant to the problem being studied. Data were collected through various techniques, such as observation, interviews, document analysis, and audiovisual materials. (Figueroa, 2008). This approach was chosen because it is appropriate for exploring social realities and communication practices in a natural context, namely the classroom. A case study was used because this research focuses on a single location and subject: teachers and students in English learning at Mutiara Insani Junior High School, Purwakarta. This approach aims to comprehensively understand how instructional communication occurs, is interpreted, and is perceived by educators, particularly within a deep learning-based learning framework adopted from the Finnish educational model. The object of this research is the implementation of instructional communication in English learning at Mutiara Insani Junior High School (SMPS) in Purwakarta. This school was chosen because it implements an innovative learning approach adapted from the Finnish education system, particularly in student-centered learning practices, dialogic communication, and the creation of a safe and humane learning climate. Mutiara Insani Junior High School is under the auspices of an educational institution that collaborates with Finland, including academics from Tampere University. This collaboration allows for the transfer of pedagogical ideas and the contextual application of Finnish learning principles in learning activities, particularly in English. Furthermore, the junior high school level is considered relevant for study because students are at a stage of cognitive and social development that supports communicative interaction, discussion, and language practice. This situation makes instructional communication a crucial aspect of successful English learning. Another consideration in selecting the research object was the openness of the school and teachers in granting researchers access to conduct classroom observations, interviews, and lesson documentation. This access allows researchers to obtain in-depth, natural, and comprehensive data in line with the research focus. The research objects consist of: (1) English teachers who teach at the middle-class level (grade VIII); (2) Students in grades VIII A and VIII B who participate in direct English learning.

## Data Collection Techniques

Data collection in this study employed three main qualitative techniques: classroom observation, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Primary data were obtained directly through observations and interviews, while secondary data were derived from relevant documents and literature. Classroom observations were conducted to examine instructional communication practices in authentic English learning settings, focusing on verbal, nonverbal, and media-based communication, as well as interaction patterns between teachers and students. Field notes and observation sheets were used to record student engagement, feedback, and classroom interactions. In-depth semi-structured interviews were carried out with English teachers and selected students to explore their experiences, perceptions, and reflections on instructional communication during the learning process. To strengthen data validity, document analysis was conducted by reviewing lesson plans, teaching guides, student worksheets, and relevant academic literature, enabling data triangulation and a more comprehensive understanding of instructional communication practices.

## Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study followed the qualitative interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman, in which data analysis is conducted continuously and iteratively until data saturation is achieved. The analysis consisted of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data reduction involved selecting, summarizing, and focusing raw data obtained from observations, interviews, and documents to identify relevant patterns of instructional communication. Data display was carried out by organizing the reduced data into descriptive narratives, tables, and selected quotations to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn and verified by identifying recurring communication patterns and linking them to relevant theoretical frameworks and contextual conditions. This analytical process was conducted simultaneously during and after data collection, with data triangulation applied to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

## Results and Discussion

A teacher's instructional communication style is reflected in how they convey information, give instructions, manage interactions, and facilitate the learning process. Teachers use a combination of verbal and nonverbal communication to clarify messages, ensure student engagement, and guide the learning process. In practice, Miss Novi implements responsive instructional communication, which involves offering praise before correction, encouraging students to express alternative perspectives, and allowing students the flexibility to ask questions at any time. Based on classroom observations and in-depth interviews with English teachers, it was found that the instructional communication styles used are diverse and contextual, adapting to learning objectives, student characteristics, and the principles of student-centered learning. Instructional communication is not only carried out through verbal delivery but also through two-way interaction, the use of visual symbols, learning media, and constructive feedback.

Table 1. Mapping of Gagné Learning Stages in Finland-Based Instructional Communication Practices in English Learning

| <b>Stages of Winning Learning</b>    | <b>Teacher Instructional Communication Practices</b>  | <b>Features of Finland's Education Approach</b>                   | <b>Impact on Students</b>   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Gaining attention                    | The teacher opens learning with personal greetings, spark questions, and association of the material with students' daily experiences | Learning starts from real experience and dialogical relationships | Students are more focused, comfortable, and ready to engage in learning |
| Informing learners of objectives     | The teacher explains the purpose of learning openly and communicatively   | Goal transparency and meaningful learning                         | Students understand the direction of learning and feel involved         |
| Stimulating recall of prior learning | The teacher invites students to discuss and share previous  | Appreciation of the student's                                     | Students are more active and  |

|                                  |   |   |  |
|----------------------------------|---|---|--|
|                                  | experiences or knowledge  | background and experience                             | confident in their opinions  |
| Presenting content               | The teacher delivers material through discussions, contextual examples, and digital media | Contextual and multimodal learning                    | Material is easier to understand and engaging                                  |
| Providing learning guidance      | The teacher plays the role of a facilitator, giving direction without dominating          | Teacher as learning companion, not the sole authority | Students are more independent and collaborative                                |
| Providing feedback               | The teacher provides positive responses, constructive corrections, and appreciation       | Mistakes are seen as part of the learning process     | Increase motivation and courage to communicate                                 |
| Assessing performance            | Assessment is carried out formatively through discussion, presentation, and reflection    | Minimal evaluative pressure, focus on process         | Students are not afraid of making mistakes and are more actively participating |
| Enhancing retention and transfer | The teacher invites students to reflect and relate the material to other contexts         | Deep and reflective learning                          | Students' understanding is more meaningful and sustainable                     |

Theoretically, this study has enriched the study of instructional communication by showing that instructional communication is not just a message delivery technique, but a social practice that shapes meaning, relationships, and learning experiences. The integration of Gagné's theory with the Finnish educational approach suggests that instructional communication can be a bridge between learning design and student learning experience. In practical terms, these findings provide an instructional communication model that can be adapted in other schools, particularly in English language learning, by emphasizing dialogue, collaboration, and enjoyable learning environment as the core of the learning process. Based on the findings of the research, instructional communication can be understood as a strategic process that integrates the delivery of academic messages, the development of interpersonal relationships, and the management of emotions in the context of learning. Instructional communication is no longer positioned as a teaching technique alone, but rather as a social practice that shapes the learning climate and student experience.

The main contribution of this research to the science of communication lies in the strengthening of the concept of instructional communication as a dialogical, humanist, and contextual process, especially in English learning based on the Finnish approach. According to Ms. Minna Mäkihönko, instructional communication styles in learning are also reflected in the arrangement of the learning environment, particularly the seating positions of students. Ms. Minna emphasized that seating arrangement has a significant influence on learning effectiveness, particularly when the teacher delivers the main explanation or initial instructions. During this phase, students should be seated uniformly facing forward. Seating arrangements that form a U-shape or face each other are considered less effective when the teacher is

delivering an important explanation, as they can distract students from the teacher and the learning objectives being conveyed. Nevertheless, flexible seating arrangements are still considered important, but they need to be tailored to the objectives and phase of the learning process.

*“Seating arrangements really matter. When the teacher is explaining something important, students should face forward. Sitting in a U-shape or facing each other can distract them from the learning goals at that moment.”*

This form of instructional communication demonstrates that in Finnish-based learning, communication is not only realized through verbal language, but also through the management of the learning space and situation that supports student focus and engagement. The results of research conducted with expert teachers indicate that the forms of instructional communication used by expert teachers include complementary verbal and nonverbal communication. Verbal communication is realized through giving instructions, explaining material, and directing learning activities. Meanwhile, nonverbal communication is carried out through gestures, modeling, and the use of visual media.

The interviewee explained that verbal instructions alone are often insufficient, especially for students with basic abilities, as stated below:

*“For students with basic abilities, sometimes they don't understand the instructions alone. So, it must be demonstrated first, explained coherently, and given practice.”*

Furthermore, the expert teachers also emphasized the importance of using nonverbal communication to avoid reliance on language translation, as stated:

*“If you want students to understand instructions without translation, you can use gestures and modeling. You can also use videos or images because they can convey more meaning.”*

This form of communication demonstrates the application of Finnish-based learning principles, which emphasize contextual and multimodal learning. Observations show that teachers use various forms of instructional communication, both verbal and nonverbal, in the English language learning process. Verbal communication is the most dominant form, particularly in delivering instructions, explaining material, and providing feedback to students.

## **Verbal**

Observations indicate that Miss Novi's communication tends to be two-way, but occasionally one-way, especially when initially conveying core material and learning objectives. At the beginning of the lesson, Miss Novi uses a lecture method. Instructions are delivered step by step and clearly in English, then briefly translated into Indonesian. Miss Novi frequently asks questions such as "What do you think?" to encourage students to be interactive in their learning. Learning instructions are generally delivered in simple English. The teacher uses short, clear sentences, such as "Open your book," "Work in groups," or "Listen carefully." When students show signs of confusion, the teacher repeats the instructions at a slower pace or clarifies them again in Indonesian (Observation, September 17, 2025, 10:25 a.m. WIB).

The teacher also uses questions as a form of instructional communication to ensure student understanding. Questions such as "Is it clear?" or "Do you understand?" are often asked after the teacher provides specific explanations or instructions (Observation, September 10, 2025, 9:40 a.m. WIB). Other forms of instructional communication include persuasive and motivational communication. Teachers consciously build communication that encourages

student engagement through motivation, appreciation, and simple rewards. This approach is used to boost student confidence and create a positive and participatory learning environment.

*"If a student answers correctly, I acknowledge them with praise or sometimes a small reward to further motivate them."*

When providing feedback, teachers employ a non-judgmental, reflective and corrective form of communication. When students give an incorrect answer, teachers do not directly point out the error, but instead guide students to rethink it through probing questions. This approach aims to maintain students' sense of security in communicating and encourage them to keep trying.

*"If they're wrong, I don't immediately say it's wrong. I usually prompt them with questions like, 'Is there another answer?' and then I explain it again."*

Furthermore, based on student interviews, teachers also use simple and functional verbal instructional communication, particularly when delivering classroom instructions. Instructions are often delivered in concise, familiar English, so students become accustomed to hearing and understanding English in real-world contexts. examples of frequently used instructions.

*"For example, 'Open your book,' 'Come to the front,' 'Answer the question.'"*

However, to ensure understanding for all students, Miss Novi also implements bilingual communication, using both English and Indonesian flexibly.

*"The instructions are usually bilingual, using Indonesian and English."*

This approach aligns with the principle of inclusivity in Finnish education, which emphasizes that the language of instruction should facilitate understanding, not hinder learning. Teachers employ clear, structured, and contextualized verbal communication when delivering material. They use relatively simple, easily understood language appropriate to the students' ability levels. Furthermore, they regularly ask open-ended questions to encourage critical thinking and active student participation, in accordance with the recommendations of Richmond and McCroskey (2009). As stated by a student named Kanza, regarding encouraging active student participation, stated,

*"Actually, Miss Novi often asks us questions first, hehe. But for me, I ask more questions than I answer. The instructions are usually bilingual, so it's safe."*

Teachers alternately use English and Indonesian (bilingual), especially when giving instructions, asking open-ended questions, and explaining material. The use of simple, easy-to-understand sentences enables students to understand and participate in learning activities. For example, when asking or explaining the location of objects, restaurants, or everyday things, such as "There is/are" to provide and ask for information about the location of something. Teachers consistently provide clear and concise instructions, ensuring students are not confused when completing assigned tasks or activities. Miss Novi consistently praises students with words like "Good job!" or "Excellent!" for those who dare to ask or answer questions. She also praises students for their courage while correcting them gently and non-judgmentally.

Interviews with eighth-grade students at Mutiara Insani Junior High School revealed that English teacher Miss Novi employs a variety of interactive, contextual, and student-centered instructional communication methods. These communication methods are not limited to verbal delivery but also include the use of oral instructions, visuals, hands-on practice, two-way communication, and collaborative communication in group activities. This aligns with Finnish-based learning principles that emphasize dialogue, active participation, and student-centered learning. One dominant form of instructional communication is two-way (dialogic) communication. Students reported that Miss Novi consistently opens up the question-and-

answer space and encourages students to respond to instructions and questions throughout the lesson. Jeni explained that when students experience confusion, the teacher provides opportunities for them to ask questions and re-explain.

*"If there's a part we're confused about, we often ask again, 'Miss, what does this mean?' Then we explain it again."*

Arsya also emphasized that teachers don't just explain, but also give students time to work and respond, so that communication is reciprocal.

*"Miss Novi usually explains first, then gives us a chance to work."*

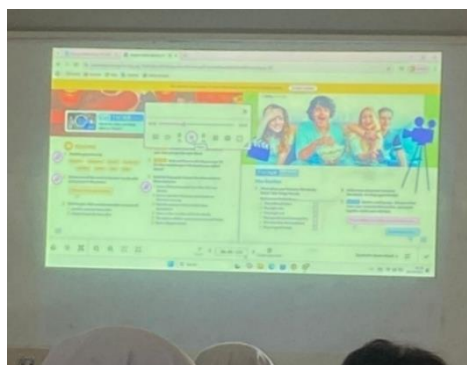
This form of communication reflects the teachers' understanding that learning is not just about delivering messages, but rather an interactive process that involves feedback, as emphasized in the Finnish approach.

### **Nonverbal**

In addition to verbal communication, teachers consistently utilize nonverbal communication. They use hand gestures to point to sections of the book, the projector screen, or students who are being asked to answer questions. They also move around, approach students working on assignments, and provide personal guidance (Observation, September 10, 2025, 9:50 a.m. WIB). The use of body language, facial expressions, and eye contact are important aspects of teachers' nonverbal communication. Teachers demonstrate interest and empathy through gestures that support the learning process, creating a more comfortable and communicative classroom atmosphere. Observations show that teachers try to adapt their expressions to the content and mood of the students, increasing their confidence and motivation. Miss Novi uses varied intonation, intense eye contact, and smiles to motivate.

Teachers utilize gestures or hand movements when explaining and discussing video content, using eye contact, facial expressions, and direct physical approaches, such as patting students on the shoulder, approaching students who appear to be struggling, or raising a finger to emphasize a point. This helps reinforce communication and ensures that students understand the message. The teacher's facial expressions, sometimes blank or smiling, help lighten the mood and increase student comfort in interacting. While students are working on assignments, Miss Novi never remains silent. She constantly walks around the class to check whether students are completing the assignments correctly and to ensure students' understanding, as she is concerned that some students may still be confused. If they are, they are likely to fall behind, requiring Miss Novi to check and assist them.

### **Media**



*Figure 1. Using the Cambridge One application Using A Projector*

In practice, teachers utilize various supporting media, such as projectors, instructional videos, and interactive digital applications. The use of these media has been proven to enhance learning and accommodate various student learning styles, in line with the principles of media theory and based communication. The use of learning symbols, visual media such as PowerPoint presentations, videos, images, and body gestures is used to clarify instructions and minimize misunderstandings, especially when English is used as the medium of instruction.

*"Instructions are usually delivered through visual aids such as pictures, flashcards, or slide shows, then repeated two or three times with clear intonation and supported by gestures."*

Teachers use visual media such as whiteboards, projectors, loudspeakers, and laptops to support active and interactive learning processes. For example, they display videos, audio, and digital materials such as e-books using the Cambridge Learning Platform that are appropriate for the material, as well as image-based worksheets.

Based on observations, learning media plays a role in supporting instructional communication. Teachers use projectors to display learning materials, videos, and audio. In some meetings, students are asked to use their laptops to access digital materials prepared by the teacher. The teacher ensured that all students had access to the material before the lesson continued (Observation, November 7, 2025, 12:45 WIB).

Another prominent form of instructional communication was visual and multimodal communication. Students reported that the teacher utilized media such as projectors, videos, audio listening, e-books, and worksheets to support the delivery of the material. Gadiza explained that the use of media helped students understand the material more concretely.

*"Miss Novi uses the projector, we open the e-book, watch the video material, then Miss Novi explains it, and then we work on the worksheet together."*

Fatih also added that the variety of media makes learning more engaging and less monotonous.

*"Sometimes there are games, sometimes we watch using the projector. We really enjoy listening."*

This use of media is also relevant to the Finnish approach, which emphasizes a variety of media to create learning experiences. It was stated that the quiz feature in learning facilitates the learning process because there is also a learning flow, eliminating the need for the hassle of preparing teaching materials. This demonstrates that the use of digital features such as quizzes can help create a more efficient and structured learning process. This is interesting, as one student commented.

*"It's fun, the language is simple and easy to understand. Sometimes there are games, sometimes we watch videos using a projector. We really enjoy listening, both video and audio. Sometimes in the lab, sometimes in class."*

This suggests that the English learning facilitated by Miss Novi is engaging and easy for students to understand.

## **Learning Approach**

Based on observations and interviews, students are actively involved in classroom communication. Teachers also mentioned that they often ask questions, offer suggestions, and even politely criticize. What initially is a two-way interaction between teacher and students often develops into multi-way communication during group discussions. In these situations, students interact not only with the teacher but also exchange ideas with their classmates.

The Finnish learning method emphasizes the importance of personalized learning, so each student receives individual attention tailored to their learning style, needs, and pace. This approach makes the learning process more relevant, motivational, and improves learning outcomes because students feel cared for and valued. Furthermore, the hands-on practice method is highly effective in improving students' fluency and confidence in English through activities such as dialogues, dramas, and writing exercises, which enable them to apply theory to real-life situations. Miss N said:

*"The Project-Based Learning method uses projects/activities as the core of learning. In these activities, students explore, evaluate, interpret, and synthesize information to obtain various learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and attitudes). When conducted in groups, each group is given a different problem. They must present to the class, and their peers provide feedback and take notes. At the end, questions are asked, either by me as the teacher or by the presenting group, to ensure mutual attention. This provides them with hands-on experience. Finally, I require reflection, asking practical questions such as, "When is the present tense used? What is the purpose?" We can ascertain from their answers whether they truly understand the use and outcomes of today's learning."*

The implementation of a project-based learning model is also highly appropriate, where students are invited to work on projects such as creating videos, posters, or presentations that integrate language skills with other 21st-century skills, thereby increasing motivation and deepening understanding. Furthermore, a play-based learning approach is a highly suitable method for students because it involves fun and meaningful activities that foster intrinsic motivation and the natural development of social and language aspects. As Miss N stated,

*"Learning through a playful approach is very important. Because through play, children can learn in a fun and meaningful way. They become more motivated internally, not because they are told to. Furthermore, play activities also help them develop social and language skills naturally."*

Equally important, collaborative learning, which involves students working together in groups to complete tasks, can strengthen their communication and cooperation skills, while also developing social competence and the ability to express ideas deferentially. Miss Novi frequently uses this approach because it is more effective and easier to implement. Learning through play and collaboration can be combined, as several eighth-grade students noted.

*"I vividly remember the moving class in the field. We created sentences in groups using the simple present and present continuous. We had to hurry because there was a time limit. It was exciting and nerve-wracking."*

*"So learning is like playing."*

*"Yes, the hands-on practice helps us understand and visualize when it's used."*

By adopting and integrating these principles, English learning in Indonesia can be more effective, enjoyable, and inclusive, and significantly improve the quality of learning outcomes. One student said,

*"I think it's very clear, Sis. The explanations are easy to understand and straight to the point. They're not long-winded and don't get boring. Sometimes there are parts that are a bit difficult, like the material on tenses, but Miss N is very patient in explaining until we understand."*

Several students stated that the learning adopted from Finland and delivered by Miss Novi is easy to understand and enjoyable. Instructional communication is also realized through the

arrangement of social interactions in the classroom. The teacher arranges students' seating according to learning needs, both during material delivery and during discussions or group work. This arrangement is intended to maintain student focus and encourage collaboration. Miss N said,

*"When the teacher is explaining, everyone should be sitting facing the front. However, when learning in groups, seating is arranged according to learning needs."*

Furthermore, the teacher implements collaborative communication by involving students in group activities and projects. In this context, communication occurs not only between the teacher and students, but also between students. The teacher acts as a facilitator who monitors, guides, and provides direction when necessary. According to Miss N,

*"When they're in groups, I give them different problems. They have to present, and then their peers provide feedback."*

The instructional communication methods used by teachers also include a personalized approach. Teachers strive to approach students individually, especially when they lack focus, lack confidence, or have abilities that are more prominent than their peers. This approach is carried out through direct dialogue, assigning special roles, or positive reinforcement.

*"For students who are more proficient, I ask them to help their peers, so it's like a teacher's assistant."*

Teachers at Mutiara Insani Junior High School in Puwakarta adopt a student-centered learning approach that emphasizes active student participation. As a facilitation tool, they use digital technology, accommodate diverse student needs, and develop varied and innovative learning strategies. This approach supports effective and interactive communication, in line with the Finnish model that places students at the center of learning.

In addition to verbal and visual communication, Miss Novi also implements hands-on, hands-on instructional communication. Students find that English learning is often packaged in the form of practice, games, moving classes, and extracurricular activities. This form of communication allows students to understand the material through experience, not just theoretical explanations. Students described their experiences as follows:

*"So learning is like playing."*

*"We learn while moving, not just sitting in class."*

This form of communication reflects the principle of joyful learning in Finnish-based learning, where learning experiences are designed to be meaningful and enjoyable. In the context of social interactions, teachers also implement collaborative instructional communication through group work and discussions. Students explained that teachers divide groups into different tasks, encourage discussion, and facilitate the exchange of ideas among students. Students reported that group work helps lighten the load and increase participation.

*"We can discuss together and exchange ideas."*

Teachers also play an active role in monitoring group communication to ensure all students are involved.

*"Miss Novi always walks around the class and makes sure we're doing our assignments."*

Miss Novi often uses communication that builds a sense of security and confidence. Students noted that Miss Novi doesn't judge students when they make mistakes, but instead provides patient and constructive correction.

*"If we make a mistake, Miss Novi doesn't get angry, but patiently corrects us."*

Kanza also emphasized that the class atmosphere felt relaxed and not tense.

*"If you make a mistake, we'll all joke around about it, so you're not embarrassed."*

This form of communication reflects the principle of psychological safety, a key foundation of the Finnish education system, where students are encouraged to experiment without fear of being judged. The teacher defines Finnish-style learning as an approach that places students at the center of learning (student-centered learning). According to her, this approach honors students by respecting their needs, abilities, and curiosity. Teachers serve not only as transmitters of material but also as facilitators, helping students find meaning in their learning process. However, in practice, implementing this approach can be quite challenging and requires thorough preparation.

The teacher explained that Finnish-style learning emphasizes deep thinking, not simply academic achievement. In this context, learning is viewed as an enjoyable, relevant, and meaningful activity for students. Some of the Finnish values implemented by the teacher in the classroom include student-centered learning, class agreements, the implementation of moving classes, and environmental awareness, such as removing shoes in the classroom to maintain cleanliness. Miss Novi also emphasized the importance of equalizing learning opportunities for students with special needs with other students, and creating contextual, humanistic, and collaborative learning between teachers, students, and parents.

The most striking difference between this method and traditional methods, according to teachers, lies in the focus of learning. While traditional methods emphasize exam results and memorization, the Finnish approach prioritizes the process of understanding, exploration, and the development of critical thinking. The teacher's role is not as a center of information, but as a facilitator facilitating the learning process. Teachers employ the PPP (Presentation Practice Production) method and the observation-practice approach, which are oriented towards hands-on practice and simulations. Teachers also facilitate group discussions, utilizing various activities that stimulate active student participation and enhance students' communication potential in a practical way. The activities involved vary, from lectures, group discussions, student presentations, to the use of visual and digital media.

Documentation shows that the instructional communication used by teachers is multimodal, involving verbal, visual, and activity-based communication. In the lesson plans, teacher instructions are often conveyed through open-ended questions, simulations, and dialogues designed to encourage active student participation. For example, in the core activity of Think Level 1 Unit 3, teachers write instructions in the form of direct questions to students, such as, "Do you sometimes eat out? Where do you usually go? What kind of food do you like eating?" This form of communication demonstrates the use of language as a tool to elicit students' responses and personal experiences. In addition to verbal communication, teachers also use visual and audio media as part of instructional communication. The lesson plan document states that teachers "show pictures," "have students listen to recordings," and use Think Digital (CD Audio) as learning media.

The use of these media reinforces the delivery of instructions and helps students understand the material through various communication channels. This form of instructional communication is also evident in the use of simulations and role-playing. In Think Level 1 Unit 4, teachers designed guided role-play activities in which students portrayed specific characters such as Kathy, Lucy, Tom, Mum, and Dad to practice asking for permission. This activity demonstrates that instructional communication is not only one-way verbal but also manifests in interactions between students through social roles.

Overall, the forms of instructional communication used by English teachers at Mutiara Insani Junior High School are multimodal, interactive, and adaptive. The results of the study indicate that the forms of instructional communication used by English teachers include verbal-bilingual, visual, hands-on, collaborative, and affective. These various forms of communication show that teachers do not only focus on delivering material, but also on the interaction process and students' learning experiences, in accordance with the characteristics of Finnish-based learning.

### **Inhibitor**

In addition to supporting factors, teachers also face several obstacles in implementing instructional communication. One major obstacle is students' psychological state, particularly their fluctuating moods. When students are emotionally unprepared, instructional communication becomes less effective, even if the learning method has been well-designed.

*"There are times when I've prepared the method well, but the students aren't in a good mood."*

Another obstacle relates to differences in students' ability levels and self-confidence. Some students are still passive or lack confidence in communicating, especially when using English. This situation requires teachers to take an extra approach to encourage students to actively engage.

*"Building student-centered learning is not easy. Some students are still passive or lack confidence."*

Furthermore, students' limited English vocabulary also presents a barrier to instructional communication. Not understanding certain instructions or terms can lead to miscommunication, requiring teachers to repeat, simplify, or translate instructions to ensure students understand. Miss N said:

*"Most misunderstandings occur because they don't understand the meaning of English vocabulary."*

Another obstacle that arises is the significant difference in ability levels between students, including those with higher English proficiency. This situation has the potential to reduce the focus of students who already feel capable if not managed properly. According to Miss n,

*"Almost in every class, there are students who are already too good at English."*

However, teachers strive to overcome these obstacles through various adaptive strategies, such as creating a positive classroom atmosphere, preparing alternative plans (Plan A and Plan B), providing appreciation, and involving more advanced students in helping their peers. According to Miss n,

*"I always prepare several alternative strategies and provide appreciation, no matter how small, so they dare to try again."*

According to Miss Novi, the success of instructional communication is influenced by the emotional connection between the teacher and students, the classroom atmosphere, and the flexibility of the teacher's teaching style to suit the students' needs. However, obstacles still arise, especially in efforts to build fully student-centered learning. This is because not all students have the same level of motivation and activeness. As teachers, we must put in more effort to foster a passion for learning and build the self-confidence of students who are still passive. The inhibiting factors identified were related to students' initial feelings of nervousness

or stress when having to use English. However, according to a teaching expert, this can be overcome by providing a clear learning flow, as stated:

*"Initially, they're definitely stressed because they're nervous, but they have to follow instructions. The important thing is to provide a path so they don't get confused."*

Furthermore, the differences in student characteristics also pose a challenge to instructional communication. Therefore, the teaching expert emphasized the importance of building rapport first:

*"We have to get to know each other first, and there has to be an approach. Communication must be ongoing."*

Teachers revealed that the success of instructional communication is greatly influenced by several factors, including a good emotional connection between teacher and students, a comfortable classroom atmosphere, and the teacher's flexibility in adapting their teaching style to students' needs. According to an interview with Miss N, to overcome these obstacles, teachers must prepare various alternative strategies, such as creating a plan A and a plan B to ensure learning continues smoothly. She also strives to appreciate every small effort made by students, as she believes that simple rewards can be a powerful motivator for students to continue the process. Miss N also said

*"There are times when I've prepared a good method, but the children aren't in a good mood. The challenge is that the learning must continue, and I have to maintain a positive mood to keep the class moving. And actually, if they're in a good mood, communication or learning, no matter how I convey it, will be effective. That's why Finland always reminds us with the phrase, "Don't forget to be happy," because they say happiness is a key learning concept. So, before the lesson begins, how do we get them in a good mood? Usually, we do what they want, or we can use icebreakers, or we play quizzes, and other things that make them happy or get them in a good mood."*

Some students also had difficulty understanding instructions in English that lacked translation, hindering their participation. In some activities, the instructions were incomplete, causing confusion, such as when group assignments were given without detailed explanations of the steps. This also hindered the learning process. On the other hand, several inhibiting factors were also identified in the implementation of instructional communication. Differences in English proficiency among students meant some students required additional explanations or repetition of instructions. This was evident when several students questioned each other about the instructions given by the teacher during the audio lesson (Observation, September 17, 2025, 11:15 a.m. WIB). Limited learning time also posed a significant obstacle, particularly during group discussions and presentations. The teacher repeatedly reminded students of the remaining time for activities, such as by saying,

*"Time is almost up, five minutes left" (Observation, September 18, 2025, 11:30 a.m. WIB).*

Another potentially inhibiting factor was the excessive emphasis on exams. In the Finnish education system, exams are not a primary focus of the learning process because they are considered to limit students' creativity and exploration. Instead, the primary focus is on the learning process, the development of understanding, and students' thinking skills. According to Miss m,

*"In Finland, we don't focus heavily on exams. The most important thing is the learning process, not test results."*

The findings from this discussion are crucial in identifying conditions that support and hinder the implementation of Finnish-based English teacher instructional communication in the learning context. On the other hand, the documentation also indicates potential inhibiting factors. The complexity of learning activities, such as role-playing, group projects, and the use of digital media, requires time commitment and good classroom management. Furthermore, the use of various digital features requires adequate technological literacy from both teachers and students, which can potentially become a barrier if not balanced with adequate guidance. Overall, the supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of instructional communication interact and influence the dynamics of classroom learning. Teachers' ability to manage obstacles and maximize supporting factors is key to maintaining the effectiveness of instructional communication in English learning.

Theoretically, instructional communication is understood as a process of exchanging messages consciously designed to facilitate effective, meaningful learning, and oriented toward achieving learning objectives. Instructional communication encompasses various forms of communication, both verbal and nonverbal, that teachers use to convey material, provide instructions, foster interactions, and create a classroom climate that supports active student engagement. This perspective positions communication not merely as a means of conveying information, but as a pedagogical instrument with a strategic function in the learning process.

The results of this study indicate that English teachers at Mutiara Insani Junior High School use a variety of flexible and contextual forms of instructional communication. The most prominent form of communication is two-way verbal communication, manifested through question-and-answer activities, short discussions, and clarification of understanding throughout the learning process. Teachers consistently encourage students to respond to questions, express their opinions, and confirm their understanding of the material being studied. This practice demonstrates that instructional communication is not one-way but rather positions students as active communication partners.

Within the framework of humanistic instructional communication theory, this two-way communication serves to build positive interpersonal relationships between teachers and students. Dialogic interactions enable teachers to gain a deeper understanding of students' learning situations and provide space for students to express their ideas and any learning difficulties they encounter. This approach aligns with Finnish educational principles, which emphasize the importance of open communication and egalitarian educational relationships in the classroom.

In addition to verbal communication, teachers also consistently utilize nonverbal communication in their lessons. Observations revealed that teachers use friendly facial expressions, supportive body gestures, and varied intonation to maintain student attention and engagement. This form of nonverbal communication reinforces the teacher's verbal messages and creates a comfortable and relaxed classroom atmosphere. From a communication theory perspective, the use of positive nonverbal messages contributes to the construction of meaning and the overall effectiveness of communication.

In the Finnish-based learning context, warm, non-authoritarian nonverbal communication plays a crucial role in fostering psychological safety. A psychologically safe learning environment allows students to confidently ask questions, express opinions, and make mistakes without fear. This is evident in the students' relatively active responses and their unhesitant interactions with the teacher during the English learning process.

Another form of instructional communication identified is facilitative communication, which serves to accompany and guide students during the learning process, rather than dominate

classroom activities. Teachers deliver brief and clear instructions at the beginning of the lesson, then act more as facilitators, monitoring student activity. During this stage, teacher communication often includes open-ended questions, verbal cues to encourage thinking, and brief, constructive feedback. This communication pattern reflects a shift in the teacher's role from teacher-centered to student-centered learning.

Theoretically, facilitative communication is closely related to the constructivist approach, which emphasizes that knowledge is actively constructed by students through learning experiences. Finnish education adopts this principle by empowering students to explore learning materials independently. Research findings indicate that teachers understand and implement this form of communication by giving students the opportunity to attempt tasks before providing additional assistance or explanations.

The instructional communication methods used by teachers also demonstrate contextual communication, which relates learning material to the realities of students' daily lives. Teachers use examples, situations, and vocabulary familiar to students' experiences to explain English material. This form of communication serves to increase the relevance of learning and help students understand the material more meaningfully. In theoretical studies, contextual communication aligns with the principles of meaningful learning and phenomenon-based learning, which are characteristic of Finnish education.

Furthermore, research results indicate that instructional communication used by teachers places relatively little emphasis on exam-based evaluation. Teachers more often use communication in the form of verbal reinforcement, appreciation for student effort, and brief reflections on the learning process. This form of communication supports the view that learning should focus on the process and development of student understanding, not solely on grades. This principle is also part of the Finnish educational philosophy, which prioritizes the well-being and holistic development of students.

Thus, the various forms of instructional communication used by English teachers at Mutiara Insani Junior High School, ranging from verbal and nonverbal communication, two-way communication, facilitative communication, to contextual communication, demonstrate the alignment between classroom learning practices and the theoretical framework of instructional communication and the principles of Finnish-based innovative learning. These forms of communication are an integral part of the English learning process, which is oriented towards active involvement and student learning experiences.

## **Conclusion**

The instructional communication methods employed by teachers include verbal, nonverbal, and media-supported communication. Teachers use simple language, clear intonation, repetition, prompting questions, and positive feedback. Nonverbal communication, such as gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, and physical contact with distracted students, also plays a crucial role in clarifying messages. Furthermore, the use of media such as PowerPoint presentations, videos, flashcards, Finnish SOP symbols, and project-based activities enhances the effectiveness of instructional communication. These forms of communication demonstrate that teachers actively strive to ensure message clarity (teacher clarity), create a comfortable atmosphere, and stimulate student participation.

## **Suggestion**

Teachers are expected to maintain the multidirectional communication patterns and humanistic approach that have been working well. The variety of media and visual strategies can be increased to make instructions more easily understood by all students, including those with

lower abilities. Learning reflection should also be conducted consistently to help students understand the meaning of learning. Schools are advised to provide ongoing support through instructional communication training based on the Finnish method and ensure the stability of the technology facilities used by teachers in learning. Furthermore, schools can strengthen coordination between teachers so that these good practices can be applied to other subjects. Future research could expand the focus on the relationship between instructional communication and student learning outcomes quantitatively, or apply it to different levels and subjects to assess the consistency of the effectiveness of the Finnish approach in the Indonesian educational context.

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