

Communication Patterns in Preschool Education Institutions – Practical Examples

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Proper communication in pre-school institutions for education is undeniable importance to the development of the child, as evidenced by numerous studies. After the child’s birth follows the most complex phase in its early phases - preschool education. Only high-quality, synergistic relationship triad: parent-child- educator and the modern postulates of preschool child education, warrants successful preschool child education. **Methods and materials:** Description, with examples from daily practice in a large institution for preschool education, marked were the critical points on the complex way in child education, many pitfalls encountered by both parents and educators. Considered are the errors in communication with the proposed solution to avoid the same in practice. **Conclusion:** Proper, daily communication in the preschool institution for education, within a relationship between parent-child-educator, mutual consultation, respect, acceptance, facilitation, resulting in successful common goal - the proper education and socialization of children in institutions for preschool education.

Key words: Preschool education of children, communication patterns.

1. INTRODUCTION

Children speak the truth ...
— Chinese saying

Regarding the structure of communication models related to the whole system of preschool education, especially the institutions in which the system is implemented (Kindergartens or “Child House”) are the basic communication patterns *within* and *outside* the institutions of preschool education. In addressing communication models in kindergarten, it is necessary to consider the needs of all participants are meeting within the communication in kindergarten. Communication in the context of human needs means meeting the needs together with other people, and with child population. Communication can be improved by the satisfaction of their needs, but not at the expense of others to meet their needs. The concept of *communicative competence* implies the possibility of achieving personal and relational objectives of communication, so that the objectives are achieved alone or together with others (1).

It is important to mention *Waclavek* rules on the communication process:

- It is impossible not to communicate:
- Every communication has content and relational aspects.
- Relationship characteristics are determined by the interpretation of the communication relations.

Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to understand others, what motivates them, how they work, how to cooperate with them. Interpersonal (internal) intelligence (is the basis of interpersonal): balance in changes of personal thoughts and emotions (personal satisfaction and self-acceptance) so that we can access

others without prejudice; empathize with someone else; help another person in a way that it appropriate for that person (2).

2. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS–CHILD–EDUCATOR

If we now shift the focus to the area of educating a child, there is no doubt that the most important link in the educational process of the child is parental care, communication between *parent and child*. Ideally, the child should grow in a family surrounded by parental care, in the company of brothers and sisters. This, idyllic, image was possible previously, before the industrial revolution when there was no institution of kindergartens, and when the kids all the time was at home under the supervision of other family members. In accordance with the new circumstances, today’s parents are preoccupied with work to provide needs for the family, there is less time to socialize with the child (children). Therefore, the logical replacement for parental home and parental care, is the institution in which the child (children) stay while their parents are occupied with work in their workplaces. Their new home is a preschool (kindergarten) in which teacher/educator takes parental powers and becomes a “*surrogate parent*” for a group of children entrusted with their education and care. History of kindergarten just coincides with the development of society and the era of industrialization, so the first kindergartens were organized in Western countries. It also showed a critical need for them because the workers’ families during their stay on the job had to find a substitute for the care of the child. On the other hand, communication cooperation and participation of parents in the program, early child-

hood education for long time has been questionable because of Hawkins paradigm “that parents will offer sooner the subjective assessment than expert opinions or objective observations” (3). Finally, the fact that parents are responsible for their child, according to some eminent experts, parents should also have a voice in program evaluation (4).

Bronfenbrenner argued that for better efficiency of the early childhood programs for upbringing and education and their lasting impact on children, there is the need to involve parents of children and the community, and that they should work together to promote same goals (5,6).

In practice, until the beginning of the 90’ school partnerships in relation kindergarten-family was more the exception than the rule. Since then, however, provided there is growing evidence that parental involvement has a positive effect on the quality of education of children and their success in school. Higher levels of parental involvement in their child’s upbringing is not due to the legal framework and regulations, but also due to the simple realization that parents are best acquainted with all the characteristics of their child. Reform moves from the mid-eighties, parents communicate daily with preschools staff, which are entitled to inform them about child development while choosing the right kindergarten. Some studies confirm that parental involvement also contributes to better relations between children and between children and educators. Finally, good communication between staff and parents is a prerequisite for quality care and education of young children. Growth of the child, after which family care and communication in the family, transforms into kindergarten or preschool, some new communication relationships arises so now is recognized triad parent-child-educator.

3. COMMUNICATION RELATIONS IN KINDERGARTEN

This relation reflects the essence of communication processes in institutions where **child**, “*little man*” is for the first time faced with the collective (“*children’s house*”), in which applies some new rules in relation to life in home. Synergy of proper parental and teachers approach to the child, communication of the parents, educators and child care, between children, is of crucial importance for the further development of the child. A child who comes from a healthy, unencumbered, families in which it grows with love and attention relative to adapt quickly to new rules of community life. In contrast, a child that carries the frustration of the home from many, different, reason will have great difficulty to adjust. Especially for such children is

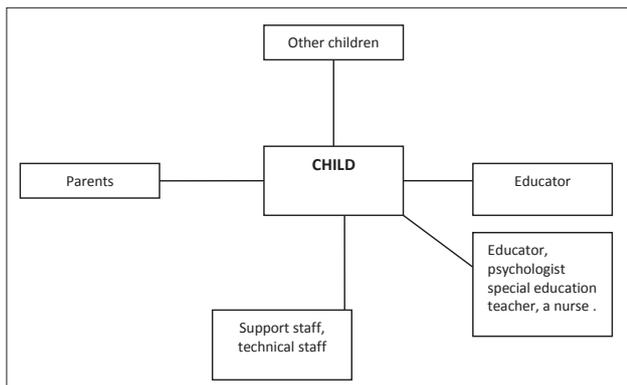


Diagram 1. Child-Communication relations

reflected knowledge and experience of educators to identify such children and select them adequate (preferably individualized) approach. Important component is communication with children, hard work on the “opening” of the introverted child, learning to live in a collective, rules of life and finally, open communication with other children. **The child** is at the center of all communication patterns in pre-school institutions, and it focused all other relations, the primary communication applies in kindergarten are shown in Diagram 1.

If we are consider coming to kindergarten from child’s perspective, first visit to the nursery for them is a violent separation from parents, therefore, from the environment in which to feel safe, in a new, unknown space and handed over to strangers. It is understandable that a child in these circumstances is experiencing the frustrations that can manifest in different forms of behavioral changes and mood (energetic protest, crying and withdrawal, denial of communication with the teacher or, paradoxically, “stick” to teacher, refusing food, frantically holding objects which are associated to the house, waking, not sleeping, express anger and disobedience to the new conditions, manifest aggression towards the environment...).

The first days of the child’s stay in the kindergarten are stressful for children and parents, and of course, for educators. Since kindergarten, is surrogate home and family environment, the child educator needs to develop a sense of security and belonging to a new family that is kindergarten. The task of the kindergarten, therefore, is to provide a safe and stable environment, an atmosphere which understand, accept and support the child’s feelings

If these communication relationships are observed from the parent’s point of view (whether or not the educator take care of my child in the way I do, to understand its personality and its needs, “bugs”, will have patience with my child, along with many other children, whether to accept it, finally, whether the child will be fine in the new environment), it is clear what is the responsibility of educators as well as the difficulties they will encounter during the upbringing of children. To respond to the complex requirements of parent educators will use an appropriate form of communication in order to achieve a harmonious relationship, with communication as a fundamental feature of mutual trust and understanding.

Finally, a view of the **educators** on parents (monitors the extent to which parents are under stress due to separation from the child, how to recognize stress and frustration of parents, how to handle a parent who is frustrated because of the child’s frustration, the way of feed and removal of the child, views and nonverbal communication, which sometimes speak louder than words, restraint in communication, (not) a rare and aggression by parents...) are all signs that the teacher should be recognized and interpreted in order to be properly set according to each parent by building specific communication form.

The parent is the first and most important link in the upbringing of the child. For the child’s emotional stability and proper development it is most important that parents establish proper communication with the child from its earliest years. A warm family environment in the home, harmonious parental relations, relationships among siblings and other family members (grandparents) contributes to the proper development of the child, without the stress and frustration. The aforementioned departure of a child to kindergarten is the first stress to

the child's psyche, which is why parents need to be prepared to that milestone in a child's life. In the first place, it is essential that their positive attitude towards kindergarten and confidence in educators, shortening the stay of a child in kindergarten the first day, parent involvement in all activities related to kindergarten, establishing a precise rhythm of arrival and departure from the kindergarten, and in the interim period adaptations allow the child to bring his/hers toys, pacifier, bottle, etc., which remind the child to home. Period of adjustment of the child is different and depends on the age group, of course, to quickly adapt to children older groups. A sudden separation from home child interprets as treason by parents and often reacts with anger, disapproval and aggression, often regressive behavior (crawling, bedwetting, etc.). For all these options parent should be ready to answer them with stronger affection, conversation and rationalization, of course, to the extent that to the child is understandable. Before kindergarten, a child needs to prepare and get used to this act, an occasional visit to a kindergarten, observing children at play, talking with staff, to be able to eat independently and possibly self-dresser. It is useful to occasionally leave the child with her grandparents or people who kept the diet for a few hours or a whole day to get the child used to the occasional separation from parents. Also, it is very important to build a relationship of trust and mutual respect with educators, proper communication and collaborative partnership because they are for parents and educators directed towards a common goal—successful adaptation of the child in the new circumstances.

Educator is the next link in the educational process of the child. To educator belongs a fundamental and very responsible role, “surrogate parent” for parents employed because they due to the workload have less time to socialize with the child, which are increasingly leaving the work in kindergarten (full day, 10-hour programs) (7).

Certainly in the educational process in the kindergarten equally affect the other participants: psychologist, pedagogue, special education teacher, speech therapist, and others who are important to the upbringing of the child (assistant, cooks, other staff), therefore all complementary to achieve complex missions in child-rearing.

4. COMMUNICATION PATTERNS - WAYS OF COMMUNICATION

As stated above *word*, verbal communication is the foundation of every communication, including with pre-school children, some of which are still learning to speak. Proper verbal communication seeks calm approach to child, educator's equidistance towards other children in kindergarten (not favoring one child, so the other would not feel neglected) and finally individual approach, if necessary (e.g., children with special needs). Apart from this, regular communication, according to psychological divisions, there are also non-verbal communication (“body language”), and paraverbal communication (mode of speech, facial expressions, tone of voice). Like adults, children are very well understood by all three forms of communication, so that the educator in her work has extremely careful in all three forms (in) direct communication with the child. Child communication seeks educator's attention, equal relationship and the need for him to tutor his full attention to the conversation, i.e. that it is not in any way neglected.

So, if the educator is occupied some other business (e.g. preparation of workbooks, or other activities) and the child spoke, educator should stop working and devote its full attention. This means, not with some other work, it is necessary to look into the eyes of a child, to patiently hear its question or comment.

Also, *body language*—gestures that betray impatience (tapping a pencil, interrupting the conversation, watching over the child, non-listening...) and the desire to talk or request as soon as possible, lead to poor communication between educators and child.

Finally, the raised voices in conversation with the child, threatening expression (*paraverbal communication*) at the start eliminate child's desire to communicate, to which particular must watch every educator.

It should be noted that the child during the entire stay in the kindergarten assess teacher's person, personality, way of communicating, and vice-versa, in a similar way to educator evaluate children in behavior and adoption of knowledge.

The most important part of a successful adaptation of the child to kindergarten makes teachers. During the period of adjustment child educator needs to know, as a group, parents and children, recognize the individual needs of each child. Also, as a token of good communication relations educators need to be accepted by the child, through their activities, providing support to the child and parents. Educators monitor, observe the child during his stay in kindergarten take notes, plan activities and design child room to learn, play and other activities.

What is the key moment in relation educator—child is that the everything that child is going through in kindergarten *transmits* to parents, or independently of its, spontaneous narratives, parents questioned in detail about (every)day stay in kindergarten and events (the ratio of educators to child, other children, food hygiene, etc.). Follow every move, every educator's raised voice, or some other form of punishment of the child (rough handling, pushing, pulling hair, etc.) Which may lead to very poor communication form educator-child. From such, disturbed, relations subsequently followed poor communication parent-educator, because any change in the relationship between child communications signals to parents. Of course, the relationship between educators and parents (the child's testimony parents often exaggerates!) Two vital components in preschool, thereby permanently disrupted. According to the findings of misfortunate events in kindergarten, and after talking with the child, the parents immediately, ultimately the director of the institution seeking punishment or removal of educators for the sake of the child's testimony.

The above triad is the subject of numerous studies, psychological, pedagogical, as well as in the field of communication sciences, and they all agree with the fundamental postulates of communication, which in relation to the child has its specificities. So, parents and educators, spending time with your child should adhere to the following postulates:

- Talk with child- teach introvert child to talk, encourage it to conversation, avoid conversation with the answers yes and no.
- Call child by name—if you call them by the name, the child interprets this intimacy with a sense of responsibility, contrary to anonymous communication which means indifference.
- Look child in the eyes: a direct sight means that you are interested in it (not too long, because fixed look achieve

the opposite effect, watching manner means indifference or its absence).

- Touch of a hand, touch child's hair: intimacy, commitment, "reward" for a completed task.
- Diction, voice tonality of voice, facial expression—bland calm voice, without elevated tones, soothing facial expression.
- Short, simple communication, understandable words.
- Repetition—repeat your request, if you are ignored.
- Award him (your choice award) if it met your expectations.
- Deprive him an award if you it does not fulfill their task, it was his worst punishment Teach him the eighth decency, "please" and "thank you"—mandatory in communication.
- Point out errors, teach the child conversation.
- If you mad tell him that you are sorrowful and sad because he did, do not allow yourself to be provoked or shout at a child.

5. EXAMPLES FROM DAILY PRACTICE IN THE INSTITUTION FOR PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Although Chinese proverb (quoted at the beginning of the text) says that children are telling the truth, we know from experience that it cannot be true (8). Reason false accusations may be because of relations between parents (9), (the so-called. Said syndrome sexual allegations in divorce) but also false allegations that the child expresses (invent) (10). What happened was that children of parents accuse educators for (not) work that the same is not really so.

Example. (Statement of an educator). "Peter was lively and happy child often would come in my lap. He was not always willing to fulfill the tasks, but with a little persuasion he gets them done. One morning he came with his father, corpulent worker from shipyard and very rudely attacked me, because if I had yesterday beaten child. I told him it was not true, and that such a thing has never happened in our kindergarten, but the father was insistent, saying that his Peter never lies. Immediately I called Peter and asked him in front of his father: "Did I beat you yesterday?" He embarrassingly said that I did not, and that he invented it so he does not have to do a task that for him was so hard. Parent immediately pounced the child, but now with a story that is a little liar and that his house does not believe anything."

In some cases the child, out of fear, hides a traumatic event in kindergarten fearing retaliation of the educators. Example: (testimony of parents) ... My Igor, a boy with signs of mild MCD, which required a special, individual approach because it is often obstinately persisting in their demands. Educator obviously had no patience with him, because the lady who earlier came by my child said that he is an educator led him to the bathroom and well beaten because he in a loud voice yelled. I have noticed that since that day my son did not want to go to kindergarten, he was afraid, he was crying but he would not say why, I guess out of fear. Of course ... I'm also reported the director of the kindergarten "...

These cases are sporadic, rare, but should be assiduously investigated, because the truth always eventually came to light. For example after talks with parents who report changes in child behavior (frustration, fear, anxiety ...) followed by psychological testing (processing, drawing, etc.) That reveal educators /

woman who got lost in the water for their upbringing and that systematically punish children in kindergarten (11). These cases are rare, but there are some, an example of a case where educators are parents set up a hidden camera that has discovered what all the kids did and how they were punished (12).

However, in most cases by children honestly convey to parents all events, was pleasant and unpleasant, and the knowledge and application relevant to kindergarten every case non pedagogic work with the child should be thoroughly investigated and, if necessary, sanctioned (13).

Without a doubt, these situations are extreme, because the vast majority of educators do their job responsibly, and finally themselves have chosen the honorable invitation educators. Therefore, any case report violations of the child's integrity and personality (login parents or third parties, public or anonymously) should be accepted, checked thoroughly investigated and, if necessary, conduct psychological testing or other actions that would not have occurred cases which, needless, throw filth the honorable job of educators. A child who is developing normally, during his stay in kindergarten, collective, rapidly improves your vocabulary, speech impediments, talking with other children and with the teacher. However, the unconscious child can take on some negative qualities of speech and facial expressions (drawl, mispronounced words, tics) of children with these problems, imitating them.

Example: Mirko child from highly educated family, whose parents are alternately brought and taken away from the nursery. (testimony of parents)... "In the beginning was staying in kindergarten flowed really well, Mirko quickly adapted and played with children. The problem arose when we noticed that Mirko weird talking, delaying and modulating voice in a special way, which has never before been done. I'm a little bothered, questioned and found that Mirko most endeared and hung out with the boy John, (a boy with Down syndrome), which, when we checked spoke in the same manner as is now saying our Mirko! "

All these are the moments that must be observed educator who, as a corrective, talking with parents, seeks to correct the child's behavior, to direct it and to give special attention to such children. Because once mistakenly learned, it is difficult to correct. Kids play, learn unencumbered through the game, absorbing every word of educators, even if they do not know the true meaning of the word, but according to the sense and context are decrypted.

Every word spoken, remembered the child may return like a boomerang, if a parent mechanically in a situation or someone send a curse, the child will remember and reproduce in approximately similar situation (anxiety, anger, resentment). Child resonates: If dad (or mom) so saying it is wrong and can also say in front of other people. So can it happen in a completely unmanageable situation juicy cursed child, even if you do not know the meaning of swearing, because it is a situation where it occurs associated with parental cursing in a similar situation.

Example 1: (testimony of parents) "The car journey with us was a little Ida, in her chair tied in last place. While driving in front of us carelessly, high speed from the side street crashed driver who almost hit us. I admit I slipped a juicy curse, but it all ended well. Next time driving, when I slammed on the brakes, Ida repeated cursing in the same way as I did I previously spoke ".

Example 2 (testimony of parents). "We looked at (wife, little Emma) TV with an entertainment show in which he participat-

ed in one of our show biz stars be rampant. I quietly (not to hear me daughter!) Told the woman to switch the channel because I cannot watch that bitch..... Ok, a woman had done a few days back on TV appeared the same stars from the entertainment industry. Emma immediately cried loudly: There goes that son of a ... immediately shut down the TV. “

This will also happen in relation to the teacher: child will house use phrases that he heard from educators, was in communication with him or with other children.

6. IMPORTANCE OF PROPER COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE FAMILY

Immeasurable importance of proper communication relation child and parents. Famous aphorism Earl of Rochester's (I had six theories about raising children when I had no child, now I have six of them and no theories ...) confirms this. Parents with a debut child learn communication and education on the forms that they experienced in their youth when they were raised by their parents. Parents who grew up as an only child, unconsciously accepted patterns of his youth, and almost identical to convey the paradigm of education to their child. Parents who grew up in a large family with different forms of education and communication with the child. What is now clear, the economic situation in the society, parents are reluctant to have another child, let alone more: partly out of conformism, but more for economic reasons. In families with one child, a kindergarten is a surrogate for a large family, and as such is necessary in the education of an individual, especially as parents occupied a job cannot be adequately measured participate in the upbringing of the child. Of course it is necessary nursery with large families in which the parents work, and the parents were all agree that education is the first child toughest. This is partly from inexperience and partly because of a family with one child unconsciously, exaggerated care, such children spared all possible situations in which a child could possibly be the endangered (e.g. Child is not sent to the nursery or day care due to the risk of transmission of infections, keeping the cold, rain, presvalačenje several times a day, especially feeding, mixed foods, avoiding the society of other children in the building where they live or work outside of a possible infection, avoidance of vaccination for the possible consequences, avoid rooms which housed more people, etc ...). 14 Because over care and isolation of the child, in such families are left only for parents, lonely, eager to socialize with other children. Company other kids did milieu in which the child is developing normally, realizes communication relationships with children their own age, and through the game with the children a feeling of satisfaction and happiness. Children who are only children in the family, “condemned” the only parents that if he wanted to, I cannot provide what the child wants, subconsciously are lonely and dissatisfied, because it is the day in the house monotonous and uneventful, until now the prevailing mood state . All knowledge about the life of children from their parents and in the best case of the second generation (today's increasingly rare!) Grandparents, who take the role of the nursery. So evident is the discrepancy between the generations, the generation gap, it is questionable as a good solution in education of a child. That is why the kindergarten indeed the solution for their situation, the postulation of kindergarten (kindergarten),

which was established in 1840 (15) by Frobel and remains very topical today, of course, in the new, modern conditions.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: NONE DECLARED.

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