

**AN ANALYSIS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION
AMONG ATHLETES AND COACHES TARUNG DERAJAT
FOR PRAPON 2027**

SKRIPSI



Presented to
IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Sarjana in English Education

By:

Dhani Ahmad Abdullah

NIM 22120041

**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ART EDUCATION
IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO**

2026

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MOTTO

" It always seems impossible until it's done."

(Nelson Mandela)

""Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."

(Winston Churchill)

“Sometimes love is not about holding on, but about letting go with hope that, if destiny allows, two souls will meet again at the right time.”

(D.)

“I may not have started with the best circumstances, but I choose to finish with the best version of myself.”

(D.)

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First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Allah SWT, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful, for His endless blessings, guidance, strength, and mercy throughout every step of this journey. Without His grace and permission, I would not have been able to complete this thesis.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my beloved parents, whose unconditional love, endless prayers, sacrifices, and unwavering support have always been my greatest source of strength. Their encouragement has motivated me to keep moving forward, especially during the most challenging moments of this academic journey.

I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to my supervisor for the invaluable guidance, constructive feedback, patience, and continuous encouragement throughout the process of completing this research. Your knowledge, support, and dedication have played a significant role in shaping this thesis.

My sincere thanks also go to my friends in ****Keluarga Waras****, who have shared countless moments of laughter, encouragement, and support. Thank you for being there through both the stressful and joyful times. Your friendship has made this journey more meaningful and memorable than words can express.

Last but not least, I would like to thank myself for not giving up. Thank you for staying strong, believing in your abilities, learning from every setback, and continuing to move forward despite the challenges. This achievement is a reminder that perseverance, patience, and faith can lead to something worth celebrating.

To everyone who has contributed, whether directly or indirectly, to the completion of this thesis, I extend my sincere gratitude. Your kindness and support will always be remembered.

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

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In order to uphold academic integrity, sincerely and without coercion from any parties, I hereby declare that the thesis entitled:

**“AN ANALYSIS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION AMONG
ATHLETES AND COACHES TARUNG DERAJAT FOR PRAPON
2027”**

Is the result of my own original work, and all sources of information used have been clearly cited in the reference list according to the scientific and academic code of ethics. I am aware that if any violations of scholarly ethics regarding to the authenticity of this work are found, I personally accept the consequences in accordance with the applicable regulations and am prepared to bear legal sanctions.

Bojonegoro, 09 Juli 2026



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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze interpersonal communication between coaches and Tarung Derajat athletes in preparation for PRAPON 2027. The study focuses on the forms of communication that occur during the training process, the factors that support effective communication, and how athletes perceive the communication established by their coaches in relation to their motivation and training experiences. A qualitative approach with a case study design was employed. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation involving both coaches and athletes. The data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

The findings indicate that interpersonal communication between coaches and athletes extends beyond technical instructions. It also includes emotional support and non-verbal communication expressed through attitudes, facial expressions, and body language during training sessions. Effective communication is supported by mutual trust, shared goals, regular training evaluations, and close relationships between coaches and athletes. From the athletes' perspective, the coaches' communication plays an important role in enhancing motivation, self-confidence, commitment to training, and readiness for competition. These findings suggest that interpersonal communication is not only essential for delivering information but also for fostering positive relationships that contribute to athletes' overall performance and development..

Keywords: interpersonal communication, athletes, coaches, Tarung Derajat, PRAPON 2027.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis komunikasi interpersonal antara pelatih dan atlet Tarung Derajat dalam persiapan menghadapi PRAPON 2027. Penelitian ini berfokus pada bentuk-bentuk komunikasi yang terjadi selama proses latihan, faktor-faktor yang mendukung komunikasi yang efektif, serta bagaimana atlet mempersepsikan komunikasi yang dibangun oleh pelatih dalam kaitannya dengan motivasi dan pengalaman latihan mereka. Pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan pelatih dan atlet. Analisis data menggunakan model Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña, yang terdiri atas kondensasi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan kesimpulan dan verifikasi.

Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi interpersonal antara pelatih dan atlet tidak hanya terbatas pada instruksi teknis semata. Komunikasi tersebut juga mencakup dukungan emosional serta komunikasi non-verbal yang diekspresikan melalui sikap, ekspresi wajah, dan bahasa tubuh selama sesi latihan. Komunikasi yang efektif didukung oleh adanya rasa saling percaya, tujuan bersama, evaluasi latihan yang rutin, serta hubungan yang dekat antara pelatih dan atlet. Dari perspektif atlet, komunikasi pelatih memainkan peran penting dalam meningkatkan motivasi, rasa percaya diri, komitmen terhadap latihan, dan kesiapan menghadapi kompetisi. Temuan ini menyimpulkan bahwa komunikasi interpersonal tidak hanya esensial dalam menyampaikan informasi, tetapi juga dalam membina hubungan positif yang berkontribusi pada performa dan perkembangan atlet secara keseluruhan.

Kata kunci: komunikasi interpersonal, atlet, pelatih, Tarung Derajat, PRAPON 2027.

PREFACE

First and foremost, the writer would like to express sincere gratitude to Almighty God for His grace and blessings, which have enabled the writer to complete this undergraduate thesis entitled “An Analysis of Interpersonal Communication among Athletes and Coaches of Tarung Derajat for PRAPON 2027.” This thesis is submitted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of Sarjana in English Education at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.

This research was conducted based on the writer’s interest in interpersonal communication within sports contexts, particularly in martial arts training environments. The preparation period for PRAPON 2027 presents a unique setting where athletes and coaches interact intensively under high physical and psychological demands. Through this study, the writer seeks to explore how interpersonal communication is perceived and experienced by both athletes and coaches, as well as how it influences athletes’ motivation and training effectiveness.

The writer would like to express sincere appreciation and deepest gratitude to Oktha Ika Rahmawati, S.Pd., M.Pd. (NIDN. 0701108602) as Advisor I, and Ayu Fitriarningsih, S.Pd., M.Pd. (NIDN. 0720049101) as Advisor II, for their valuable guidance, patience, constructive feedback, and continuous support throughout the process of writing this thesis. Their academic insight and encouragement have been invaluable in helping the writer complete this study.

The writer also extends gratitude to the Rector of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, the Dean of the Faculty of Languages and Art Education, the Head of the English Education Department, and all lecturers who have provided knowledge, guidance, and support during the writer’s academic journey.

Special thanks are also addressed to the Tarung Derajat coaches, Coach Bima and Coach Tessar and athletes who participated in this research for their willingness to share their experiences and perspectives. Their cooperation and openness greatly contributed to the completion of this study.

Finally, the writer realizes that this thesis is still far from perfect. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions from readers are highly appreciated for future improvement. It is hoped that this study may contribute meaningfully to the field of communication studies, particularly interpersonal communication in sports contexts, and serve as a reference for future researchers.

Bojonegoro, 21 Desember 2025

Dhani Ahmad Abdullah
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Especially in professional and organizational settings, such as in sports, communication plays a crucial role in shaping human interaction. In the world of sports, effective communication is not only essential for delivering technical instructions, but also for fostering mutual understanding, trust, and cooperation between coaches and athletes (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003; Devito, 2015). Athlete success is influenced not merely by physical strength and technical skills, but also by the quality of interpersonal communication developed throughout the training process, which contributes to motivation, confidence, and relational harmony (Mulyana, 2014; Effendy, 2003).

Communication occurs in various forms depending on the nature of interaction. Tubbs and Moss (2008) classify communication into intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, and mass communication. Among these forms, interpersonal communication is considered the most fundamental, as it involves direct interaction, immediate feedback, and the exchange of both verbal and nonverbal messages, allowing individuals to express emotions and interpret meanings more effectively.

Interpersonal communication can be defined as a process in which two or more individuals exchange messages through verbal and nonverbal cues to build understanding and maintain relationships (DeVito, 2019). This process is influenced by several key elements, including empathy, openness, trust, and mutual respect. When interpersonal communication is effective, individuals are better able

to interpret messages accurately, manage differences, and respond constructively, particularly in demanding or stressful situations.

In the context of sports, interpersonal communication holds a particularly important role due to the close and continuous interaction between athletes and coaches. This role becomes more prominent in martial art sports, where training demands high discipline, emotional control, and physical endurance. One such martial art sport is Tarung Derajat, an Indonesian combat sport that emphasizes discipline, respect for hierarchy, and mental resilience. In Tarung Derajat training, communication between coaches and athletes is often direct, firm, and instruction-oriented, requiring clarity and mutual understanding to avoid misinterpretation. Weinberg and Gould (2018) emphasize that coaches' communication styles significantly influence athletes' motivation, self-confidence, skill development, and team cohesion.

Interpersonal communication in sports involves a dynamic exchange of instructions, feedback, encouragement, and emotional support during both training and competition. In the context of Tarung Derajat, clear and supportive communication strengthens trust, role clarity, and athletes' confidence, while ineffective communication may lead to confusion, decreased motivation, psychological pressure, and suboptimal performance.

The PRAPON 2027 represents a crucial preparatory phase leading to the National Sports Week (PON), during which athletes and coaches experience increased training intensity, psychological pressure, and performance expectations. For Tarung Derajat athletes preparing for PRAPON 2027, strong interpersonal communication between athletes and coaches becomes increasingly important to

ensure goal alignment, constructive feedback, and consistent emotional support. However, differences in communication styles, perceptions, and expectations may also create challenges that potentially interfere with training effectiveness and the quality of the athlete–coach relationship.

While many studies have addressed how people communicate in sports, the majority center on quantifiable data like communication success, motivation levels, or results in performance. Not much focus has been placed on what athletes and coaches personally go through, specifically in martial arts which highlight self-control, ranking structure, and mental toughness.

Moreover, very little research has looked into how people communicate with each other while getting ready for the PraPON, even though there's a lot of stress and close teamwork between athletes and their coaches at this time. As a result, a detailed qualitative study is required to discover how athletes and coaches in Tarung Derajat feel, view, and understand their communication while training for PRAPON 2027.

Considering these conditions, this study seeks to examine interpersonal communication between athletes and coaches in the context of Tarung Derajat during the preparation stage for PRAPON 2027. By identifying communication patterns and potential barriers within this specific setting, the study is expected to provide insights that contribute to more effective coaching practices, enhanced athlete development, and its implications for athletes' motivation and training effectiveness.

B. Formulations of the Problems

From the background explanation provided, the author will next discuss the issues that will be highlighted in this study, concentrating on the interpersonal communication employed by Tarung Derajat coaches, Coach Bima and Coach Tassar, with their athletes.

1. What types of interpersonal communication athletes and coaches do?
2. What factors support effective interpersonal communication between Tarung Derajat athletes and coaches during the preparation for PRAPON 2027?
3. How athletes perceive the influence of coaches' interpersonal communication on their motivation and training experiences during the preparation PRAPON 2027?

C. Research Objectives

From the explanation above, the author hopes that this research will have significant and useful value for anyone who needs it. The benefits of this research can be seen from:

1. To explore how interpersonal communication is carried out between Tarung Derajat coaches and athletes during the preparation for PRAPON 2027.
2. To identify the factors that support and hinder interpersonal communication between Tarung Derajat coaches and athletes throughout the PRAPON 2027 preparation process.
3. To understand how Tarung Derajat coaches and athletes perceive and evaluate their interpersonal communication, as well as its implications for athletes' motivation and training effectiveness during the preparation for PRAPON 2027.

D. Significance of the Study

This study is intended to provide meaningful contributions at theoretical, practical, and academic levels regarding interpersonal communication in sports contexts, particularly within the preparation process for PRAPON 2027 in the Tarung Derajat discipline.

1. Theoretical Significance

From a theoretical perspective, this study is expected to enrich discussions in the field of communication studies, especially those related to interpersonal communication in sports settings. By exploring interpersonal communication patterns, communication barriers, and the perceived influence of coaches' communication on athletes' motivation and training effectiveness, this research provides contextual insights that complement existing communication and sport-related theories.

Furthermore, this study integrates perspectives from interpersonal communication theory and sport communication, offering a more comprehensive understanding of communication dynamics between coaches and athletes in a martial arts environment. The findings are also expected to serve as a reference for future qualitative studies focusing on athlete-coach communication, particularly in high-performance and competitive sports contexts.

2. Practical Significance

Practically, the findings of this study are expected to benefit Tarung Derajat coaches, athletes, and sports organizations involved in the PRAPON 2027 preparation process. For coaches, the study may provide reflective insights into how interpersonal communication influences athletes' motivation, emotional readiness,

and training interactions. This understanding may help coaches improve communication practices during training and preparation phases.

For athletes, the study may increase awareness of how interpersonal communication shapes their motivation, confidence, and relationship with coaches throughout the training process. In addition, sports institutions and coaching organizations may consider the findings as input for developing communication-oriented approaches to athlete preparation, particularly in martial arts disciplines that emphasize discipline, hierarchy, and mental resilience.

3. Academic Significance

Academically, this study is expected to provide supporting material for students and researchers who are interested in interpersonal communication and sport communication. The research may serve as a qualitative reference for further studies conducted in similar sporting contexts.

E. Definitions of Terminologies

1. Interpersonal Communication

Refers Interpersonal communication is a foundational concept in communication studies, broadly defined as the direct exchange of information, thoughts, feelings, and meanings between individuals. To establish a solid theoretical grounding, this concept is viewed through the perspectives of prominent communication scholars:

- DeVito (2019) defines interpersonal communication as the transactional process of sending and receiving verbal and non-verbal messages between two or more interdependent individuals. He emphasizes that interpersonal communication is inherent to relational development and functions

continuously through real-time, mutual feedback loops that shape the cognitive and behavioral responses of all participants involved.

- Tubbs and Moss (2008) characterize interpersonal communication as a face-to-face dynamic interaction occurring between two or more people. They highlight that the primary hallmark of interpersonal communication is the immediate availability of sensory data, allowing communicators to simultaneously observe, evaluate, and adapt to both explicit verbal statements and subtle non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, vocal tone, and body posture.
- West and Turner (2018) describe interpersonal communication as a continuous, transactional, and relational process in which individuals construct, negotiate, and maintain shared meanings within a specific social context. According to their conceptual framework, communication is not merely a linear transmission of messages from a sender to a receiver, but a complex co-construction of reality influenced by relational histories and shared objectives.

Application in This Research: In the specific context of this study, *interpersonal communication* is operationally defined as the multi-dimensional, face-to-face instructional, motivational, and emotional communication exchanges occurring directly between the head coach (Coach Bima), the assistant coach (Coach Tassar), and the official roster of *Tarung Derajat* athletes representing Kabupaten Bojonegoro. Rather than viewing communication in abstract terms, this research applies the concept specifically to the daily dialogic

interactions during the intensive physical and technical training sessions leading up to PRAPON 2027.

Operationally, this includes:

- a. Verbal Dimensions: Tactical instructions, immediate performance feedback, constructive critiques, disciplinary measures, and verbal encouragement delivered before, during, and after sparring and physical conditioning.
- b. Non-Verbal Dimensions: Demonstrations of combat techniques, paralanguage (vocal pitch, tone, and volume when shouting commands), hand gestures, eye contact, and empathetic physical gestures used to reinforce authority or provide emotional reassurance.
- c. Relational Functions: The dyadic and small-group interpersonal dynamics that foster athlete trust, enhance psychological resilience, sustain training discipline, and mitigate pre-competition performance anxiety within the combat sports environment.(Hananti & Winduwati, 2024).

2. Athletes

In the discipline of sports psychology and human movement science, an athlete is defined as an individual who engages in structured, systematic, and competitive physical activities requiring specialized skills, endurance, and strategic preparation. According to Anshel (2012), an athlete is a dedicated participant in organized sports who undergoes rigorous physical and psychological training to attain optimal performance levels within a standardized rule system. Furthermore, Jowett (2007) conceptualizes an athlete not only as a physical performer, but as an active relational partner within the sports ecosystem whose cognitive, emotional, and athletic

development is continuously shaped through dynamic interpersonal communication with coaches and peers. Additionally, Weinberg and Gould (2018) emphasize that high-performance athletes are specialized decision-makers who must manage internal psychological factors—such as stress, motivation, and focus—while receiving, processing, and responding to instructional feedback delivered by their leadership team during intensive preparation cycles.

Application in This Research:

In the context of this qualitative study, athletes specifically refers to the officially registered combatants and fighters (*petarung*) selected to represent the KODRAT (*Keluarga Olahraga Tarung Derajat*) squad of Kabupaten Bojonegoro in preparation for the PRAPON 2027 competitive cycle. Within the framework of this research, these individuals are operationalized as the primary receivers (*receivers/interlocutors*) of interpersonal communication, tactical instructions, and psychological reinforcement delivered by Head Coach Bima and Assistant Coach Tassar.

The focus of this term in the research encompasses:

- Interpersonal Communication Reception & Perception: How the Tarung Derajat athletes interpret, absorb, and execute verbal instructions, corrective feedback, and non-verbal cues provided by the coaching staff during routine training and simulated sparring (*tarung*).
- Relational Dynamics & Cohesion: The interpersonal relationships, mutual trust (*closeness and commitment*), and communication openness established between the athletes and their coaches.

- Psychological & Physical Readiness: How effective interpersonal communication helps the athletes overcome personal communication barriers, physical exhaustion, competitive anxiety, and mental pressure during the rigorous preparation phase leading up to PRAPON 2027.

3. Coaches

In the domain of sports science and interpersonal communication, a coach is defined not merely as a physical instructor or tactical coordinator, but as a central interpersonal communicator, mentor, and dynamic leader within the athletic environment. According to Jowett and Cockerill (2003), a coach is an essential figure responsible for guiding athletes through structured instruction, providing critical physical, tactical, and psychological support to foster both individual and collective athletic performance. Furthermore, Weinberg and Gould (2018) assert that a coach functions as a foundational leader whose specific interpersonal interaction styles—including direct verbal feedback, non-verbal cues, authority, and emotional encouragement—directly shape the motivational climate, self-efficacy, and behavioral discipline of athletes during intensive training regimes and high-pressure competitions. In line with this, Lyle and Cushion (2010) define coaching as a complex, structured, and contextual interpersonal process wherein the coach continuously utilizes strategic communication to facilitate decision-making, manage intra-team dynamics, and build mutual trust (*closeness, commitment, and complementarity*).

Application in This Research:

In the context of this qualitative study, coaches explicitly refers to the primary technical, tactical, and psychological leadership figures of the official KODRAT

(*Keluarga Olahraga Tarung Derajat*) athletic squad of Kabupaten Bojonegoro—specifically the Head Coach (Coach Bima) and the Assistant Coach (Coach Tessar). Within the framework of this research, these coaches are operationalized as the primary communicators (*senders of messages*) who design, convey, and enforce training strategies, discipline, and emotional encouragement to prepare the athlete roster for the PRAPON 2027 selection and tournament.

The focus of this term in the research encompasses:

- Interpersonal Communication Dynamics: How the coaches use formal instructions, informal dialogues, constructive feedback, and non-verbal signals during combat (*tarung*) and physical conditioning sessions.
- Psychological & Tactical Direction: The methods employed by Coach Bima and Coach Tessar to manage athlete anxiety, build mental toughness, and maintain team cohesion.
- Barrier Resolution: How interpersonal communication strategies are tailored to overcome communication noise, generational gaps, or interpersonal conflicts between the coaching staff and the athletes leading up to PRAPON 2027. (Han, 2022)