

# **EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

*Study text for participants of courses*

*Educational Communication*

*Faculty of Education*

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# 1. COMMUNICATION

## 1.1 WHAT IS COMMUNICATION

Communication is simply the act of transferring information from one place to another. Although this is a simple definition, when we think about how we may communicate the subject becomes a lot more complex. There are **various categories** of communication and more than one may occur at any time. The communication process can be described as follows: a message or communication is sent by the **sender** through a **communication channel** to a **receiver**, or to **multiple receivers**. The sender must **encode** the message (the information being conveyed) into a form that is **appropriate to the communication channel**, and the receiver(s) then **decodes** the message to understand its meaning and significance. Misunderstanding can occur at any stage of the communication process.

*Effective communication involves minimising potential misunderstanding and overcoming any barriers to communication at each stage in the communication process.*

### **The communication process**

An effective communicator understands their audience, chooses an appropriate communication channel, hones their message to this channel and encodes the message to reduce misunderstanding by the receiver(s). They will also seek out feedback from the receiver(s) as to how the message is understood and attempt to correct any misunderstanding or confusion as soon as possible. Receivers can use clarification and reflection as effective ways to ensure that the message sent has been understood correctly.

### **Communication channels**

Communication theory states that communication involves a sender and a receiver (or receivers) conveying information through a communication channel. Communication Channels is the term given to the way in which we communicate. There are multiple communication channels available to us today, for example face-to-face conversations, telephone calls, text messages, email, the Internet (including social media such as Facebook and Twitter), radio and TV, written letters, brochures and reports to name just a few.

### **Appropriate communication channel**

Choosing an appropriate communication channel is vital for effective communication as each communication channel has different strengths and weaknesses. For example, broadcasting news of an upcoming event via a written letter might convey the message clearly to one or

two individuals but will not be a time or cost effective way to broadcast the message to a large number of people. On the other hand, conveying complex, technical information is better done via a printed document than via a spoken message since the receiver is able to assimilate the information at their own pace and revisit items that they do not fully understand. Written communication is also useful as a way of recording what has been said, for example taking minutes in a meeting.

### **Encoding messages**

All messages must be encoded into a form that can be conveyed by the communication channel chosen for the message. We all do this every day when transferring abstract thoughts into spoken words or a written form. However, other communication channels require different forms of encoding, e.g. text written for a report will not work well if broadcast via a radio programme, and the short, abbreviated text used in text messages would be inappropriate if sent via a letter. Complex data may be best communicated using a graph or chart or other visualisation. Effective communicators encode their messages with their intended audience in mind as well as the communication channel. This involves an appropriate use of language, conveying the information simply and clearly, anticipating and eliminating likely causes of confusion and misunderstanding, and knowing the receivers' experience in decoding other similar communications. Successful encoding of messages is a vital skill in effective communication.

### **Decoding messages**

Once received, the receivers need to decode the message, and successful decoding is also a vital skill. Individuals will decode and understand messages in different ways based upon any barriers to communication which might be present, their experience and understanding of the context of the message, their psychological state, and the time and place of receipt as well as many other potential factors. Understanding how the message will be decoded, and anticipating as many of the potential sources of misunderstanding as possible, is the art of a successful communicator.

### **Feedback**

Receivers of messages are likely to provide feedback on how they have understood the messages through both verbal and non-verbal reactions. Effective communicators should pay close attention to this feedback as it is the only way to assess whether the message has been understood as intended, and it allows any confusion to be corrected. Bear in mind that the extent and form of feedback will vary according to the communication channel used: for

example feedback during a face-to-face or telephone conversation will be immediate and direct, whilst feedback to messages conveyed via TV or radio will be indirect and may be delayed, or even conveyed through other media such as the Internet.

## **1.2 THE DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF COMMUNICATION**

**Spoken or verbal communication:** face-to-face, telephone, radio or television and other media.

**Non- verbal communication:** body language, gestures, how we dress or act - even our scent.

**Written communication:** letters, e-mails, books, magazines, the Internet or via other media.

**Visualizations:** graphs and charts, maps, logos and other visualizations can communicate messages.

### **The goal of all categories of communication**

*The desired outcome or goal of any communication process is understanding!!!*

### **Interpersonal communication**

The process of interpersonal communication cannot be regarded as phenomenon which simply 'happens', but should be seen as a process which involves participants negotiating their role in this process, whether consciously or unconsciously. Senders and receivers are of course vital in communication. In face-to-face communication the roles of the sender and receiver are not distinct as both parties communicate with each other, even if in very subtle ways such as through eye-contact (or lack of) and general body language. There are many other subtle ways that we communicate (perhaps even unintentionally) with others, for example the tone of our voice can give clues to our mood or emotional state, whilst hand signals or gestures can add to a spoken message. In written communication the sender and receiver are more distinct. Until recent times, relatively few writers and publishers were very powerful when it came to communicating the written word. Today we can all write and publish our ideas on the Internet, which has led to an explosion of information and communication possibilities.

### **Principles of interpersonal communication**

Common to all interpersonal communications are some basic principles. These principles govern the effectiveness of our communications; they may be simple to understand but can take a lifetime to master.

### **Interpersonal communication is a necessity**

We may, at times, try not to communicate; but not communicating is not an option. In fact the harder we try not to communicate, the more we do! By not communicating we are communicating something: perhaps that we are shy, perhaps that we are angry or sulking, perhaps that we are too busy. Ignoring somebody is communicating with them, we may not tell them we are ignoring them but through non-verbal communication we hope to make that apparent. We communicate far more and far more honestly with non-verbal communication than we do with words. Our body posture and position, eye-contact (or lack of it), the smallest and most subtle of mannerisms are all ways of communicating with others. Furthermore we are constantly being communicated to, we pick up signals from others and interpret them in certain ways and whether or not we understand is based on how skilled we are at interpreting interpersonal communication.

### **Irreversibility of interpersonal communication**

The process of Interpersonal Communication is irreversible, you can wish you hadn't said something and you can apologise for something you said and later regret - but you can't take it back.

### **Stereotypes in interpersonal communication**

We often behave and therefore communicate to others based on previous communication encounters. These encounters may or may not be appropriate points of reference. We stereotype people, often subconsciously, maybe by gender, social standing, religion, race, age and other factors – stereotypes are generalisations, often exaggerated. Because of these stereotypes, when we communicate with people we can carry with us certain preconceptions of what they are thinking or how they are likely to behave, we may have ideas about the outcome of the conversation. These preconceptions affect how we speak to others, the words we use and the tone of voice. We naturally communicate in a way that we think is most appropriate for the person we are talking to. Unfortunately our preconceptions of others are often incorrect. This can mean that our communication is inappropriate and therefore more likely to be misunderstood. As the goal to all communication has to be understanding it can be said that we have failed to communicate. By communicating in this way, being influenced by preconceived ideas, we feedback further stereotypes to the person we are speaking to, thus exasperating the problem.

Start all interpersonal communication with an open mind; listen to what is being said rather than hearing what you expect to hear. You are then less likely to be misunderstood or say things that you regret later.

### **1.3 THE COMPLEXITY OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS**

No form of communication is simple, there are many reasons why communication is taking place, how it is taking place and how messages are being broadcast and received. Variables in communication, such as language, environment and distraction as well as the individuals involved in communicating all have an effect on how messages are sent, received and interpreted. When we communicate verbally we swap words - words that have, maybe subtly, different meanings to different people in different contexts. It could be argued that words are in fact just tokens we exchange with each other and that they have no inherent meaning at all hearted discussion in this area. We can communicate the same thing to different individuals but each person may have a different understanding or interpretation of the message. At any point in communication any misunderstanding, regardless of how small it may seem, will have an effect on the message that is being received.

#### **The Context of Communication**

All communication has a context; communication happens for a reason. Communication can fail because one or more of the participants overlook the context. To help avoid misunderstandings, and therefore communicate more effectively, it is important that the context of the communication is understood by all. It is important to know why the communication is happening and that participants are on the same 'wavelength' so that they understand why the communication is occurring. It may be useful to start a larger conversation by explaining why it is happening.

#### **Problems that affect the context of the communication**

Knowing why communication is occurring is an important first step - however there are other problems that affect the context of the communication: timing, location and misconceptions.

#### **Timing**

Timing is fundamental to successful communication as well as considering a suitable time to hold a conversation you should make sure that there is enough time to cover all that is needed, including time to clarify and negotiate. Talking to an employee about a strategic decision five minutes before they have to leave the office for the day, for example, would probably not be as successful as having the same conversation the following morning.

## **Location**

It should be fairly obvious that communication is going to be less effective if it is conducted in a noisy, uncomfortable or busy place. Such places have many distractions and often a lack of privacy.

## **Misconceptions**

The context of communication is also governed by our own feelings about it. As already discussed, we stereotype people and therefore can develop inaccurate misconceptions and false assumptions. When communicating we may assume that: all parties know what we are talking about; we know the other person's views and opinions of the situation; we should not show any emotion; we are right, they are wrong. There are many other examples of misconceptions highlighting the importance of careful reflection and clarification in all communication.

## **Factors of Communication**

- **Persons** - *willingness to communicate; language ability and skills; reasons and interest, how many persons communicate, etc.*
- **Way of communication**- *verbal, non-verbal, letter, electronic media; phone, etc.*
- **Content** – *importance for all participants, etc.*
- **Environment** - *emotional influence; space - possibility of communication (noise inappropriate place for communication, etc.).*

## **2. BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION**

There are many barriers to communication and these may occur at any stage in the communication process. Barriers may lead to your message becoming distorted and you therefore risk wasting both time and/or money by causing confusion and misunderstanding. Effective communication involves overcoming these barriers and conveying a clear and concise message.

### **2.1 COMMON BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

The message, you want to transfer, can skew the *use of jargon, over-complicated, unfamiliar and/or technical terms*. There are *emotional barriers and taboos*. Some people may find it



difficult to express their emotions and some topics may be completely 'off-limits' or taboo. Other barriers to communication may constitute *lack of attention, interest, distractions, or irrelevance* to the receiver. Naturally differences in perceptions and opinions exist in the human population, which can cause problems in interpersonal communication. Physical disabilities such as *hearing problems or speech difficulties* can be very serious barriers to communication. Some *physical barriers complicate or even make it impossible to non-verbal communication*. Not being able to see the non-verbal cues, gestures, posture and general body language make communication less effective or impossible. These handicapped people have problem with language differences and they have the difficulty in understanding unfamiliar accents.

Other possible barriers could be *expectations and prejudices* which may lead to false assumptions or stereotyping. People often hear what they expect to hear rather than what is actually said and jump to incorrect conclusions. *Cultural differences* contribute to these manners. The norms of social interaction vary greatly in different cultures, as do the way in which emotions are expressed. For example, the concept of personal space varies between cultures and between different social settings. A skilled communicator must be aware of these barriers and try to reduce their impact by continually checking understanding and by offering appropriate feedback.

## **2.2 A CATEGORISATION OF BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION**

When studying the barriers to communication we get to their categorization. The above-mentioned barriers can be divided into the following groups:

- *Language Barriers*
- *Psychological Barriers*
- *Physical Barriers*
- *Systematic Barriers*
- *Attitudinal Barriers*

### **Language Barriers**

Language and linguistic ability may act as a barrier to communication. However, even when communicating in the same language, the terminology used in a message may act as a barrier if it is not fully understood by the receiver(s). For example, a message that includes a lot of specialist jargon and abbreviations will not be understood by a receiver who is not familiar

with the terminology used. Regional colloquialisms and expressions may be misinterpreted or even considered offensive.

### **Psychological Barriers**

The psychological state of the communicators will influence how the message is sent, received and perceived. For example, if someone is stressed they may be preoccupied by personal concerns and not as receptive to the message as if they were not stressed. Stress management is an important personal skill that affects our interpersonal relationships. Anger is another example of a psychological barrier to communication, when we are angry it is easy to say things that we may later regret and also to misinterpret what others are saying.

More generally people with low self-esteem may be less assertive and therefore may not feel comfortable communicating - they may feel shy about saying how they really feel or read negative sub-texts into messages they hear.

### **Physiological Barriers**

Physiological barriers may result from the receiver's physical state. For example, a receiver with reduced hearing may not grasp to entirety of a spoken conversation especially if there is significant background noise.

### **Physical Barriers**

An example of a physical barrier to communication is geographic distance between the sender and receiver(s). Communication is generally easier over shorter distances as more communication channels are available and less technology is required. Although modern technology often serves to reduce the impact of physical barriers, the advantages and disadvantages of each communication channel should be understood so that an appropriate channel can be used to overcome the physical barriers.

### **Systematic Barriers**

Systematic barriers to communication may exist in structures and organisations where there are inefficient or inappropriate information systems and communication channels, or where there is a lack of understanding of the roles and responsibilities for communication. In such organisations, individuals may be unclear of their role in the communication process and therefore not know what is expected of them.

### **Attitudinal Barriers**

Attitudinal barriers are behaviours or perceptions that prevent people from communicating effectively. Attitudinal barriers to communication may result from personality conflicts, poor

management, resistance to change or a lack of motivation. Effective receivers of messages should attempt to overcome their own attitudinal barriers to facilitate effective communication.

### **2.3 BOOK ABOUT BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION**

Authors Kevin Hogan and Ron Stubbs who have a lot of experience with communication have written book “Can’t get through 8 barriers to communication” which contains advice on effective communication. Kevin Hogan is an expert in communications and in his book passes on readers the key findings related to the topic of body language, influence, persuasion method of offering goods and sometimes humorous presentation as in the following example:

*"The ability to say something funny requires a high level of intelligence. If you memorize a thousand jokes, that doesn't make you a person with a sense of humor. Sense of humor is more subtle. A good sense of humor is about timing, the ability to say the funny thing at the right time and to the right people. Telling a sexist joke in a room full of women will probably not score many points with the audience. Humor is largely an interpersonal activity that requires a high level of emotional, social and also mating intelligence."*

#### **Eight Barriers to Communication**

K. Hogan has found that there are eight basic mistakes causing loss of attention and respect towards other actors of communication - 8 barriers to communication:

- It is difficult shortly to define barriers to effective communication
- K. Hogan has discovered that there are 8 general ways that people lose the attention and respect of others when communicating - 8 barriers to communication:
- Failure to make a great first (and second) impression
- Flubbing (bungleing) the story
- Not listening
- Arguing with the intent to harm
- Criticism
- Hostility and contempt
- Ignoring body language
- Ignoring the cycle of communication

## **Important Facets of Communication**

There are several facets of communication, many of which people never consider. Here are the most important:

- You, your beliefs, your intentions, your verbal skills, your empathy.
- The other person, his/her beliefs, intentions, verbal skills, and empathy.
- The physical environment (church, hospital, school, office, family).
- The physical appearance of each communicator.
- The nonverbal communication of each communicator.
- The degree to which two people like each other.
- Gender differences in perception and communication.

## **3. VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

### **3.1 VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

Speech - is the most frequently used device of interpersonal communication. There are three speech organs that take part in speech production: breathing organs, organs producing voice, and articulation.

**Factors important for quality speech are:**

**1. Breath** - working with breath - inspiration.

**2. Voice** - sound, created by the vocal cords, it is important for correct articulation and accents that affect comprehensibility.

**Distinguishing features of voice:**

**a) strength (intensity):** should correspond to external conditions, but also the specific situation - lecturer should change the intensity of the voice;

*ATTENTION - overloading leads to damage of voice!*

**b) pitch:** we distinguish voices high and deep; raising the voice = higher physical exertion (overload) - may create an unfavorable atmosphere;

**c) colour:** is different at various people, it can be deliberately modified, and may be affected by mentally and physically states; specific voice quality causes that a particular voice is pleasant, clear, gentle, and another vice versa uncomfortable and hard for listeners.

**Other important aspects of speech:**

**Rhythm** - a regular rhythm calms down, sometimes it can be sleep-inducing and irregular enables change or interruption in long speech.

**Dynamics** - helps to highlight content and to attract attention. It represents enhancement or the attenuation of voice and highlight words or sentences.

**Intonations** - change voice pitch. It is very important, fulfills communication and emotional functions. If intonation is not used, speech becomes monotonous and attention of listeners decreases.

**Tempo** - the speed of speech is mainly corresponding to the speaker's temperament, but also it is influenced by environment, current situations, goals, etc. It is necessary to select the appropriate pace and subject matter of communication, because too high rate of speech leads to incomprehensibility, too low rate of speech is sleep-inducing.

**Pause** - pauses in speech are necessary mainly for expiration, but also for logical organization of thoughts and sometimes intentionally for psychological effect.

An important factor is the *spatial distribution of communication participants* because the distance among people positively or negatively affects their communication. When communicating in a room, there are places to which lecturer pays more attention than others.

**There are 3 communication areas:**

- **first zone (up to 3.7 m)** - lecturer communicates to listener more often and they are more active;
- **second zone (3.7 to 7.6 meters)** - the lower the number of contacts lecturer - listeners, the lower quality of communication
- **third zone (over 7.6 m)** - the poorest communication and collaboration

### **3.2 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

Non-verbal communication relates to verbal communication and has the following features:

- **highlighting** - underlines what we have said in words;
- **adding** - what we did not say the words, it will add non-verbal communication;
- **denying** - if we do not speak the truth, and we want others to know it;
- **regulating** - we regulate our verbal communication using non-verbal expressions;
- **repeating** - we can also repeat what we have just said using words;
- **replacing** - we have omitted the words communication and used instead for example gesticulations.

Professional literature nonverbal communication divides into eight ways of communication:

- **Views** - speech using eyes
- **Facial expression** - speech using face
- **Kinesics** - speech using movements
- **Posturology** - body language, speech using physical attitudes
- **Gestures** - speech using gestures
- **Haptics** - speech using touches
- **Proxemics** - speech using distance, to zoom in or out
- **Appearance and environment.**

### **Eyes in non-verbal communication**

Views - speech of eyes are the most important means of communication in nonverbal communication. Medical findings showed that eye movements associated with individual hemispheres of the brain. They show us the emotional states, but also energize visualization. The most dominant and reliable features of the face, the eyes provide a constant channel of communication. They can be shifty and evasive; convey hate, fear, and guilt; or express confidence, love, and support.

Studies show that gaze and eye contact can:

- provide information,
- regulate interaction,
- express intimacy,
- exercise social control, and
- facilitate goals.

Communication using eyes is different depending on the culture and gender. There are states which direct eye contact consider as a sign of seriousness and sincerity (USA), and vice versa there are other countries, it is considered a sign of disrespect and insult (Japan). Large differences are discernible in the eye contact between man and woman. Women applied eye contact more frequently and for longer periods than men. The reason may be a greater emotional involvement of women while talking or listening. When communicating only women their views are allied and encouraging, while men tend to turn away their views.

### **Facial expression**

It is a speech using face. The facial expressions express personal emotional state, emotional attitudes, extent of freshness and personal commitment. For speaker, it is important in the context of effect on audiences, to control his/her facial expressions. Research has found that

one can distinguish some emotions in facial expressions:

- happiness - unhappiness
- joy - sadness
- interest - disinterest
- calm - anger
- fear - a feeling of insecurity
- surprise - fulfilled expectations

The human face is one of the important means of identification of another person. Even when changing hairstyle, makeup, hair color or deployment of glasses can recognize typical facial expressions on his face.

### **Kinesics**

They are communication body movements, not movements connected with work. Extent of body movements is associated with emotional experiencing a particular situation. From the face can be read the kind of emotion and from the body movements, what is its intensity. It is proved that the different moods give into motion different muscle groups.

### **Posturology**

From the communication point of view it is an important human ability. It is possible to express some message using particular body postures, hands, feet and head. Body postures communicate to other people, how one feels, if her/his attitude is friendly or hostile, if she/he wants further negotiations or discussions is terminated.

### **Gestures**

Gestures are accompanying the movements of any body part when verbal communication. We use a lot of gestures purposely, some quite unconsciously. When communication correctly use of gestures is very important. They can attract more attention of listeners than boring interpretation of some issues. But speaker should not exaggerate the communication via gestures.

It is appropriate to mention the differences in using gestures in different cultures. For example, nod the head as an expression of agreement can in other state mean the opposite, the rate of smiles in every culture is significantly different gestures and carried arms in different areas differently interpreted. Different gestures are also in communication of women and men.

### **Haptics**

Communication via touch facile form of contact between people. When two people touch, it is possible to speak not only about which body parts are touched, but also to recognize the kind

of touch. These include a handshake, kiss etc. Touch can express in token of friendship or hostility. In the job environment, the boss can express the satisfaction or dissatisfaction, positive or negative evaluation.

The body distinguishes certain zones that are similar zones proxemics. The hands belong to a **social zone** and every day hands are available for manipulation. Hair, arms and shoulders belongs to the **personal zone**. Other parts of the subtle differences between men and women belong to the **intimate zone**. Boss or colleagues principally touch shoulders or head. Nowadays communication via touch in job environment is not recommended.

### **Proxemics**

In social communication happens that persons communicating together keep certain distance, and choose different distance places. These distances vary according to circumstances. When meeting people may even cause misunderstandings, when one person considers to take part in the official meetings, while the other not, and find a reasonable distance from each other is difficult. Especially in a school environment where teachers meet with students, there is a mutual to zoom in and out constantly. When communicating the two groups form called likeable distance in which they both feel good. This distance depends on:

- extrovert and introvert character;
- emotional relation in communicating;
- formal position of boss and subordinate;
- culture and ethnic.

Proxemics distinguishes horizontal and vertical distance between communicating.

#### **(1) Horizontal**

**Intimate Zone** - the body contact over a distance 30-60 cm - in this zone may enter only people very close. If you enter the intimate zone of other people, it can cause discomfort for the individual.

**Personal Zone** - a distance of 30-60 cm to 1.2-2 m - this distance is common for both personal and business communication. The choice of distance depends on the noise environment, the time limit, the topic of conversation etc. We can follow other aspects of nonverbal communication. For example facial expressions and glances.

**Social, group zone** - usually from 1.2 m to 3,6-10 m - at this distance ongoing business, teaching in schools, etc. People usually know, they see the whole body and it makes them feel safe.

**Public zone** - a distance of 3.6 meters - this distance maintains anonymity. People remain



alien and they do not know each other.

## **(2) Vertical communication**

It happens when people communicating have different height. The balanced communication includes the same eye height. Smaller person may feel uncomfortable and inferior. Higher person tends to some superiority. An example is the teachers' desk increased, a higher chair than other senior employees like. It evokes a feeling of attention.

## **Makeovers**

Our appearance and clothing that can give evidence about ourselves. Experts say that about half of our first impression about the other person we create based on his or her appearance. For some occupations the way we get dressed is much more important than other jobs-representation of the public administration.

People pay more attention to:

- **dress**ing - a modern, reliable, tasteful
- **accessories** - characterize the financial situation
- **body building**
- **teeth**
- **face paint**
- **hairstyle**
- **make-up**

Combination of performing speaker with the way we look create an overall professional image that strongly affect other people and affects the degree of speaker significance. Properly used clothing, accessories, outlook, at women also make up, all this highlight the personality of the speaker and can make the communication easy.

## **4. EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

Educational communication is a specific form of social communication. The point of educational communication is to communicate and supply certain meanings in social behaviour within the scope of interpersonal relations. *Social interaction* incorporates three main aspects:

- (1) *interaction viewpoint (mutual impact, influence);*
- (2) *communication viewpoint (the supply of meanings);*

*(3) perceptual viewpoint (perception of our partners in the scope of linear.*

### **Characteristics of educational communication**

It takes place between the participants of the educational process (teachers, students, headmaster, parents). It is always connected to a certain situation in the educational process (for example, a discussion about ways of growing carnations between two teachers during the break, would not be regarded as Educational Communication). Teacher's profession is associated with the skill of effective communication, which can be learnt, exercised, developed, and improved.

### **What are the differences between educational communication and social communication?**

It is usually defined as mutual exchange of information between the participants of the educational process. It is characteristic with its intentions and goals. It is a device used in upbringing and education. Educational communication can be viewed from two perspectives: the content and the process. The information mediated to the students has generally three components:

- (a) cognitive component influences the development of recognition of student's character;
- (b) affected component influences development of learning motivation, strengthens ability of making opinions;
- (c) regulative component it helps the implementation of schooling.

Those three components occur integrated in practice – they form the content surface of Educational communication in teaching.

### **Educational communication employs different tools of social communication:**

- (1) Verbal Form, communication by means of a word (spoken, written);*
- (2) Non-verbal - communication without the use of a word;*
- (3) Communication by a deed, a certain action takes place.*

For Social and Educational Communication even the content is identical.

### **We communicate:**

- (a) The Information
- (b) Our Emotion
- (c) Our attitude towards the content of our conversation
- (d) Our attitude towards the person we are speaking to
- (e) The rules of communication

- (f) The acceptance of our self-concept

#### **4.1 THE TOOLS OF EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION: Verbal Communication**

Speech is the most frequently used device of interpersonal communication. There are three speech organs that take part in speech production: breathing organs, organs producing voice, and articulation.

**Breath** – teacher must adopt a so called 'Breath Economy', which is an economical and conscious control of breathing to facilitate better speech performance.

**Voice** – each voice has three qualities: strength, pitch, and color. These qualities compromise the acoustic attributes of the voice. Teacher must master another important characteristic: flexibility (dynamics, tone) and the persistence of his or her voice.

##### **Nine characteristics of the Voice (paralinguistic aspects of speech)**

- (1) *The intensity of the voice (the change of the volume, dynamics);*
- (2) *The tone pitch of the voice;*
- (3) *The colour of the voice;*
- (4) *The length of the speech;*
- (5) *The rate of the speech;*
- (6) *The breaks and pauses made during the speech;*
- (7) *The acoustic content of the breaks (silence or humming);*
- (8) *The accuracy of the speech (avoidance of 'slips of the tongue', mistakes, parasitic words);*
- (9) *The manner of word delivery.*

##### **Verbal communication**

The content of verbal communication should be *matter-of-fact, accurate, comprehensible, brief, linguistically correct, and adequate for the specific group of students*. When verbal communication it is necessary to respect rules and principles as *to empathize with the student, to respect the personality of the student, to hold an authentic, genuine attitude, to be specific*.

The negative aspect of this communication is the difficulty of sharing emotions, showing attitudes towards other people or subjects, etc.

#### **4.2 THE TOOLS OF EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION: Non-verbal communication or 'talking without words'**

It is a kinetic behaviour, whose expressional tools are for example: *gestures, facial expressions, body postures* and others. These are mutually interconnected into meaningful

unintentional or intentional messages. Thanks to this communication it is easier to share *emotions, attitudes towards the student, class or subject*. Very young learners are not capable of accurate verbal communication like adults. *Therefore, children are more sensitive to non-verbal information signals.*

### **Types of non-verbal communication**

**(1) 'Giving a Look' communication** - it's the most frequent non-verbal means of communication. In reality the teacher observes a student or the whole class. On the other hand, the student will pay attention to a teacher who is sympathetic, gives praises and motivates. In every social (and educational) interaction are eyes functioning as a sensitive receptor, receiver and transmitter of information. Additionally, by means of their social function eyes give evidence of the personality of other human being, their psychological state, attributes, and relationship towards us. The teacher should observe the focus of the students look and its duration, frequency, sequence, extent and direction, shape and movement of the eyes including blinking, and last but not least the skin around the eyes. The teacher should not only be able to read from the students looks, but also be fair in dividing his or hers looks at each student.

**(2) Communication via 'the looks on one's face' (facial expressions)** - it is mostly based on the manifestation of emotions. Therefore, teacher can distinguish student's emotions of fear, sadness, happiness or surprise. Every teacher should be able to recognize if the student is anxiety, surprise, or happiness. Additionally, the teacher should be able to distinguish if the emotions are authentic or pretended. Unfortunately, teachers frequently misdiagnose students' unintentional face expressions as eye-rolling, frowning, grimace, or even pouting.

**(3) Communication via 'movements' (kinetics)** - are the movements that are signaling even the smallest trembles of one's inner mental state. We distinguish two types of students:

(a) One group is fully capable of expressing itself and vividly gesticulates. But when knowledge of subject is missing, students are weakening even in movements.

(b) Second group consists of individuals that have difficulty expressing themselves. The worse their vocal discourse gets, the more lively their movements become.

The teacher should be able to distinguish by students' movements his or hers psychological state; two malfunctions are recognized: coordination and synchronization. For example, motion restlessness like shuffling around, swaying, arm and head jerking, squirming, etc.

signalize anxiety, fear, tension and other manifestation connected with things like decreased ability of concentration, various blocks of the thought process, memory loss, etc.

**(4) Communication via 'body postures' (post-urology)** - it is a function linked to the body posture and configuration of each part of the body. Position, in which the student is, actually expresses the overall attitude. In most cases, the student strikes a pose that is a part of an act that the student puts on to show his or hers unfriendly attitude towards the teacher. At the same time, this pose is a cover up for students feeling of uncertainty and stage fright.

**(5) Communication via 'gestures'**. Gestures (e.g. the movements of hands and other parts of the body - head turning, bow) have a communicative function - these are movements which accompany verbal communication or they even replace them. The teacher should always strive for self-control and self-knowledge while using gestures.

**(6) Communication via 'touch'** (tactile contact, haptics) - e.g. a handshake, a squeeze, a hug, a stroke, a kiss, a pat, a pinch, a poke, etc. Touch, when considered from educational communication's point of view can be taken as a token of hostility (a slap, a smack in the face, a push etc.) or a sign of friendship (a stroke, a pat). There also a symbolic manifestations, such as when teacher instead of verbal reprimanding taps lightly on students arm. The teacher should touch the students very carefully and with optimal degree.

**(7) Communication via 'use of space'** - approximation or pulling away from each other (proxemics) - mutual interpersonal relations between people in a certain group. In a particular space we tend to move closer to people that are sympathetic, and move away from people that are unpleasant. While in class, the teacher is associating in the public, social, and personal sphere; exceptionally in the intimate sphere. The area (of the front desk) in the class is more frequent in interaction and is marked as so called 'action zone'. The teacher usually communicates more often with students in this area and they are also more active. Additionally, an 'eye-to eye' communication is very suitable - feelings of dominance or inferiority.

**(8) Communication via 'appearance'** - stresses the importance of one's appearance and style of clothes, hair and make-up, etc. The appearance of the teacher provides certain information about the teacher's character traits and the teacher is therefore under the students' scrutiny.

Another important factor is arrangement of the class and its environment. Information about the student can be distinguished from student's desk and how tidy or messy his things are, etc. Same applies to teacher's desk.

**Communication via 'deed'** - meaning the interaction between the teacher and students, how they treat each other and what attitude they have towards each other. The students definitely do sense how well the teacher is prepared and ready for the class. They evaluate if he or she arrives on time, gives fair marks and the overall attitude towards them. With the behavior and each deed, the teacher shows the class and each student his or her appreciation and respect → social evaluation (increase in value) or the other way around → social devaluation.

**Factors influencing teacher attitude towards the student:**

- (a) social role of the teacher (the class teacher is usually more objective and helpful);
- (b) teacher conception of a 'good student';
- (c) qualities and appearance of the student;
- (d) if the student is talkative;
- (e) class, which the student visits.

**The style of upbringing**

With communication definitely goes hand in hand the choice of style of upbringing. It is important to recognize who in the class is the authority that sets all norms and makes sure that they are being kept. There are three style of upbringing:

Authoritative (autocratic) style – *where the teacher sets the norms and makes sure that they are kept.*

Democratic style – *the teacher sets the norms with the cooperation of the students, and teacher makes sure that they are kept.*

Liberal style – *the teacher sets the norms with the cooperation of the students, and the students are responsible themselves for keeping them.*

The choice of style always depends on individual class and situation, and is closely interconnected with the authority of the teacher. To be able to communicate properly, the teacher must be able to communicate effectively. Meaning that the teacher must know how to express points properly, must be a good listener, and be empathetic = empathy.

Principles of simplifying communication:

- (1) Communication while during lessons should be purposeful.

- (2) We should communicate only with attentive listeners.
- (3) We should allow the possibility of misunderstanding with the students.
- (4) The communication should always incorporate humour.
- (5) In any case there should be humiliation or ridicule present in communication with students.

## 5. RESOURCES

The presenting text is addressed to participants English version of courses of Educational Communication (Pedagogická komunikace). After completing it, students should obtain the same outputs as students of the Czech version of the course and be prepared for state final exams. This text has therefore been specially prepared and is based on the sources presented below.

Hogan K. & Stubbs, R. (2003) Can't get Through 8 Barriers to Communication. LA: Pelican Publishing Company, Gretna.

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