

COMMUNICATION IN A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Kęstutis Trakšėlys¹, Dalia Martišauskienė²
Klaipėda University

ANOTATION

In the article authors discuss communication in a learning environment. Intercourse is one of the most important assumptions of individual's becoming a human. During the intercourse, people exchange information, create a favorable emotional environment and affect each other. Intercourse is an establishment and maintenance of connection between people, a communication. Communication is the basis of intercourse, collaboration and social activity. For the expression of social activity (for initiative, responsibility, sociability), important are cognitive interests and activity of individuals. Communication in a social learning environment can be defined as a technique of social relations and contact, a social reciprocity of conditions and specific result and as an interaction of various social institutions in order to satisfy intercourse needs and to fulfill learning objectives.

The article also analyzes the theory of communication barriers-conflicts and discusses their solutions.

KEYWORDS: communication, communication problems, learning environment.

Introduction

The communication concept can be attributed to friendship lasting for many years, to correspondence by e-mail and to actor's performance for the audience. Therefore, there are various types of communication and components. First of all, the following types can be distinguished: intrapersonal communication, i.e. communication with oneself and communication with others and interpersonal communication.

The most important aspects of interpersonal communication are mutual understanding (social perception), information exchange (social communication), reciprocity (social interaction) and relationships. Mutual understanding is a perception

¹ Kęstutis Trakšėlys, Klaipėdos universiteto Tęstinių studijų instituto Andragogikos katedros mokslo darbuotojas. Mokslinių interesų sritys: suaugusiųjų švietimo sociologija, suaugusiųjų švietimo politika, suaugusiųjų švietimas.

² Dalia Martišauskienė, socialinių mokslų (edukologijos) daktarė, Klaipėdos universiteto Tęstinių studijų instituto Konsultacinio centro vadovė. Moksliniai interesai: švietimo vadyba, kokybės vadyba, edukologija, andragogika

of people features, their behaviour, motives and intercommunion. It is a video playback of social reality in human's mind. This is an important part of communication process which is especially strong while starting the conversation with a stranger when the communication partner is trying to form an opinion about his/her interlocutor while the speaker wants to make an impression.

Communication is an exchange of information using a particular notation. In order to transmit this information, various techniques are used: language (verbal communication), mimics, and gestures, sometimes even some particular details of clothing or accessories (non-verbal communication) (Želvys, 1995).

Reciprocity is an effect made by people, who communicate with each other. In communication process people make a particular impact on each other: change feelings, attitudes and behaviour. Interaction (in communication process) is an internal part of communication process which determines external part of communication process, i.e. communication itself and its results.

Individual features, social provisions and mental state are important for intercommunion while skills are the most essential for communication. In communication process, reciprocity is determined by mutual provisions (Jakavičius, 1998).

In communication, there is a direct connection between person's social status, prestige and power together with "dictionary" he/she uses. The higher individual's social or professional position, the better he/she is able to communicate in the level of words and phrases. In non-verbal communication, there is a connection between the level of person's eloquence and gesticulation. Therefore, it appears that in a communication process, a person who has a high social or professional position uses his/her "oral resources" much more than a less educated or less professional person who uses gestures more often than words. The higher the person's social-economic position is, the less developed are his/her gestures and body language (Lawton, 2006).

Development of communication capabilities can help to restore psychological balance, to return the status favourable to the activity, creativity and communication of employees. On the other hand, the development of self-confidence, self-esteem and pro-social values can facilitate the communication. The basis of good relationships with others is a positive approach towards oneself.

Only those who help and collaborate themselves can receive a positive assessment from the surrounding people. The essential method of communication improvement is personal involvement into productive communication. It is necessary to make conditions for the person to have a desire to communicate and act together. Therefore, it is important to take into account his/her hobbies, experience, interests and expectations (Jovaiša, 2002). In contrast, those who are suspicious, irritable, critical, oppose others negatively, unwilling to help often become lonely and others avoid to interact with them. Goodwill, trust, respect to another person's freedom of

self-determination, ability to tolerate different views and conscious disposition to strive in the name of better intercommunion are the cornerstones without which it is impossible to create a meaningful, stable and effective style of one's communication with others (Almonaitienė, 2003).

During the communication a human becomes a personality. It is impossible to imagine the human himself/herself without the communication because in communication processes all human traits are formed: values, ideals, feelings, emotions, character features and behavioural habits. Communication is a complex activity that requires a lifelong learning because it has many laws which the one needs to know, and rules which the one must consciously follow.

Lithuanian and foreign authors R. Želvys (1995), V. Legkauskas (2008), J. Almonaitienė, R. Lekavičienė (2005), E. Lawton (2006) studied the phenomenon of communication between people in relationships and revealed the process, forms, information senders' functions and communication between processes occurring mental.

Authors A. Suslavičius, G. Valickas (2006), L. Joyce, R. Wilimot, W. Wallace (2007) examine interpersonal communication and communication in the process of social learning environments. A. Jacikevičius (1999), V. Jakavičius (1998), L. Jovaiša (2002) look at the communication as an important aspect of learning process of becoming personality.

R. M. Andriekienė, B. Anužienė (2006), M. Teresevičienė and others (2003), P. Jarvis (2001) examine various communication problems, see its role in learning. The various aspects that affect the interaction of culture, researchers J. Almonaitienė (2003), A. Bėkšta, V. Lukošūnienė (2005), J. Kasiulis, V. Barvydienė (2001), V. Kučinskas (2003), and others analyze the relationship between organizational culture and organization. Dealt with conflict situations, dealt with the problems presented various aspects of successful work with adults.

Accordingly, the scientific problem has been formulated – what is an effective learning environment?

The purpose of the article – theory to analyze the communication learning environment

1. Communication as a basis for adult education

People experience the world directly while acting and reacting, and that is the primary experience; however, the world can also be experienced indirectly through speaking and communication, and that is the secondary experience (Jarvis, 2001).

Communication is a process when people try to understand each other's perception, ideas and experience through the language. When communicating, two people become dependent on one another and create intercommunion through the act of

communication. Communication is encouraged by our desire for another person to know what we know, to value what we value, to feel what we feel, and to decide to do something in the way we would do it. Two people understand each other by seeing, hearing, touching and smelling each other. That wholeness has an impact on everyone's perception about what the other is preparing to do or how to act. Therefore, the communication is not only an exchange of verbal information; it is also a non-verbal behaviour. L. Jovaiša (2002) emphasizes that communication does not always reveal the real relations between people because a smile can hide hostility while anger can hide love.

It is assumed that person tries to be himself/herself and this can be implemented through relation with others, through activity and communication philosophy. On the other hand, every person wants to communicate. Communication is a process when the senders and receivers of information influence each other by words. Our communication models are not the result of our free creation. Although we more or less consciously choose which communication tools we will use in a particular situation, but we take communication tools, as well as other social behaviour, from other people (Legkauskas, 2008). Therefore, communication peculiarities are one of the tasks to be resolved by adults in order to help each other to learn, to know and to understand. Perception of self and others is a necessity for a partnership in communication which is one of the most important assumptions of adult learning (Teresevičienė et al, 2006). It is also important to follow communication rules and respect its culture when making and fostering mutual relations. Nobody comes to this world knowing how to communicate. Wisdom and communication art are learned. Human history shows that the family begins to prepare a person for life. Family is the first human development institution. "Education, considering the meaning of the word, should be understood as a purposeful and lifelong process of people communication which creates personality interacting with the environment and humanity's cultural values (Jakavičius, 1998, p. 9).

Intercourse is one of the most important assumptions of individual's becoming a human. During the intercourse, people exchange information, create a favourable emotional environment and affect each other. Intercourse is an establishment and maintenance of connection between people, a communication. Communication is an exchange of mental activity results (knowledge, thoughts, decisions, and feelings) and interaction as the exchange of actions and mutual impact. Such intercourse is education. In the content of education (as of intercourse process) there are interaction (mutual impact...) and communication (exchange of knowledge...) (Jakavičius, 1998).

Communication is an exchange of information (more accurately, revision and expansion of knowledge and opinions; it is a process of intercourse, exchange of experience, thoughts and feelings; it is a two-sided action, a process of intercourse

and information exchange in the society, which is realized by spoken or written text. Therefore, many authors (Suslavičius, 2006; Gailienė et al, 2002; Nauckūnaitė, 2000; Jovaiša, 2007; and others) first relate communication concept with the process of intercourse. When a person interact using language and non-verbal, he/she can transmit the message about his/her thoughts and feelings to others. Communication is a process of information exchange. At least two people are participating in the communication process, where one of them is an information sender (correspondent) and the other one is a receiver (recipient). The objective of the information sender is to affect the other person in some way; therefore, he/she sends particular information which he/she encodes. In order to understand this message, the receiver has to decode it. Generally, the participants of communication process often change their roles: information sender become the receiver and vice versa (Gailienė et al, 2002). Therefore, the success of the communication depends on both sides. Communication is one of the intercourse functions; others are interaction and perception (cognition) (Nauckūnaitė, 2000).

Intercourse is an effective interaction between two or more people. It is realized on the basis of three principles. The first is empathy, i.e. the ability to emphasize with another person's inner world, to look at the world and oneself through the eyes of another, to experience other person's emotions. Perhaps the most important thing in empathy is the understanding of that other person, respect and desire to help him/her; to this objective, a principle of individual's originality (remaining oneself in any kind of situation not using any masks) can be useful. Remaining oneself provides another interlocutor with certainty, sense of security. The third principle, acceptance, is also important to the equivalent intercourse. Acceptance is when other person is taken as he/she is. When communicating, we have to treat another person as a miscellaneous subject worth the respect and not to have any prejudices against him/her. This helps to hear and understand the interlocutor, and to form an identical image of another person (Teresevičienė et al, 2003). In conclusion it can be stated that communication is the basis of intercourse, collaboration and social activity. For the expression of social activity (for initiative, responsibility, sociability), important are cognitive interests and activity of individuals. Communication in a social learning environment can be defined as a technique of social relations and contact, a social reciprocity of conditions and specific result and as an interaction of various social institutions in order to satisfy intercourse needs and to fulfill learning objectives.

2. Communication problems, conflicts and ways to solve them

Conflicts between groups occur due to many reasons, for example, methods of work evaluation, tasks which cross interests of different groups, objectives the achievement of which one group has to work against the other, different appro-

ach of groups towards the aspiration of common objectives, and personal conflicts of different groups' members. Almost any combination of these miscellaneous reasons can cause conflict between groups (Suslavičius et al, 2006). Inability to control one's emotional state, low self-esteem level, aggressiveness, hypersensitivity or non-communication are enough for a person to be recognized as "conflicting" (Kasiulis, Barvydienė, 2001). People who get involved into conflicts are usually stubborn, inert, and hate contradictory behaviour. Conflicting people are those whose main objective of life is to win at any price the recognition of surrounding people, to occupy a prestigious position in the society. The conflict should be assessed as an opportunity or as a problem; therefore, they are divided into negative and positive conflicts (Almonaitienė, Lekavičienė, 2005). Negative conflicts have unsolved problems.

Relations between employees become tougher and tenser, hostility occurs; sometimes they even dissipate, and employees sometimes tend to expand their contentions. However, conflicts can also play a positive role:

- They help to learn more about the other person's needs and their satisfaction;
- Get to know each other better;
- To clarify things and to improve interpersonal relationships;
- To remove various shortcomings and become more involved into the activity;
- Helps to unite and enhance concentration;
- Helps to develop and remove stagnation (Kasiulis, Barvydienė, 2001).

Opportunities and ways to solve communication problems and conflicts. L. Jovaiša (2002, p. 199) writes: "Why should the communication be improved? The answer is simple: it has never been perfect. In addition, there is a severe crisis in communication caused by historical, economic and social reasons." Therefore, improvement of human relations and development of communication capabilities improve the communication in social environment.

Communication capabilities are rather broad concept involving skills of argument in speaking, listening, other human cognition, conflict solving, negotiation (business dispute) and other skills.

Communication, as a meaningful interaction between two or more people, occurs naturally in any group of people; therefore, it seems that it is not necessary to specifically develop communication capabilities (Želvys, 1995). However, it is not true. Necessity is certain knowledge and possibilities to apply them, to analyze one's and others' communication experience and learn from it.

When solving any kind of problem, it is always important to ponder on everything deeply and fully, to foresee and predict the consequences. Sometimes it is necessary to look not at the problem, but at the environment and circumstances:

time, situation, internal state, etc. It is very important when looking for a better way to solve the problem to go deeper into oneself, to imagine oneself in another person's situation and to think about how to behave or choose the appropriate words and to offer support. When one focuses on the respect and support, thoughts are concentrating allowing the creation of positive environment. It is very important to listen and to hear other person's opinion, learn from future mistakes, to look for and to find new ways and tools for conflict control.

Conflicts are a part of everyday life, work and learning. Every person sometimes is involved into complex communication situations. In order for interpersonal conflicts to be solved successfully, a person needs a lot of knowledge and skills. However, communication is impossible without conflicts. The conflict itself is not bad yet. The essence is the nature of the conflict: productive or destructive. According to psychologists, destructive conflict is oriented not towards the solution of the problem, but towards the destruction of the opponent. Since conflicts are inevitable in the process of becoming a personality, it is necessary to look for positive ways to solve them in order to reduce their negative impact on both the personality and quality of group's activity (Gumuliauskienė, Pocevičienė, 2007).

It is noted (Fullan, 2004) that of all the chances the perception of communication process is the hardest. It is not perfect by itself; it does not mean agreement; it does not mean that essential disagreements are impossible; it does not mean that individuals must obey the will of the majority.

False decisions are most often stimulated not by conflicts, but by superficial consensus (Misevičius, 2003). Disagreements begin when a spirit of loyalty dominates in a group which encourages indifference or even hostility to others between the groups. Communication is a joint creative process: two or more individuals who have skills that complement each other work together when creating a common understanding none of them had before and would not have been able to achieve it independently (Teresevičienė et al, 2003). In order to cooperate, every partner must be prepared to change his/her culture and relations. Joint work can create conditions for coherence, coordination and persistence; that is what an employee and development of the organization need. Both partners must try to cooperate, i.e. create new structures, respect each other's culture and share a common experience in order to solve problems. The conflict when different opinions intersect openly is not only inevitable, but also a valuable thing in life, work and learning. It helps to ensure that different possibilities will be observed. Not conflicting may demonstrate reluctance to take responsibility, lack of interest or sluggish thinking. Therefore, many conflicts have both rational and irrational elements and their range is very wide, i.e. from interests to personal conflicts.

Interpersonal conflicts often arise between two people when at least one of them is angry, disadvantaged or is against another person. However, the hostility must be

repressed and this is the main way to solve the conflict. The essence of the conflict solving – what is discussed in a conflicting situation and how, together with the inner state of the participants. It is not enough to understand the origin of the conflict, internal mechanism of its emergence and development. It is more important to remove interpersonal conflicts and their negative impact on learning environment (Joyce et al, 2007).

When a situation with incompatible objectives occurs, measures are taken in order to prevent the conflict. One of the first steps of conflict control is the outpouring of feelings. After a person says everything he/she wanted and outpours his/her emotions, it is easier for him/her to start talking again and make the decision. In order to improve the conflict situation, one must always know the reason of the conflict. Every person is unique and has the right to have his/her individual opinion, and he/she has a right to express the dissatisfaction. An appropriate note of the teacher or colleague, compliment or encouragement will affect the person, who may feel disadvantaged, positively. There would be much less conflicts if the atmosphere is quiet and friendly (Almonaitienė, Lekavičienė, 2005).

J. Kasiulis and V. Barvydienė (2001) state that if there is compatibility in the learning environment, there will also be coherence, and capability to co-operate and communicate with each other. They distinguish the following four levels of compatibility:

1. Functional compatibility: matching by age, anthropometric data (height...), physical endurance, etc.
2. Psycho-physiological compatibility: matching by the speed of reaction, movement, information processing, etc.
3. Psychological compatibility: matching by temperaments, emotional expression techniques, situation assessment, etc.
4. Social-psychological compatibility: matching of objectives, interests, values, etc.

In these authors' point of view, the most important is a social-psychological compatibility. When selecting people for a learning groups, attention is paid to features as the need to dominate, introversion and extroversion, aggressiveness, pliability, etc (personality type, temperament and others). Another "layer" includes valuable orientations, individual every person's objectives, positions, approach towards other people and teamwork. Especially emphasized must be positivity: in a group successfully learning groups those people who have positive attitudes towards others, trust them and think that others can also provide valuable ideas and properly perform the goal.

Conclusion

Communication is an exchange of information using a particular notation. In order to transmit this information, various techniques are used: language (verbal communication), mimics, and gestures, sometimes even some particular details of clothing or accessories (non-verbal communication).

Communication is important in the creation of study environment. The intercourse between teacher and student is active in communication process. It is extremely essential in adults learning process.

Communication is education. In the content of education (as of intercourse process) is interaction (mutual impact...) and communication (exchange of knowledge...).

Communication is the basis of intercourse, collaboration and social activity. For the expression of social activity (for initiative, responsibility, sociability), cognitive interests and activity of individuals are important. Communication in social learning environment can be defined as a technique of social relations and contact, a social reciprocity of conditions and specific result and an interaction of various social institutions in order to satisfy intercourse needs and to fulfill learning objectives.

Development of communication capabilities can help to restore psychological balance, to return the status favorable to the activity, creativity and communication of employees. On the other hand, the development of self-confidence, self-esteem and pro-social values can facilitate the communication. The basis of good relationships with others is a positive approach towards oneself. Only those who help and collaborate themselves can receive a positive assessment from the surrounding people. The essential method of communication improvement is personal involvement into productive communication. It is necessary to make conditions for the person to have a desire to communicate and act together. Therefore, it is important to take into account his/her hobbies, experience, interests and expectations. In contrast, those who oppose others negatively, are suspicious, irritable, critical, unwilling to help often become lonely and others avoid interacting with them. Goodwill, trust, respect to another person's freedom of self-determination, ability to tolerate different views and conscious disposition to strive in the name of better intercommunion are the cornerstones without which it is impossible to create a meaningful, stable and effective style of one's communication with others.

Gauta 2013 04 10

Spausdinti rekomendavo doc. dr. Gitana Tolutienė

References

- Andriekienė, R. M., Anužienė, B. (2006). *Andragoginiai kompetencijų tobulinimo aspektai tęstiniame profesiniame mokyme*. Monografija. Klaipėda: Klaipėdos universiteto leidykla.
- Almonaitienė, J. (2003). *Bendravimo psichologija*. Kaunas: Technologija.

- Almonaitienė, J., Lekavičienė, R., Matulienė, G., Vasiliauskaitė, Z. ir kt. (2005). *Bendravimo psichologija*. Kaunas: Technologija.
- Bėkšta, A., Lukošūnienė, V. (2005). *Mokomės dialogo. Kaip susikalbėti piliečiams, organizacijoms ir kultūroms*. Knyga mokytojui. Vilnius: Lietuvos suaugusiųjų švietimo asociacija.
- Fullan, M. (2004). *Pokyčių jėgos: skverbimasis į ugdymo reformos gelmes*. Vilnius: Tyto alba.
- Gailienė, D., Bulotaitė, L., Sturlienė, N. (2002). *Psichologija*. Vilnius.
- Gumuliauskienė, A., Pocevičienė, R. (2007). *Novacijų valdymas švietimo organizacijoje globalizacijos sąlygomis: požiūriai ir interpretacijos*. Mokytojų ugdymas. ISSN 1822-119X. Šiauliai: Šiaulių universiteto leidykla, Nr. 8, p. 77–90.
- Jacikevičius, A. (1999). *Siela, mokslas, gyvensena*. Vilnius: Žodynas.
- Jakavičius, V. (1998). *Žmogaus ugdymas*. Klaipėda: Klaipėdos universiteto leidykla.
- Jarvis, P. (2001). *Mokymosi paradoksai: suaugusiųjų švietimas dabarčiai ir ateičiai*. Kaunas: VDU leidykla.
- Joyce, L., Wilmot, W., Wallace, W. (2007). *Interpersonal conflict*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Kasiulis, J., Barvydienė, V. (2001). *Vadovavimo psichologija*. Kaunas: Technologija.
- Kučinskas, V. (2003). *Vadovavimo etika*. Klaipėda: Klaipėdos universiteto leidykla.
- Lawton, E. (2006). *Body language and the first line manager*. Oxford: Chandos, London. Institute of leadership & management.
- Legkauskas, V. (2008). *Socialinė psichologija*. Vilnius: Vaga.
- Nauckūnaitė, Z. (2002). *Iškalbos mokymas*. Kaunas.
- Jovaiša, L. (2007). *Enciklopedinis edukologijos žodynas*. Vilnius: Gimtasis žodis.
- Jovaiša, L. (2002). *Edukologijos įvadas*. Kaunas: Technologija.
- Suslavičius, A. (2006). *Socialinė psichologija*. Vilnius.
- Suslavičius, A., Valickas, G. (2006). *Socialinė psichologija teisėtvarkos darbuotojams*. Vilnius: Lietuvos teisės akademija
- Teresevičienė, M., Gedvilienė, G. (2003). *Mokymasis grupėse ir asmenybės kaita*. Kaunas: VDU leidykla.
- Teresevičienė, M., Gedvilienė, G., Zuzevičiūtė, V. (2006). *Andragogika*. Kaunas: VDU leidykla.
- Želvys, R. (1995). *Bendravimo psichologija*. Vilnius: Valstybinis leidybos centras.

BENDRAVIMAS MOKYMOSI APLINKOJE

Kęstutis Trakšėlys, Dalia Martišauskienė

Santrauka

Straipsnyje autoriai analizuoja bendravimą mokymosi aplinkoje, nes pasaulyje, kartu ir Lietuvoje, vykstant socialinėms transformacijoms, sparčiai keičiasi ne tik žmogaus veiklos kontekstas, bet ir jo vertybės, savastis. Kaita sukuria sunkiai aprėpiamas socialines įtampas demografinių procesų, etnokultūrinių, dorovinių, ekonominių, teisinių, politinių, religinių, organizacinių ir tarpasmeninių santykių srityse. Svarbiausi tarpasmeninio bendravimo aspektai – tai tarpusavio suvokimas, keitimasis informacija, tarpusavio sąveika ir santykiai. Žmonių santykiai ir veikla prasideda ir plėtojasi per kalbą, kuri yra bendravimo pagrindas. Sąmoningas ir tikslingas bendravimo gebėjimų tobulinimas, žinių apie bendravimo sampratų ir turinio

pokyčius bei radimosi ištakų plėtotė leidžia kiekvienam žmogui įveikti problemas ir konfliktus, su kuriais jis susiduria mokymosi aplinkoje. Straipsnyje akcentuojama, kad institucija bei mokymosi situacijos veikia, keičia suaugusiųjų švietimo procese dalyvaujantį asmenį, apibrėžia jo veiklos, bendravimo, elgsenos kryptis, pobūdį. Ypatingos svarbos įgyja besimokančiųjų gebėjimas mokytis bendraujant ir bendradarbiaujant. Vadinasi, bendravimo gebėjimų plėtojimas yra suaugusiųjų švietimo institucijos funkcija, kurios pobūdį lemia kultūriniai, socialiniai ir kiti aspektai. Bendraujant mokymosi aplinkoje, perimamos žmonijos sukurtos vertybės, pasiekiami laukiami andragogo ir besimokančiojo veiklos rezultatai. Bendravimo savitumą suvokimas yra vienas iš uždavinių, kuriuos turi išspręsti suaugusieji, norėdami vienas kitam padėti išmokti, sužinoti, suprasti. Savęs ir kitų suvokimas yra būtinybė siekiant partneriškos komunikacijos, kuri yra viena svarbiausių suaugusiųjų mokymosi prielaidų.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: bendravimas, bendravimo problemos, mokymosi aplinka.