Intervention Strategies in Didactic Communication

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Abstract

Didactic communication has an important role in today’s educational system because it is the basis for forming a relationship that ensures a mutual dialogue between the teacher and the student. This dialogue will then allow the student’s personality to form. However, the didactic communication can be obstructed by many factors that form barriers in communication both from the transmitter’s as well as the receiver’s perspectives. These barriers can be overcome with educational intervention. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the role that didactic communication has in the educational process, namely to transmit different kinds of messages as a form of knowledge, feelings, emotions, abilities.

Keywords: communication, didactic communication, verbal, nonverbal, para-verbal, barriers in communication, educational intervention;

1. Introduction

“Communication focuses its main interest on those behavioral situations where a source transmits a message to a receiver, with its manifested intention for influencing his subsequent behavior.”†

(Gerald R. Miller)

The definition that Gerald R. Miller gave is particularly useful in defining the role that didactic communication has in the educational process. From this perspective, the way information is transmitted, how it gets assigned a reference point from the one who transmits it and how it is transformed into a message represents the result of a “masterpiece” that gets defined over time.

Starting from the role communication has inside a human community, as an existential phenomenon, this paper addresses the general problem of human communication and, in particular, didactic communication.

So what does communicating mean? This is a question that we can hardly answer, as communication assumes a circular, temporal process that continuously influences and shapes its own expression.

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In trying to offer a scheme for communication, I have pledged for a model proposed by C. Shannon and W. Weaver because of the advantage of direct functionality of communicational dimensions.

Figure 1. Communication process. Adapted from Shannon and Weaver's model
2. Didactic communication

"In educational communication the teaching act is one that is curative. The student, being helped to communicate, obtains the source of satisfaction, the fulfillment of the needs for spontaneous expressing, well thought and prepared. Thus, efficient communication becomes possible along with the freedom of expressing, fostered by the force of communication and the trust that he can give clear meaning and beauty to his thoughts, ideas and emotions." ‡

In concrete terms, today’s modern educational system relies on innovation, and the modern teacher must search for and identify solutions, strategies and opportunities throughout which the ideal path in education is achieved. From this perspective, the innovative didactic communication offers to the process of education the value of a complex educative intervention.

Starting from the fact that every communication process has a specific defined and represented structure regardless of the communication forms that are used, the teacher has the mission of not only following the educational success of his students, but also contributing to the personal success they are having in everyday life. This mission is achieved only by having a good teacher-student communication.

Continuing from this point, we will head our focus on the different forms of communication: verbal, nonverbal and para-verbal.

By its specific means, didactic communication is mostly a verbal form that dominates the entire process of teaching – learning – evaluating and assures the use of multiple ways of expression, either spoken or written. The spoken form is efficient because it allows the emitter to quickly verify the message that the receiver got and understood, and it also has advantages like naturalness, customization, rapidity and feedback. Written communication focuses on a higher strictness than the spoken form, but it offers the access possibility for a higher number of receivers.

In the case of nonverbal communication, this expresses interpersonal attitudes, affective states and shapes the ideas that are transmitted. We must be aware that in didactic communication, the outfit, facial expressions, and different gestures that the teacher makes can arouse emotional and intellectual reverberations. Para-verbal communication has an important role in didactic communication because it expresses an attitudinal state and it is transmitted throughout vocal and prosodic elements.

Summarizing the above, we conclude that didactic communication relies on the whole para-verbal and nonverbal components which in the end sustain the interaction between the teacher (the emitter) and the student (the receiver).

3. Barriers in communication

Communication represents an open system, influenced by many factors. Because of this, barriers in communication can appear both from the transmitter’s and the receiver’s perspectives.

These barriers can obstruct didactic communication, modifying or disrupting the normal educational process. This could be because of multiple factors, such as differences in knowledge, roles, social statuses, etc. Furthermore, external or ambient noise can also be added to these barriers, as it may cause a transmitted message to be misunderstood by its receivers.

4. Educational intervention strategies

It is very obvious that education is realized with the use of different educational interventions, mainly through communication, in the mentality and behavior of those who are being thought. The concept has been introduced by the logician Constantin Sălăvăstru and seems to be appropriate in the context of the present analysis. He defines educational intervention as “every human act throughout which an influence over an individual is being realized.”

We are faced with a bigger problem when we try to classify these educational interventions. More precisely, teachers – particularly young teachers- are willing to find the methods and strategies for an optimal functioning of the educational process.

In this way, I propose the following classification of these educational strategies.

4.1. Pedagogical communication strategy

This strategy assumes mastering of skills and abilities by the teacher, which he should apply while aiming effective communication. The art of pedagogical communication assures overcoming obstacles and transforms the “subject - object” interaction into an educational intervention. Thus, the teacher is choosing the forms of communication by focusing on transmitting information, inspiring beliefs, inducing a certain emotion or even revealing a certain behavior that the student has.

4.2. Pedagogical knowledge strategy

This strategy ensures optimal implementation for planning, organizing and conducting educational activities. Communication relationship between the teacher and the student is influenced by the way the teacher approaches communication. Truly knowing his students is the only way to understand how they think and feel. From the moment the teacher understands his students, we can speak about knowledge. In this way, empathy has the role of defining knowledge and communicative relationships. Communication is the fundamental form of psychosocial interaction. This is the reason why, in the case of empathy, communication and understanding are the main assignments.

4.3. Pedagogical creativity strategy

This strategy must stimulate student activism and creativity in order to manifest a positive behavior and attitude. Within this strategy, it should be noted that the transfer of values that foster creativity from the teacher to the disciple represents a self-development and self-training phenomenon. The teacher’s role is one of stimulating and managing, but creativity’s motivation appears from the teacher’s enthusiasm. Thus, the educational process becoming an “adventure of knowledge”.

5. Conclusions

Didactic communication becomes effective the moment when both the teacher and the student comply with certain requirements:
Table 1. Teacher and student requirements for an effective communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of messages</td>
<td>Ability to concentrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy in communication</td>
<td>Possession of prior knowledge required for learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using accessible language, according to the level of understanding</td>
<td>Motivation to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical structure of ideas</td>
<td>Knowing the parlance used by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring a favorable environment communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathize with students</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In this way, didactic communication includes those informational flows, verbal or nonverbal, that shape a pluridirectional speech. Within the educational act, the teacher acts as a resonator as well as the student, the former just having the freedom of choosing the educational strategies that leads to an efficient didactic communication.

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