The Development of NCS Communication Skills
Performance Assessment Instrument

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Abstract. The South Korean government selected "Creating a Competence Based Society" as a core task, and established National Competency Standards (NCS) for successful implementation of the task. To apply NCS into educational practice, assessment tools for NCS-based curriculum should be developed. However, a standardized assessment tool that instructors can use has not been developed yet. This study developed the performance assessment instrument to assess NCS communication skills, and tested the validity of developed instrument. Developed instrument enables the objective and coherent assessment of a learner's communication performance skills.

Keywords: National Competency Standards, Assessment Instrument, Performance Assessment, NCS Communication Skills

1 Introduction

The South Korean government selected "Creating a Competence Based Society" as a core task, and established National Competency Standards (NCS) to assess the college students’ professional competency with a realistic technique [1]. The government have provided 13 types of performance assessments as an alternative way to access students’ professional competency. However, these performance assessments only present direction of assessment, and do not present instructions of use of those assessments and specific assessments instruments that instructors can use in their class. To apply NCS into the educational practice, the assessment instruments for NCS-based curriculum should be developed [2]. According to Back and Park, assessment, feedback, reeducation should be conducted in order to operate NCS-based curriculum successfully [2]. In this study, we developed the assessment instrument for NCS communication skills, which was one of NCS vocational basic skills, and tested the validity of the developed assessment instrument.
2 National Competency Standards

NCS is defined as required knowledge, skill and attitude in order to execute one’s duties at work, which are systematized by business sectors and level of ability [3]. NCS vocational competency is the competency that is required to perform a duty successfully. NCS vocational consists of job competence and vocational basic skills. Vocational basic skills consist of 10 core skills including communication skills, resource management skills, interpersonal skills, problem solving skills, mathematics skills, self-development skills, information literacy skills, understanding organization skills, technical skills, and vocational ethics [3]. Among 10 vocational basic skills, communication skills have been regarded as the most important skills by researchers, companies, and educational institutions [4, 5]. Korea Ministry of Education provides 13 types of performance assessment method to assess students various NCS skills such as portfolio, essay, checklist, and descriptive assessment [1]. However, it is hard to find standardized assessment instruments that practitioners can use for assessing students’ performance level of NCS skills.

3 Research Design

The purpose of this study was to develop the assessment instrument to assess students’ NCS communication skills. With this purpose, the specific research questions were 1) What is the appropriate performance assessment type for assessing NCS communication skills?, and 2) What is the appropriate assessment instrument that can assess NCS communication skills?

This study chose design-based research as methodology to develop the assessment instrument and test the validity of developed instrument [6]. The development process of NCS communication skills performance instrument is as follows.

![Development Process of NCS Communication Skills Performance Assessment Instrument](image)

Fig. 1. Development Process of NCS Communication Skills Performance Assessment Instrument

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4 Development of the Assessment Instrument

4.1 Selection of Assessment Areas of NCS communication Skills

Through the literature review on existing studies about communication skills, we identified and selected assessment areas of NCS communication skills. The areas of assessing NCS communication skills that we selected included document comprehension skills, document writing skills, listening comprehension skills, and linguistic expression skills. We stated the performance goals of each assessment area of NCS communication skills.

4.2 Selection of Type of Performance Assessment

According to each assessment area of NCS communication skills, we selected four types of performance assessments among 13 types that were provided by the government. With an analysis of existing studies on assessment of communication skills we selected descriptive assessment and essay assessment to assess document comprehension skills and document writing skills, and selected tester checklist and testee checklist to assess listening comprehension skills and linguistic expression skills. Each of the selected performance assessment type got 4.5 point average out of the possible 5 in the validity by expert examination.

4.3 Development of the Performance Assessment Instrument

With selected assessment areas and types of performance assessments, we developed the performance assessment instrument. At first, we identified assessment elements by assessment areas. And then, we classified the assessment instrument into document type and lingual type. The document type assessment instrument was developed as a form of descriptive and essay assessment. We developed the instruments based on the assessment frame and the table of specification of the document comprehension skills and the document writing skills. Those frame and table helped us to identify all assessment items. Table 1 and 2 show the assessment frame and the table of specification of the document comprehension skills. Assessment items of this instrument were developed into 9 document comprehension skills items and 9 document writing skills items. The scoring criteria of each item were also developed.

Table 1. Assessment Frame of Document Comprehension Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Document</th>
<th>Official Task</th>
<th>Official document, Plan, Report, Drafting paper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official Task</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unofficial Task</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Delivery</td>
<td></td>
<td>Instructions, News release, Business memo</td>
</tr>
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</table>
The lingual type assessment instrument was developed as tester checklist and testee checklist. Each checklist item was developed connecting with each assessment factor. The listening comprehension skills assessment instrument was composed of 6 items. The linguistic expression skills assessment instrument was composed of 34 items about presentation and speech, 23 items about meeting, reporting and interview, and 9 items for ordinary business communication. Particularly, the assessment guide and reference items of assessment were also developed to support the use of tester checklist and testee checklist in practice.

4.4 Verification of the Validity of Instrument

We tested the validity of developed instrument. The validity of assessment instrument received 4.3 out of the possible 5. According to the calculating result of validity of each item of each assessment area, each item of the document comprehension skills
assessment instrument received .46, the document writing skills received .77, the listening comprehension skills received .83, and the linguistic expression skills received .95.

5 Discussion

In this study, we developed the performance assessment instrument to assess NCS communication skills. This study has its significance in that it can be an assessment instrument, which enables the objective and coherent assessment of a learner's communication performance skills. When we developed the performance assessment instrument, we developed scoring criteria, assessment guide and reference items of each assessment item together in order to support users to utilize developed assessment instrument. Instructors can use this assessment instrument in their real classroom to assess students’ NCS communication skills.

We also made efforts to develop assessment instrument systematically. At first, we analyzed 13 types of performance assessment to identify what is the most appropriate performance assessment among 13 types. We considered the conformity between performance goals of assessment areas and performance assessment types, and checked the possibility of application of a specific assessment in real classroom in order to choose the most appropriate performance assessment for assessing NCS communication skills. And also, we created and used the assessment frame and the table of specification in order to identify all assessment items thoroughly on the development process. These approaches had a positive effect on ensuring the validity of developed instrument.

The developed NCS communication skills performance assessment instrument will contribute to the development of an assessment instrument for assessing other vocational basic skills in the future. As a follow-up study on the development of NCS communication skills performance assessment instrument, we will test the reliability and usability of the developed instrument.

References