

## Peculiarity of interpersonal communication

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### **Abstract**

The specificities of interpersonal communication are actually the specificities of social inclusion and the functioning in different social relations. These specificities (skills) provide an effective and a satisfactory communication with other people. Mainly, it consists of recognizing the feedback and an articulation of positive response, the empathy with others, ability to listen to others, the delicacy of self-presentation, precise observation of him/her and others, as well as controlling the use of verbal and non-verbal cues. Listening skills relies on non-verbal communication. Meanwhile, it includes the knowledge on the issue, acceptance of the other person as a partner in communication, regardless of a potential agreement or disagreement in terms of attitudes, beliefs and value systems. Perception skills are identified as three levels of perception: recognition, reflection and action. Practically, this means making appropriate observations about the other person, as well as avoiding hasty conclusions, and making a careful assessment of the formation of a proper response to the perception of other people.

**Keywords:** Interpersonal Communication, Pedagogical Communication, Empathy

### **Introduction**

Conditioned by predominant philosophical conception and the social, cultural, and historical context, the pedagogy as a scientific theory of education and upbringing as well as the educational activities and their practical realization, today faces a more emphasized need to set up a new foundation that will contribute to the development of better and more efficient educational action in the pedagogical practice and thus achieve the set goal of education - developing the full potential of every child.

The educational system with a range of existing deficiencies is becoming increasingly obsolete, losing its breath and rhythm to follow the changes in the 21 century. At the macro level, the educational systems are very much outdated, based on the poor tradition of low level of scientific knowledge, preserve the defined past of outdated content from the onslaught of chaotic, open and non-defined hypothetical future. In addition, the dominant social, economic and educational standards in the center of attention put the results neglecting the process. Although in the context of teaching and the teaching quality, personal satisfaction of teachers and students is as important as the results achieved; these norms are reflected as in a mirror in both our schools and the entire education system. As a result, there is alienation of students and teachers from the educational content as well as from each other, and even from themselves, from their own origin and identity. Difficulties of personal development, interpersonal communication, and the difficulty in solving

specific problems often occur as a result of it. The phenomenon of social pathology among children and adolescents records a progressive growth.

A number of relevant researches and the progress in various fields of scientific work, particularly in those important for the education of psychology, pedagogy, sociology, neurology, as well as educational requirements of futurology, complement the current educational context.

A logical question is asked, how the educational or teaching process can catch up with the modern world and respond to the challenges that lie ahead.

What is the role of the teacher as the main inspiration of the children's comprehensive development: cognitive, conative, affective, psychometric, in all the changes that are happening? What teachers as equal partners and not the solely responsible in the entire process of education need to make the teaching process an adequate response sent to this world of constant change?

A school that does not regard the pupil as a person, the school whose aim exclusively is adoption of academic knowledge, which is not characterized by modern and creative thinking and communication activity, and which does not have time to engage with social and emotional development of students, the school where in the classrooms "rules emotional desert", in the words of Flanders, is not the 21st century school.

All these are arguments that together with our daily experience we are all witnessing in the upbringing and education practice are the main reason we have chosen to study a topic that is related to the interdependence of interpersonal communication between students and teachers and the quality of the teaching process, in order that its content and message illuminate the importance of this segment of educational work and as such to make it a subject of daily questioning.

## **Interpersonal Communication**

Interpersonal communication functions in such a manner that the sender sends message to the recipient, the recipient receives the message at the moment of sending, and can immediately come up with an answer and send it back to the sender. This model of communication does not lag, but is concerned about the symmetrical communication, which means that the messages, receiving and reaction occur almost simultaneously. In this way, both sides in the communication are able to follow the progress of understanding and eliminate any misunderstandings. Active listening, in addition to a clear speech, is one of the two basic skills of interpersonal communication. It is necessary to emphasize the importance of listening in detection of learners' needs, as well as the importance of language skills in the process of clear and consistent messages, and the need to develop training programs that will develop just these two communication skills. Clear addressing the student beside the verbal also has a non-verbal aspect. Unlike verbal communication in which information is transmitted, the nonverbal communication confirms or questions the things it communicates.

Communication is effective only when the participants understand each other, or when the sent and the received message have the same meaning. Understanding can be achieved if the sender knows exactly what he wants to impart and to really convey the intended

meaning and what is communicated is corresponding to the recipient's communicative style, so that he receives a message that is consistent with the meaning the sender wanted to convey.

Effectively conveyed message is only the one which the recipient understood the way the sender intended to. All this requires extreme precision in the speech and understanding of the basic techniques of oral expression. Communication is the process of transferring messages between two or more individuals, and is achieved only when the message is received by the recipient. In order for the communication to be effective, it is essential that the recipient understands the message and acknowledges this to the sender.

Communication involves elements of different nature (Osmić, I., 2001:51):

- Cognitive: reflected in the ability of perception, interpretation of messages, causing emotions and reactions,
- Semantic: reflected in the use of spoken and written language, terms and jargon,
- Symbolic: the use of gestures, grimaces, body movements, dress style, etc.

Any situation in which two or more people are involved in the exchange of messages through any kind of characters is called transaction. Some experiences are typical for members of a particular culture, and can be understood only if are engaged and interpreted within previously stated general experiences. The more the participants in this cultural communication are alike, their perceptions and experiences of some phenomena are more similar. The more they are culturally diverse, their perceptions and experiences are more different.

Regulation of contacts with another person is at the same time dependent of both conscious and unconscious symbols, but also of the context, code, situation or purpose of the communication understood as feedback. In interpersonal communication the concept of feedback has two aspects. In the first sense the feedback assumes sending certain message through verbal or non-verbal channels, in order to receive a response to given data from the recipient. Another feedback aspect indicates that the response is set in accordance with the content, style and purpose of communication (N. Havelka, 2000).

The skill of communication between two people depends on the knowledge and the proper use of verbal and non-verbal symbols. The interpersonal communication skill is actually the skill of social inclusion and functioning in different social relations. This skill yields effective and satisfactory communication with other people. It consists primarily of identifying feedback and articulating a positive response, but also of the ability of empathy with others, the ability to listen to others, the delicacy of self-presentation, careful observation of oneself and others, as well as controlled use of verbal and non-verbal symbols. Listening skills rely on non-verbal communication, and include knowledge about the individual talking to, as well as the acceptance of the other person as a partner in communication, regardless of the potential agreement or disagreement in terms of attitudes, beliefs and value systems. Perception skills are identified in three levels of perception: recognition, reflection and action. This means the creation of adequate observations about the other person. Avoiding hasty conclusions, making careful assessments and forming a proper response on the perception of the other individual.

Active listening

Active listening is one of the basic communication skills, upon which other more complex professional skills reside. Active listening is listener's effort to assist itself, but also the

interlocutor, in clarifying the messages, because the speaker may often not have a clear message which he wants to convey or he does not transmit it accurately enough.

Active listening in interpersonal communication is listening with a reason, when one is trying as much as possible to understand the person speaking and what it is saying. Active listening requires the person listening to really understand the message and confirm its understanding giving the person who sent the message the appropriate feedback on it.

In order for the listening to be called active it is necessary that the listener uses paraphrasing, reflecting, asking questions and summarizing skills. Using these techniques one reflects the cognitive and emotional content and clarifies ourselves and the interlocutor the facts the interlocutor has pronounced and his emotional state related to the content.

Paraphrasing the uttered is used during the conversation in order to clarify the uttered, and consists of the fact that the listener can repeat his words, what he heard from the speakers and how it sounded to him.

Asking questions - active listening discusses issues and questions as asked for clarification of what is being said. The question is posed to the interlocutor for the sole purpose of the conversation topic.

Summarizing refers to brief retelling of what the interlocutor said, and is commonly used at the end part of the conversation or at the end of the whole conversation. The aim is to paraphrase and summarize the content of the conversation which we have heard, and the purpose is to clarify the issues and highlight the most important points (Osmić, I., 2001: 32).

Interpersonal communication could be defined in a way when it would be compared with other forms of communication. It largely depends on the number of people, how much are they physically close to each other during the course of communication, how many channels were used and whether there is a feedback.

Dynamic factors of interpersonal communication

As for the dynamic factors in interpersonal communication, feedback should be emphasized in the first place. Among other dynamic factors the following should be noted:

- communicating entities,
- interaction terms of achieving reciprocity roles,
- goals and message exchanges,
- communicative competence of the communication participants.

We must not forget the objectives of exchanging messages because interpersonal communication is very purposeful, personified by a rationally set goal, but we should not drop out of sight the motivation and dynamic aspect of interpersonal communication that is designated by the mental and physical structure of the personality. Therefore, we can talk about the undetectable process of interpersonal communication known as persuasive process. Its essence is in an effort through message exchange influence the thinking, feeling and hearing interlocutors, but also oneself.

Persuasive process seeks, in particular, to act upon their attitudes in terms of their:

1. ratification,

2. correction or
3. changing.

Communicative competence is determined by a number of individual capabilities such as: feedback recognition and articulation of a positive response, the ability of empathy with others, the ability to listen to the others, self-representation, careful observation of oneself and the others as well as the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols.

#### *Forms of interpersonal communication*

Interpersonal communication can develop towards the situation in which it takes place. Zorica Tomić (2003, 64) identifies five types of interpersonal communication, such as:

1. Formal or informal, the difference between calculated on one side and spontaneous use of communication skills on the other side.
2. Public or private, the difference in terms of using the communication context, for example when communicating in a public place one should avoid the use of non-verbal cues and expressing emotions.
3. Distant or intimate, the difference in the relationships' quality between the parties in the communication; distant communication means, as a rule, higher degree of formalism in speech or appearance, while intimate communication testifies about closer ties between people.
4. Ritual or open, the difference in being able to predict the use of the communication code.

The typical way of using feedback is questioning "whether you understand what I have told you," and the answer not consisting of only one word would normally be regarded as good feedback.

Many people are poor listeners because the average man can utter between 125-200 words per minute and can understand up to 400 words a minute and this difference leaves plenty of time for mind wandering. One of the ways to improve active listening is to put yourself in the position of the sender, and there are of course active looking into the eyes of the speaker, asking questions, not too frequent interruptions of the speaker, confirming nods and appropriate facial expression, paraphrasing etc.

#### **Concluding Remarks**

The time in which we live is characterized by rapid development of science and technology as well as the rapid increasing knowledge. The explosion and the expansion of scientific knowledge is becoming larger and stronger. Many results of scientific researchers are increasingly being applied in manufacturing, engineering, technology ... And that contributes to the struggle for scientific and technical progress made in the field of education, which means that education cannot be acquired by obtaining a diploma, but continuing education is necessary. The education is a prerequisite for productivity and quality of production. "Hence, the objectives and principles of the concept of modern education imply a complete reconstruction of the traditional educational system, updating of its objectives and content, between its methodological bases and restructuring the institutional and organizational forms." (Parlić, 1977, p. 744). Therefore, modern education requires changes in the traditional educational systems, methods, forms, principles. Activity is essential for the development and progression of personality as the new school

affirms students as an active subject in the classroom. Therefore, in order to encourage development, it is a necessary to prepare the conditions for the participation of young people - students and even teachers.

In the modern school, the teacher does not only "hold" classes and is not only the main source of information, but a person who observes, organizes, stimulates, values, favoring different processes of learning and knows how to apply, when necessary, certain strategies of compensation" (Djordjevic, 1997, p. 9:10). This requires changes into the role of trainees and teachers because it is expected that modern techniques and technologies will enable faster and better knowledge acquisition, which means that the current role of the teacher lecturer and assessors is outdated and replaced with new roles. "Engagement in teaching is the basic and most important segment of the teachers' role. This sphere of its role incorporates:

- a) the obligations and expectations of the education system to be defined through the objectives, tasks and content of the curriculum and
- b) direct communication with students as individuals and the class as a group.

The teacher's role includes certain activities in relation to the creation of a teaching situation, treatment of the curriculum, selection and application of forms and methods of work, the students as individuals and the class as a group.

The teacher is the creator of special, highly complex types of situations in which occur numerous and very diverse processes on a personal and interpersonal level" (Havelka, 2000, p 124.). Consequently, the teacher is very important participant in the classroom. Given its many crucial roles, it is up to him that the quality of education depends on. In order for this quality to be as high as possible - better teacher must adjust his work to the other factors of the course primarily disciples, their intellectual abilities, prior knowledge, interests, motivation. In this sense, the interpersonal relationships of teachers and students as well as the educational facilities are also an important factor of teaching. They must be appropriate to the age of the students.

Based on everything that was said, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The exercise of effective pedagogical communication in the classroom makes a number of objective and subjective factors. These are the most common: inattention and lack of concentration, confusion over requirements, stress, fatigue and anxiety; previously formed prejudices and assumptions about the subject or the people with whom the communication is done, labeling, trial and analyzing others and ourselves; slight personality, denial of personal responsibility, ordering and criticism, attacks, imposing one's opinion or will; vague expression, excessive criticism, diversity of experiences and cultural origin, not knowing the language of the interlocutor, noise and other interfering environmental factors.
- The following factors are important in creating an atmosphere of effective communication in the classroom are: mutual respect, equality of the interlocutors, unconditional acceptance without criticism and judgments, honesty and respect, appreciation of one's own and others' needs.
- The efficient educational communication in the classroom should aim towards: encouraging reviews, development of speech, making choices, providing new knowledge, exchanging ideas and feelings, encouraging the process of solving problems, etc.

- Effective pedagogical communication in teaching is achieved by using: active listening, establishing and maintaining a good relationship with the interlocutor; honesty; using clear and short sentences and familiar words; respect the feedback on understanding the message of communication, alignment of verbal and nonverbal messages, responding to the needs and feelings of all participants in the communication; expressing feelings, attitudes and needs, a clear expression of the request; commenting behavior, not the person, providing stimulating instruction, encouragement to ask questions, etc.
- The conditions for the efficient organization of communication stated as compliance of communication with unique humanistic principles, taking into account the specific characteristics and capabilities of the protégés, honest, humane and democratic attitude, development and strengthening of the personality of the protégés.

Effective pedagogical communication in teaching is the necessity of modern education and the study of this issue is given more attention in the modern pedagogy science. According to its characteristics it is nothing unattainable or unrealizable, and forms the basis of humanization of educational processes, the creative learning and interactive teaching.

The characteristics of effective communication that are listed, as well as pointing to the necessity of change in the field of teaching communication constitute a starting point of all efforts turned towards improving and encouraging this process.

The interdependence with other segments of the foundation of the teaching process, the communication continues to be significantly affective to its efficiency. With its positive characteristics and its quality, the educational communication creates conditions that on its foundations is built a complex construct of an efficient and high-quality teaching process.

Positive characteristics and quality of communication in the classroom, such as: orientation on personality development, encouraging creativity, developing skills and students' independence, largely contribute to increasing its efficiency. By providing interaction, democratic relations, equality, humanity and confidence, motivation, the educational communication develops a positive attitude towards the educational process and a willingness to make a greater effort in the implementation of educational tasks and goals. If participants evaluate teaching communication and regard it as positive, stimulating and high-quality, if they are satisfied with it, then they much easier and with more will and loving approach to all the teaching activities and achieve better results in them.

Conversely, if students regard the teaching communication and assess as unpleasant, poor, disadvantaged, if they are not satisfied with it, the efficiency of the teaching process will be lesser. With its negative qualities such as being unidirectional, passive, unequal, authoritarian, disrespectful, etc, communication in the classroom affects the entire educational process and thus its efficiency.

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