

**Using Explanation as a Teaching Method:
How Prepared Are High School Technology Teachers in
Free State Province, South Africa?**

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ABSTRACT The objective of this study is twofold: to explore students' perceptions regarding the use of explanation as a teaching method in classroom teaching and to determine the impact of communication skills on teachers' explanation skills. A total of 120 participants from twelve High schools offering technology subjects completed the questionnaire, which assessed teachers' competences in the use of orientation, keys, summaries and communication skills. The first and second objective was addressed by calculating the frequencies and the percentages of questionnaire survey data. All data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS v18 2010). The results revealed that while majority (85%) of technology teachers have adequate technology subject content knowledge, not all of them have the necessary competence in using various explanation approaches effectively. In particular, the study revealed that nearly half the number of technology teachers surveyed was found to have limited skills in the use of orientation, keys, summaries and communication. These findings suggest that ineffective use of various explanation strategies in teaching could be attributed to a number of factors, including lack of adequate preparation, lack of skills in designing explanations and inadequate training and practice in explanation during initial teacher training. The implications of these findings demand that teacher trainers should devote more time training student teachers in explanation skills during their initial teacher training.