Adapting Communication Methods to the Specific Needs of Clients: Application on Teaching English in the University Kindergarten Qočna

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá přizpůsobováním komunikace jak v manažerské praxi, tak i v mateřské škole. Cílem je porovnání a nalezení paralel těchto dvou oblastí. Umění přizpůsobit plán spolupráce a celkovou nabídku individuálním potřebám klienta je nezbytná dovednost každého manažera, lektora a každého, kdo má v náplni práce aktivní kontakt s lidmi. Vyžaduje schopnost důkladné analýzy a posléze efektivního sloučení požadavků a potřeb s možnostmi a schopnostmi klienta. Přizpůsobování komunikace je klíčem k efektivnímu a úspěšnému jednání s lidmi.

Klíčová slova: komunikace, neverbální komunikace, dítě předškolního věku, jazyk, učení, vyučování, anglický jazyk, klient, manažer, potřeby.

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis focuses on adaptation of communication methods in business administration as well as in a kindergarten. The goal is to compare and find parallels between these two fields. The skill to adapt a cooperation plan and a total supply to individual needs of a client is the necessary skill of each manager, lector and everyone who has to communicate with people actively on everyday basis. It requires thorough analysis and subsequently, an effective combination of requirements and needs with possibilities and abilities of the client. Adaptation of communication is the key to effective and successful interaction with people.

Keywords: communication, non-verbal communication, child of preschool age, language, teaching, learning, English language, client, manager, needs.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This bachelor thesis is focused on adapting of communication to the specific needs of clients. It is known that communication is a crucial part of every job where people are in contact with others. It is a very important part of each human activity. Without effective communication, it is not possible to work well. Communication is adapted to specific situations, more specifically to the recipient, in our case to the client. For purposes of my bachelor thesis, the client is defined as a child of preschool age and his parents who agreed with English lessons. The English lessons were ordered by University Kindergarten Qočna in Zlín where my internship of teaching English took place.

The purpose of my work is to demonstrate universality of adaptation of communication to needs of clients; weather the client is a child of preschool age, or a client from business administration. To show that each client has specific needs, and that the communicator adapts the way he communicates with them. When we say that communication is a very important aspect of human activities, adaptation should be the key to effective communication and moreover, to effective interaction with others.

The first aim of this thesis is to collect theoretical information about children of preschool age as clients, and about teaching English, which represents the adaptation of communication methods. At the beginning, there will be an explanation of basic terminology used throughout the thesis. Majority of the work is devoted to a term communication, which is the crucial point of the whole thesis. The first chapter concerns communication in business administration. Then I will focus on a group of preschool children in more details. I will characterize their main features. I will also describe how teaching and communication with preschool children should look like according to literature. In the practical part, I would like to apply such theoretical information to actual experience acquired during my internship in the Qočna Kindergarden.

In the final part of my thesis, I would like to compare communication with a client of preschool age and a client from business administration. It is obvious that these two groups are significantly different, and they will have different needs. However, they could have similar communication needs. I would like to point out that adapting to communication needs can be a universal process. We always have to learn about characteristics of a specific group, recognize their specific needs, and only then we can adapt our way of communication in order to make the communication effective.

1 COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Communication is an essential part of this thesis. The first chapter describes communication in a field of business administration. The key characteristic of a successful manager should be great communication skills.

The main part of this chapter is definitely communication influenced by other factors, which are described as well. Adapting of methods of communication basically depends on the type of a client. More specifically, it includes type of a targeted individual or a group, and the type of needs they might have. All the terms, such as a client, a group or communication needs, have something in common. They are connected together, and it is important to know the context in order to understand this thesis. Communication is a very broad and general topic. That is why in this case, it will be described only to the extent that it related to the crucial part of my thesis. Predominantly, it is the communication in business administration and communication within a nursery school, which will be described more in following chapters. The aim is to find some parallels between adapting communication methods to specific needs of a client in the business sphere and a client from kindergarten.

1.1 Communication

According to Strnadová, communication is a very broad term. The word communication is derived from the Latin word *communicare* which means to connect something. Simply, it means to transform information between communicator and communicant. For this process, message coding and decoding and types of communication channels are very important. In psychology, communication is not considered only as transformation of information between sender and receiver, but it is more about self-presentation and about expressing of attitude to content of communication and receiver of the information.[1]

Communication has many functions, for example to inform, instruct, persuade, or just entertain, but there are many more. The function together with identification of the aim influences the type of communication. Because communication always has its purpose, we communicate for some reason. One of important aims of communication is to build good

[1] Věra Strnadová, *Interpersonální komunikace* (Hradec Králové: Gaudeamus, 2011) 24.

mutual relationship between communicators. It is the key factor of effective communication.[2]

The process of communication includes two types of signaling system, which work together. There are verbal and non-verbal. Verbal communication means a process of exchanging information between people through using a system of sound or graphic characters. The system is called language, and each language character takes a meaning. Non-verbal system represents all nonverbal means through which we are able to convey the meaning. These are for instance gesture, facial expression, haptics or proxemics. Despite the fact that body language is very often underestimated, it can influence the result of meeting.[3]

Nonverbal communication has even bigger influence than verbal expressions. It is proved that our nonverbal expressions are more important in our speech than the words. Therefore, people should care about their nonverbal expressions. Even more when they are working with other people and the success of their jobs relies on how they interact with them.

Interpersonal communication is a very important part of managerial work. Up 90% of manager's working hours consist of communicating. Various forms of his work are realized by form of communication. For instance managing, giving information, conducting meetings and conferences, tasking, motivating, recruitment, dismissal, evaluating, and others. All these activities require good communication skills, and good manager has to excel perfect communication skills. Communication is the only possible way how to transmit information and maintain the functionality of the company.[4]

Inter alia, the task of a manager is to organize collective work in the company, and it is in his best interest to make people cooperate. Consequently, the key to effective communication is manager's communication skills.[5]

"In general, managers prefer to rely on oral communication because communication tends to be more complete and thorough when talking in person. In face-to-face interactions, a person can judge how the other party is reacting, get immediate feedback, and answer questions. In general, people tend to assume that talking to someone directly is

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[2] Božena Jiřincová, *Efektivní komunikace pro manažery* (Praha: Grada Publishing, 2010) 21.
[3] Jiřincová, 23.
[4] Milan Mikuláštík, *Manažerská psychologie* (Zlín: Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně, 2001) 120.

more credible than receiving a written message. Face-to-face communication permits not only the exchange of words, but also the opportunity to see the nonverbal communication."[6]

1.1.1 Effective Communication in Business Administration

The following paragraph contains two of the most important abilities for effective oral communication.

The first and very essential feature of effective verbal communication is active listening. Proper understanding of a received message requires paying attention, interpreting, and remembering sound stimuli. For effective communication, it is important to make eye contact. During the meeting, participants should not be interrupted, and they should avoid emotional reactions or being rude. Paraphrasing of what is heard, and clarifying the speaker's intention or our understanding is very beneficial. Active listening also includes avoiding distracting gestures.[7]

The second ability that brings effective oral communication is a constructive feedback. A manager should provide regular and constructive performance feedback to employees. While doing this, the evaluator is supposed to focus on specific behaviors rather than making general statements. The constructive feedback should lack any signs of personal attitudes and be goal-oriented. Feedback should be offered immediately after the assessed action. Questions should be asked to ensure understanding of the feedback.[8] The employee should always understand the feedback and consequently, understand the evaluation.

1.1.2 Adapting of Communication Methods to Client

According to Müllerová, an author of a discourse has always an intention. It means that the discourse is determined for any receiver. Accordingly, the author chooses certain means of language. In written texts, it is for example choice of words, graphic layout, and regarding spoken language; it includes for example intonation or power of voice instead of

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[5] Jiřincová, 9.

[6] CliffsNotes.com, "Methods of Communication," CliffsNotes, http://www.cliffsnotes.com/study_guide/topicArticleId-8944,articleId-8919.html (accessed March 24, 2013).

[7] CliffsNotes.com, "Methods of Communication," (accessed March 24, 2013).

[8] CliffsNotes.com, "Methods of Communication," (accessed March 24, 2013).

choice of words. However, for written and spoken monolog, everything is subordinated to predetermined objective.[9]

In the case of spoken dialogue, it is a more difficult process. The role of communicator and recipient alternates constantly. Communicator chooses words and phrases according to the type of a partner he wants to adapt to him. Müllerová also cites in her article that we can find alternation of words and adaptation to partner in dialogue in children of two years. But in this age, it is more general way of adaptation.[10]

A course of each dialogue is influenced by many nonlinguistic factors. The first one, that has considerable influence on mutual adapting of partners in dialogue, is different social roles. Another factor is relationship between the partners in dialogue; whether they know each other or they meet for the first time. Next factors are age, education, or communication skills, communicative intention and aim, or topic of the dialogue. All these factors influence expression of dialogue participants.[11] This fact is also mentioned by Hutchinson and Waters. According to them, "the important point is that, if we view language as part of a communicative whole, it is clear that language use shows considerable variety. The whole communicative act is made up of a number of contextually dependent factors. Language, then, varies according to the context of use and it is this fact that enables us to distinguish, for example, formal from informal, written from spoken, self-sufficient language from context-dependent."[12]

Jiřincová in her book Efektivní komunikace pro manažery points out that adapting to a counterpart is a key to the success. She says it is important to be able to adapt to partner's speech, to create harmony in voice and words, but moreover, to adapt paralinguistic and nonverbal features. She calls this method, of adapting to other person, pacing.[13]

Hutchinson and Waters in their book English for Specific Purposes say that learners in the classroom have different needs and interests. This fact can have impact on their motivation to learn and therefore on the process of learning. They say that for the design of the course, a process called 'target situation analysis', must be performed. We need to get

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[9] Olga Müllerová, „O jazykovém přizpůsobování partnerů v dialogu," *Naše řeč* 61, no. 2 (1978), http://nase-rec.ujc.cas.cz/archiv.php?art=6038 (accessed October 30, 2012).

[10] Müllerová, „O jazykovém přizpůsobování partnerů v dialogu," (accessed October 30, 2012).

[11] Müllerová, „O jazykovém přizpůsobování partnerů v dialogu," (accessed October 30, 2012).

[12] Tom Hutchinson and Alan Waters, *English for Specific Purposes* (England: Cambridge University Press, 1987) 30.

[13] Jiřincová, 55.

a lot of information about communication purposes, communicative settings, the means of communication, language skills, and so on.[14] It is the content of teacher's work to design appropriate course for various groups of learners on the basis of recognition of their needs. The teacher should know the most about his 'clients'. He needs to know about the purpose of teaching that specific group, about the aim of the course, the place, and about what kind of methodology will be employed.[15] "Any course should be based on an analysis of learner's needs."[16]

1.2 Constituent Part of Communication

As was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the process of communication itself requires participants like senders and receivers and certain purpose. The following subhead will describe constituent parts of communication that can influence used communication methods.

Client

We can describe two types of clients for the purposes of this thesis. The first one is a client from a management sphere. Generally, it is a person or an organization that uses and buys certain services; someone who managers make business with. The second type of a client, which will be dealt with in more details, is a preschool child, or rather the parent of the child who ordered the services. In this case the services will be English lessons. As a client he has some specific characteristics and needs. They will be described in more details in the following chapters.

Client is always an individual and has his specific needs. For effective communication, it is important to analyze these needs at the very beginning, and only then to adapt communication methods to the client in a proper manner.

Group

Every person is an individual, but becomes part of a certain group during his life; whether it is a family, a school class, or a collective at work. Each group has some specifics

[14] Hutchinson and Waters, 8-12.
[15] Ibid., 21.
[16] Ibid., 53.

we need to know about if we are to be in contact or deal with the group. Each group is created for a purpose. "For individuals, the work or social group may serve to satisfy their needs for fellowship and affiliation, to offer support and simulation, or to provide the additional assistance and resources necessary to achieve personal goals. In organizations, groups come into existence to bring together the skills and talents needed to do work, that requires many hands or heads."[17]

According to Tyson, "groups are dynamics social systems, constantly adjusting in response to internal as well as external influences." They have their own rules and structure that help them to perform effectively.[18]

Each group has its size, and is characterized by types of members, their relationships and established communication channel. This makes each group different from others.[19] To be effective in communication and in other activities related to interaction with clients, we need to know how to adapt to their needs.

Needs

People never do anything without a reason. Therefore, a motivation has significant importance for each human activity. It raises, maintains, and controls the behavior of the subject. Needs are basic motives of behavior, and they represent the most pressing incentives of our actions. A need is a process that begins with a deficiency. Then it continues by gradual activity focused on an object of saturation. When the need is met, the mental tension decreases. Needs cannot be met straightforwardly.

The biggest wish and dream of each manager is for his employees to work well, effectively, and on the bases of their inner passion. This positive relationship to work can be found at the very top of the Needs Pyramid.

On the other hand, communication with others also means meeting of their needs. Jiřncová says that if you want to communicate effectively you have to pay attention to the needs of others. They significantly influence the process of communication.[20]

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[17] Trevor Tyson, *Working with Groups* (South Yarra: Macmilan, 1998) 1.
[18] Ibid., 24.
[19] Ibid., 25.
[20] Jiřincová, 33.

Strnadová notes that we satisfy many kinds of needs thanks to communication. Communication can provide a pleasure to us, or help us to reach our goals and success. Our need to communicate is one of the most important needs of life.[21]

According to Maslow's Needs Pyramid, people have many types of needs. In this case, communication needs would be part of social needs. People need to feel that they are a part of certain group and to feel accepted. Communication is the mean of achieving their goals. It is an integral part of every human activity. However, communication is effective only when its participants adapt to their mutual communication needs.

Client's needs

On the other hand, there is business administration where the main goal is to meet the needs of their clients. All communication is aimed to satisfaction of a client. Companies use an external communication to build good reputation, but it is a long-term process. To achieve this goal, companies have to adapt to customer's demands. They use first line employees to identify needs of clients and means of satisfaction. Only then, they can go to streamline their services. Managers have to know their clients and competition. The most important communication is the communication between the first line employees and clients. Marketing communication is related to the company communication. The needs of the targeted market need to be determined in order to meet all needs of clients. The main goal of marketing communication is to convince clients to buy certain goods or services. On the other hand, client's wishes need to be determined too. Another purpose of marketing communication is to increase client's awareness about production programs of a company. Companies can also communicate with clients by nonverbal means. Examples of nonverbal communication can be bulletin boards, leaflets, newsletters, media or advertisement. The last one is provided by public relations department.[22] As you can see, communication is very important, and it is closely connected with defining of client's needs.

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[21] Strnadová, 18-20.

[22] Růžena Petříková a kol., *Lidé v procesech řízení* (Praha: Professional Publishing, 2007) 47-53.

2 COMMUNICATION IN THE KINDERGARTEN

As the title suggests, in this case, children of preschool age together with their parents represent the client. Children as clients are a very specific group. And because of their specific characteristic they have different communication needs than client from business administration. For effective communication and following adapting of language, it is essential to know the client's needs and requirements. Therefore, it is very important for teachers and lectors, who work with children of preschool children, to be educated about their specific needs. This chapter will describe main characteristics of young children as a group and communication within the kindergarten.

2.1 Characteristics of Preschool Children

"The age of target students is a major factor when teacher decides about topics and techniques of teaching. People of different ages have different needs, competences, and cognitive skills; we might expect children of primary age to acquire much of a foreign language through play, for example, whereas for adults we can reasonably expect a greater use of abstract thought."[23] The following characteristic of young children is just generalization. In reality it depends more on individual differences and motivation. "Yet each student is an individual with different experiences, both in and outside the classroom"[24]

"Young children, especially those up to the ages of nine or ten, learn differently from older children, adolescents, and adults." It is very typical for children of this age to respond to meaning and context without understanding every individual word. Basically, they learn indirectly. It means that they receive all information from their surroundings rather than concentrating on a certain topic they are being taught. The process of understanding and learning, most of the time, comes from what they see and hear. Another helpful tool is when children can touch and interact with an object related to a subject they are being taught. Young children are curious about their surroundings and are enthusiastic and excited about learning unlike older students. They need individual attention. They are keen to talk about themselves, and respond well to learning that uses them and their lives as a

[23] Jeremy Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (Harlow: Longman, 2001) 37.
[24] Ibid.

main topic in the classroom. However, their attention span is limited. They might easily get bored or lose interest after few minutes.[25]

Preschool age is one of the most interesting developmental periods. It is time of sustained physical and mental activity and great interest in surrounding world. Children manifest themselves primarily by game activities. In this period, games are very often interconnected with physical activities. Motion coordination is represented by the ability of a full self-care; child is independent.

Children of preschool age have significant need of activity and initiative, but also strong need of stability, certainty, permanency, and safety. They need a stable background. The motivation is obvious to children, and close targets are connected with concrete satisfaction of certain needs.[26]

Preschool age is characterizes by stabilization of own position in the world and differentiation of relationships to the world. Persistent egocentrism influences thinking and communication, child clings to his view. Preschool age is also called period of initiative; child has a need to manage everything by himself. This period is perceived as phase of preparation for life in the society. Children ignore information that would hinder or complicate their view of the world. Verbal skills of preschool children improve in terms of content and form. Children develop especially by communication with adults. They are able to express their opinions, requirements, and feelings. Some communication rules are acquired by children until the age of five, eventually later. This mainly concerns understanding of context and relationship to certain topics. From the age of four, approximately, children are able to differentiate communication method in regards to their communication partner. It means that they start to differentiate social role of the counterpart; they use different communication methods to communicate with adults and peers.[27]

Non-verbal expressions are constituent part of mutual interactions. They are important communication means and inform mainly about emotions. Children's non-verbal

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[25] Harmer, 37.

[26] Lenka Šulová, *Raný psychický vývoj dítěte*. (Praha: Univerzita Karlova, Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2004) 66-71.

[27] Marie Vágnerová, *Vývojová psychologie I.: Dětství a dospívání*. (Praha:Univerzita Karlova, Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2005) 173-236.

communication and their abilities to understand it need to be developed already in the kindergarten.[28]

The general description of preschool children is very important. However, we have to keep in mind that there are different individuals in each class, even though they are members of the same group. This fact has to be taken into account while planning activities that are most appropriate for the clients. "We need to balance the interests of individuals against what is good for the group and to be aware of certain individual traits when putting students into pairs and groups. We need to recognize which students need more personal attention than others, and which need different kinds of explanations and practice of language." Thus, the first step is to recognize students as individuals and then as members of a group. When we recognize the different students in our class, we can then assess what kind of help they need.[29]

In the school environment, we can find students with individual differences regarding the acquisition of foreign languages. Just like people have different skills for understanding of mathematics or acquiring of manual dexterity, individual differences also exist in people's ability to learn foreign language and the ability to use the language on communication level. It is due to the individual skills of each person. In psycholinguistics, it is called the language aptitude. [30]

2.2 Mental and Physical Development of Preschool Children

When teaching children of preschool age, their mental and physical development has to be taken into consideration. Motor development is related to the total activity of children in this age. As the quality of their movement coordination increases, children are little by little able to manage swimming, cycling, skiing, and other activities. Likewise, fine motor skills concurrently effect drawing development. Initially simple drawings become more creative and detailed. It becomes one of symbolic representation of reality in which subjectively important features can outweigh the real form.

In preschool age, the intuitive visual thinking is fully developed. However, it tends to be subjectively tinged, without respect to laws of logic, and moreover, we can see a

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[28] Václav Mertin and Ilona Gillernová, *Psychologie pro učitelky mateřské školy* (Praha: Portál, 2003) 31.

[29] Harmer, 43.

[30] Jan Průcha, *Interkulturní komunikace*. (Praha: Grada Publishing, 2010) 115.

noticeable impact of egocentrism. Thinking is bound to perceptive activities. That is why an active approach of children to perceptive words supported by pictures is essential. It is important to support speech with something specific and visual.

Rather unwitting memory is very typical for children of preschool age. They start to use intentional memory around the age of five. Until then, mechanical memory is predominant. Children far better remember specific events. If these events are emotionally tinged, than a long term memory is developed. Anyhow, any evolution and progress needs to be supported by constant repetition.[31] A capacity of mechanical memory, together with activity and curiosity in this age, create good basis for easy receiving of information. It is appropriate time for initiation of foreign language learning, but it has to be provided with the use of methods adequate to the age.[32]

In the third year of life and in the following several years, before the start of school education, a change in language acquisition occurs. Children acquire grammar of the language and its morphological and syntactic system intensively. Concurrently, children's vocabulary and paralinguistic functions of language develop at a rapid rate.[33] As was mentioned before, we can find great inter-individual differences in acquiring vocabulary among children. There can be noticeable differences even between two children of the same age. According to Průcha, it can be caused by individual specificity of neuropsychological development in children of the same age. There are many factors influencing speech development in children, for instance, structure of their family, siblings and other family members, socio-economic status and profession of parents, level of parents' education, and others.[34]

Šulová cites that each developmental stage is characterized by certain typical changes. Significant individual difference is constituent part of development of human beings. It specifies the development of each of us. It can be applied on cognitive, speech, emotional, moral, and social development.[35]

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[31] Iva Hennová, *Angličtina pro předškoláky: Metodika pro výuku v mateřské škole* (Praha: Portál, 2010) 10.

[32] Šulová, *Raný psychický vývoj dítěte*. 66-71.

[33] Jan Průcha, *Dětská řeč a komunikace: Poznatky vývojové psycholingvistiky* (Praha: Grada Publishing, 2011) 51.

[34] Ibid., 89-130.

[35] Lenka Šulová, *Předškolní dítě a jeho svět* (Praha: Univerzita Karlova, Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2003) 435.

2.3 The Environment of Kindergarten

Kindergarten represents an important transition between private family environment and school as an institution. It enables children to acquire necessary experience that facilitate the start of school. Kindergarten has its specific importance of socialization. It does not create too much pressure on children's performance, and it provides time required for adaptation. The start in the kindergarten is moreover connected with a necessity to accept and respect foreign adult authority; the teacher.[36]

Initiation of the attendance in the kindergarten reveals systematized cultural activities to children. It includes tasks that require checking. Activities have their beginning and end. Teacher requires to end one activity, and then to start with another one. There are many activities and they have their schedule that needs to be adhered.[37]

In addition to the family, it is the kindergarten that directly or indirectly participates in children's development. Preschool age is exceptionally beneficial period of time for development of different sides of children's personality.[38] Therefore the communication between teacher and parents is necessary as well.

The environment, where lessons take place, is also very important during the process of teaching children of preschool age. It is essential for children to feel comfortable and confident. According to Harmer, the classroom should be bright and colorful with windows and views, and with enough room where different activities can take place. Children very often change their activities and go to different stations in the classroom.[39] Therefore, the environment of kindergarten should provide suitable conditions for children to feel comfortable.

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[36] Vágnerová, 173-236.
[37] Lenka Šulová, *Předškolní dítě a jeho svět*, 162.
[38] Mertin and Gillernová, 7.
[39] Harmer, 37.

3 ENGLISH TEACHING TO PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

In the previous chapter, we have learned about characteristics and needs of preschool children. This chapter includes all necessary information teachers need to known before the initiation of English lessons. It concerns basic information about language teaching. It deals with mental and physical development of preschool children, as well as methods of teaching English. Children are very specific group and it needs to be taken into account. The teacher has to have background knowledge in early childhood education, especially, if he is supposed to teach language. Therefore, English language will be first described in general, and the following part will focus on English teaching in more details.

3.1 English Language

The first chapter described communication as a process, and we learned that when we communicate we use coding. To express what we have on mind, we use verbal or non-verbal signals. In this chapter, I would like to focus specifically on English language which is essential for the practical part of my thesis.

According to Průcha, language is a system of verbal signs that is used to formulate ideas, social conveying of these ideas, and experiences.[40]

Nowadays, English is demanded all over the world in every sphere. It has automatically become an essential part of abilities of an educated person. "Although English is not the language with the largest number of native or ‚first' language speakers, it has become a lingua franca. A lingua franca can be defined as a language widely adopted for communication between two speakers whose native languages are different from each other's, and where one or both speakers are using it as a 'second' language."[41] English is currently only one from several international languages that is widespread in all the inhabited continents of the world.[42]

[40] Jan Průcha, *Interkulturní komunikace*, 51.
[41] Harmer, 1.
[42] Jan Průcha, *Interkulturní komunikace*, 84.

3.2 Use of Language for Different Purposes

Not only English, but any other language is used for different purposes. According to Harmer, different style of writing or speaking requires various use of language. He explains this fact on few examples. "Scientific articles employ passives more than general ones; academic essays require a style of discourse and particular expressions which would be out of place in normal social interaction. The language of air traffic control has a specific vocabulary which has to be understood and followed if the system is to work; workers in the tourist industry need to be confident about the specific vocabulary and the types of language interactions, such as dealing with dissatisfied customers that they may encounter."[43] It means that each field or specific group has its own specific way of using language, and it is important to adapt to it.

"An enormous growth area in English language teaching has been in the area of Business English because many students perceive a need for kind of language which will allow them to operate in the world of English-medium commerce. Once again there is specific vocabulary and language events (presenting to colleagues, the language of contracts, etc.) which are unlikely to appear in a general English course, but which are vitally important for business students. And so teachers find themselves training classes in such procedures as the art of negotiating, the correct use of phones and e-mail, or the reading of business reports."[44] It is connected with education of future managers. Weather it is their native language or English language which has became obviousness, they have to learn and acquire specific business terminology and be able to use them in appropriate situations.

3.2.1 Factors Influencing the Use of Language

Just like in communication, we adapt language to specific purposes. But as was mentioned before, language is only a small part of communication as a whole.

We have always some purpose in mind; purpose we want to achieve through the use of language. According to this purpose, we choose the proper language function. There are many language functions such as inviting, apologizing, offering, suggesting, or others. Each function includes the purpose in it. For example, '*Would you like to come for a*

[43] Harmer, 10.
[44] Ibid.

drink?' represents the function of inviting, or '*Call me if you need help'* is an offering of help and the purpose of it, is to show the interest in helping.[45] This means that we choose different function of language in different situation according to the purpose of our language. Sometimes we are aware of it, but most of the time we do not even realize it. According to Harmer, the process of choosing the appropriate language form in certain situations is influenced by number of factors.

The first factor is the environment where we speak. Places definitely have an impact on the way we speak; whether we use rather formal or informal language. The language differs significantly when people are at home, and when they have for example a presentation at a business meeting. Participants, people who are involved in the communication process, have also very important role concerning the choice of language form that will be used. It is the same situation as in the previous case of the environment. It is probable that employee of an international company uses different language while conversing with his boss or other superiors, than he would use in a pub with his old friends. It means that people choose the form of used language based on the receiver's status. Another factor is a gender; whether you are talking to women or men has an impact on the language use too.

The difference is in the case of different types of channel. The basic division is spoken and written language, but the spoken language has many ways to be carried out; it is influenced by the situation. Spoken language is not represented only by speaking face to face, but it can be handled via telephone, or it can have another form. "Each different channel will generate different uses of language."[46] Finally, equally important factor is the topic we are addressing. It totally affects the choice of lexical and grammatical form. We use different set of words and other features when we are writing academic essay, than when we are telling a fairytale to a little child.[47]

3.3 English Teaching

Nowadays, it has become more and more desirable for preschool children to start learning English as a second language. It is usually the preschool teacher or a language

[45] Harmer, 24.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.

school lecturer who teaches them. It would be optimal to involve English in all day activities in preschools. But in many nursery schools, English lessons are provided by external lecturers in regular intervals, usually on weekly basis.[48]

The main difference between teaching preschool children and older children is that preschool children are not yet able to read and write. That is why the teaching is mainly based on speaking, listening, and is accompanied by art and physical, or creative activities. The basic method of teaching foreign language to children of preschool age is called the *Total physical response (TPR).* This means that children respond to teacher's instructions through body or other physical movement. The teacher gives an instruction in English but the content of the sentence is demonstrated by gestures or facial expressions.[49]

According to Krashen, acquiring language is "developing ability in a language by using it in natural communicative situations. Language learning is different from acquisition. Language learning is 'knowing the rules'; having a conscious knowledge about grammar."[50]

The goals need to be defined at the beginning of the course. Only then, the most appropriate methods and materials for the course can be selected. The teachers need to consider the age of students when planning the second language program. First of all, young children are interested in different topics than older students, and generally, they have different needs. They learn language indirectly through natural language acquisition experiences.[51]

According to Mertin and Gillernová, an appropriate age to start English teaching to preschool children is at the age of five. At the age of five, children have already acquired basics of their mother language. The language is the means of communication; expressing their wishes and feelings. They have sufficient vocabulary and they should be able to pronounce well. If children's mother language is not sufficiently developed due to poor vocabulary or logopedic disabilities, they should be recommended to wait for later age. When teaching foreign language, the ideal number of children in a group is five or six. In

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[48] Hennová, 13.
[49] Ibid., 10.
[50] Stephen D. Krashen and Tracy D. Terrell, *The Natural Approach*: *Language Acquisition in the Classroom* (Oxford : Pergamon Press ; San Francisco : Alemany Press, 1983) 18.
[51] Ibid., 61-65.

such a small group, children are able to pay attention and to be in continuous contact with the teacher.[52]

3.4 Use of Communication Methods

There are several approaches regarding the extent of inclusion of English into teaching. According one of them, lessons should be conducted only in English mainly because for most children, it is the only opportunity to hear foreign language in a familiar environment. The level of difficulty should be appropriate for their age. It should be limited to only simple sentences. The lecturer should be at least at intermediate level. Knowledge of only vocabulary is not sufficient. (According to Common European Framework of Reference the language skills of lecturer should correspond to the level B2).[53]

Words are not translated to children. Instead, pictures, real objects, or other visual aids as well as facial gestures are used for clarification. Of course, children do not understand to everything right away, but if they are constantly repeating new words and being checked for proper understanding, they don't only figure out the concept, but they start to use the new vocabulary actively. A great deal of patience is required from the lecturer because the process of remembering takes much longer to children than to adults. Repetition, in a form of game, strengthens positive relationship to the language, confidence and increases motivation for learning.

Certain gestures or signals are used to let children know that it is time for English lesson. As was mentioned before, it is a good idea to use for example puppet or toy that "speaks" only English. Another option is to sing an introductory song or a familiar nursery rhyme, as a signal for English lesson.

It happens very often during the lesson that children want to express themselves in their native language. The right reaction of the lecturer would be to translate the sentence and if it happens to be a question, he should answer in English. In any event, children shouldn't be admonished or prohibited to communicate in their native language. There should be positive motivation and encouragement at all times.[54]

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[52] Mertin and Gillernová, 187-188.
[53] Hennová, 11.
[54] Ibid.

Lecturer should expect that some children will not want to communicate in English or to participate in games and activities. They don't need to worry in this case. It is a natural development which can take variously long time to individuals. We do not urge children to participate. They will eventually join the class spontaneously. This period is called "period of silence".[55]

When teaching songs or nursery rhymes, the choral form is used. It means that children repeat together without any stress in front of each other. Original audio recordings of songs, nursery rhymes, stories on DVD or CD are great tools for all lecturers. While practicing the vocabulary, it is necessary to pay attention to correct pronunciation but also intonation. Intonation is especially important with questions like '*What's your name?'* or '*What is it?'*; where the intonation decreases. Children learn the correct pronunciation and intonation by listening to the original audio recordings.[56]

There are not so many Czech literature sources focusing on adapting of language to learners. However, Betáková devoted a whole book to this topic. Inter alia, she mentions in her book that teachers should modify their speech to the learners. They need to create an appropriate kind of target language for their learners, and modify four specific properties of language. The first one is vocabulary and grammar which needs to be adapted to characteristics and needs of the target group. Then pronunciation; represented for example by slower, clearer speech. They also need to modify a style of discourse; it means that they use techniques of repetition, assurance questions, providing information, and others.[57]

3.5 Pedagogical Principles of Teaching Preschool Children

For effective teaching of foreign language to children of early ages, it is necessary to observe some basic principles. Children get tired and lose attention very quickly. Therefore, we have to alternate activities. For example, a calm activity can be spontaneously replaced with physical or creative activity. Lecturers or teachers should always take into account current situation and atmosphere in the classroom and choose the type and length of an activity accordingly. Constant repetition of what they have learnt gives them feeling of safety and increases their confidence.

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[55] Hennová, 12.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Lucie Betáková, *Discourse and Interaction in English Language Teaching* (Praha: Univerzita Karlova, Pedagogická fakulta, 2010) 57.

Children are able to learn by many different ways. The most important ways are listening, observation, imitation, and active involvement. Due to their age, they do not understand grammar or language structure. Therefore, if a child uses grammatically incorrect form, we correct him by repeating the sentence or words in correct way. On the contrary, we try to foster children to use the foreign language as much as possible. We are not angry when they use their mother language, but we gently switch back to English and react in English.[58]

Children understand non-verbal expressions and they can use them themselves. It is always good idea to support instructions in English by such non-verbal expressions. For example, if we want children to quiet down, we use finger over our mouth. Children know this expression and they can say it in their mother language to ensure that they are right. In this case, the teacher repeats it in English, but also in a non-verbal way to make sure that children understand it.

Preschool children have a great ability to imitate sounds that they hear. That is why the best possible pronunciation is very important. It is recommended to use original audio recordings of songs, nursery rhymes and fairytales.[59]

The demands on teachers are very high. Their lessons should be joyful and entertaining for children. They should be able to take advantage of children's natural curiosity, playfulness and fantasy, but also empathize with children's feelings. They should use a big amount of pictures and real objects, play games with children, sing songs and tell nursery rhymes. Obviously, they need to be able to imitate various characters, use intonation, and all this should be constantly repeated.

For easier understanding, teachers should always select topics for their lessons that are close to children, such as family experiences and familiar environments. While planning a lesson, it is necessary to adhere to the principle of frequent changing of activities and places. To maintain children's attention, we use eye contact and we involve children in activities where they can feel helpful. If children are just about to finish one activity, the teacher should already know which activity will follow. Such activity is based on current situation or possible change of children's mood. It is recommended to stop a game in the moment, when children are enjoying it, to ensure they will look forward to it. Games

[58] Hennová, 12.

should always be played all the way to the end. In the case of competitive games where somebody can finish earlier than others, the teacher should be prepared with substitute activity. Children love activities they are familiar with, so it is important to repeat them frequently.[60]

Motivation

Motivation is a constituent part of the process of language teaching. To motivate preschool children is quite simple, but all the more important. What guarantees a success is empathy with their emotions, moods, or problems, but also with their imagination. In another words, you want to get as close as possible to their soul. Learning should happen through games and in a nice friendly atmosphere. Children should not be able to distinguish between learning and games. Learning should be something natural for them. It should be similar to the way they get educated at home with their families. There are some very good aids for targeted teaching that should be used; such as puppets or plush toys. A big part of successful motivation is permanent positive evaluation of children and encouragement. Little rewards such as pictures with stamps or smiley faces can be used.

The easiest and most effective way to motivate preschoolers is through new stimuli encountered during games and activities with their peers. Thereby, children learn to cooperate, have understanding for each other, help each other to solve problems or conflict by making compromises, but also, they learn to compete.[61]

Organization in the Classroom

To ensure that children feel comfortable and enjoy themselves, each lesson should have its own structure. Introductory and final part of lesson should have a routine character. Beginning of a class can be signaled by English phrase such as; *"Hello everybody! How are you? Is everybody here?"* or by using a puppet.[62]

Introductory part should be followed by a warm-up activity, such as practicing of vocabulary through a game. In case of introducing new vocabulary, the teacher or the lecturer should have prepared a lot of pictures and visual objects. We can also add

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[59] Hennová, 13.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid., 11.

movement while practicing a song or nursery rhyme. This activity is usually very popular among children. At the end of each lesson, there should be an evaluation. Children should be appraised even for small achievements. Everybody needs to be evaluated either individually or collectively. Teachers should always try to support and foster children in their efforts.[63]

Structured teaching is one of the important roles because it determines a course of teaching, increases concentration and perception of children. Individual approach should be used but it can only be applied in certain short periods of time, always considering the rest of group.[64]

According to Hutchinson and Waters, "a lesson is communicative event, which is created by the interaction of a number of forces. The classroom, too, creates conditions which will affect the nature of a planned lesson. These might be extraneous factors, such as noise from outside, hot weather, interruptions to deal with, an administrative matter, a visitor. They might come from the learners as a group: perhaps they are tired after a long day, excitable after an incident in the break. Individual students might hold matters up by asking questions or distracting the attention of the class. They might on the other hand make a lesson memorable by putting an interesting question or telling an amusing anecdote. It is a dynamic, interactive environment, which affects the nature both of what is taught and what is learnt."[65]

Daily educational program has to be planned with the knowledge of developmental and personal differences in children or the whole group. This process is called evaluation of educational needs.[66]

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[62] Hennová, 14.
[63] Ibid..
[64] Ibid., 15.
[65] Hutchinson and Waters, 82.
[66] Mertin, Gillernová, 78.

4 TEACHING ENGLISH IN QOČNA KINDERGARTEN

In this chapter, I would like to focus on the practical part of my bachelor thesis, and that is teaching English in the University Kindergarten Qočna.

University kindergarten Qočna is situated in Zlín and is providing educative and pedagogical process in a mixed class. Maximum capacity of the class is 24 children from 3 to 6 years of age. Part of the facility is also a child care center Koala, offering babysitting of children younger than 3. The founder of the kindergarten is the Tomas Bata University. The services are provided to employees and students of Tomas Bata University since June 2011.[67]

Together with my colleague I taught English to children for about ten weeks, and it was a very beneficial experience for both of us. It was part of our practical training that we are supposed to accomplish during our studies. Even though the training should be performed rather in a company, within an area of business administration, exception has been made. We can find some common parallels between teaching English and working in business. As a teacher, you are responsible for children and for the course of lessons. You have to plan ahead and be able to adapt to the current situation in the classroom. What is also very important is to manage time and activities. Teaching children is nearly identical to working with adults, for example. Communication is a crucial part of working with people, when you are in contact with them. If you want to be successful in what you do, you have to communicate effectively. Your way of communication should be suitable and adapted to the needs of targeted group or to individuals.

In this case, not only children, but also their parents were our clients. They agreed with teaching of their children. The following subheads will describe teaching English in the kindergarten in practice.

4.1 Preparing for the First Lesson

It is not a simple task to teach somebody without any prior preparation, especially children of preschool age. Children of this age are a very specific group and it needs to be taken into account. Particularly in this age, communication with children is very important. What they receive in this age can have a big influence on their further development. That is

why we went through a short training course with a psychologist, specialist in education. The training was focused on how to teach and communicate with someone like preschool children. There were more students to teach English in the university kindergarten. During the training, we didn't learn how to compile a lesson for children and what will be the most appropriate way to teach them foreign language. We only get necessary information about preschool children. To compile the English lesson effectively was up to us. Within the training we were advised that children are not able to pay attention for a long time. That is why it is required to plan more activities and change them whenever needed. During the learning process they need lots of illustrative examples and frequent repetition of everything what is taught. We learnt that children in this age perceive an adult as authority and are particularly sensitive to criticism.[68] We were instructed not to try to "teach them as much as we can", but to predominantly familiarize them with the language, totally new to them, and to make them feel confident by using funny techniques. Of course, it is not appropriate to become their friends, if we are supposed to teach them. We have to earn certain respect, but on the other hand, they should not fear us, nor feel any negativity from us or the lesson as a whole. Our main goal is to create a happy environment where children will want to learn English with us. We also agreed that we will speak Czech to children to avoid stressing them out. Although the literature suggests that English teacher should speak only English to children, we considered the situation and decided to speak Czech and use a puppet named Cookie who speaks only English to children. Because as I mentioned earlier, the main goal of our lessons was creating a friendly environment and we assumed that, if we came to the kindergarten for the first time and started to speak in English to children, they would be stressed and did not feel comfortable. Especially, since we were strangers to them. This was not the purpose of our teaching. The training course was very beneficial to us. The specialist in education was available during the whole training course of English teaching. We supposed to write a reflexive diary and after finishing the English course we met with the specialist again to discuss our experience and thoughts.

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[67] Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně, "UMŠ Qočna," Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně, http://qocna.utb.cz/ (accessed March 25, 2013).

[68] Alicja Ewa Leix, Psychologicko-pedagogické minimum pro lektory angličtiny v předškolských zařízeních, UTB Zlín, 2012.

Before the courses started, we had to find out how many children will be in the class. All children in the kindergarten were not able to join the English lessons because they did not pass logopedic examination. There were also children whose parents did not allow them to start learning foreign language. Consequently, the children we were supposed to teach English were those, whose parents agreed and whose logopedic abilities were at the right level. We finally ended up with about 14 children registered. The initial plan was to divide them into two groups. It would have been the best set up, but because of the schedule of the kindergarten, we only had one group of children. Actually, it worked out at the end because children were sick very often, and it happened only few times that we had more than 8 or 10 students at a time. Sometimes there were only 3 children in the classroom.

Before the lessons started, we went to the university kindergarten to see the place and the technical equipment available in the classroom. We met with the director to go over all the details. In my opinion, it is important to know ahead of time where one will teach, to get familiar with the environment, and to be prepared.

There were 3 pairs of students to teach English in the Kindergarten. We taught English as the second pair in a week and our session was supposed to last maximum of 30 minutes.

4.2 Methodological Aids

Teaching young children requires the use of added materials to achieve effective outcome. We were given a set of materials for English teaching of preschool children called “Cookie and Friends”. It contained a puppet called Cookie (a cat), videotape and DVD with stories and songs, CD with songs and rhymes, cards with pictures we were learning about, and other posters. Songs with original records, sang by native speakers are important especially when the teacher is nonnative speaker. It can support his methodological process of educating, and it is important for children to listen to original records. They have a great ability to imitate the sound they hear. That is why, it is important to keep proper pronunciation. There was also one more useful material for teachers; the teacher´s book. There was no theory, but only practical examples of exercises that can be done with children. It was structured according to lessons. Every lesson was described into details, and every single exercise, game, or song had its place there. Basically, teacher did not have to add or create new activities, but only prepare the activities from the book before the lesson. We found it very useful, but some activities

seemed to us a bit difficult for certain children. That is why we sometimes chose to prepare our own activities that were more appropriate for a specific group, but were inspired by the activities from the book. What we used every lesson was a CD with songs and cards with pictures of animals, toys, and other things. How exactly were these tools used, will be described in the following chapter.

4.3 Methods of Communication Used in the Kindergarten

We knew that teaching in the kindergarten is absolutely different from teaching adults. Children of preschool age are a very specific group, and that is why it is important to know how to communicate with them in order to teach them. Our main goal was not to teach them as much as possible, but to make them feel confident and create a positive attitude to foreign language, in this particular case, English. Not to make them scared to use the language. Accordingly, the following teaching and communication practices were used. What is very crucial when teaching children anything is, that it has to be implemented in amusing and entertaining form. We have to use many pictures and examples to support children's imagination. It contributes to easier remembering of vocabulary. We also have to repeat vocabulary, songs and rhymes very often.

We decided to speak Czech to children from the beginning, because we did not want to make them feel uncomfortable or even scared. Children were of different ages, from 3 to nearly 6 years old. And from the mental development point of view, age makes a big difference. The youngest children sometimes did not understand what we wanted from them, but many times, they at least tried to imitate other children. Therefore, the aim of our English lessons was mainly to get the children familiar with the language, to show them that there are other languages beside their native Czech. To connect English and Czech language, we used a puppet named Cookie from the very beginning. It was part of a set of materials for English teaching of preschool children called Cookie and Friends. Cookie was a plush cat that played the main role in the whole teaching program. We explained to children that Cookie speaks only English and does not understand Czech, so if children wanted to tell him something they would have to use English. Of course, we as teachers would help them and explain everything that was required.

Lessons were structured and had their own order. After only a few weeks, children got used to the structure and knew for example how the lesson will start or what does it mean when a song "Good bye everyone" was played. It was our intention, and we were satisfied

when we saw results and positive feedback from children. Following paragraphs describe teaching methods and adapting of communication within English lessons in the kindergarten.

Hello Song

Every lesson started with an "opening" or "welcoming" activity, called the *Hello song*. We were singing "Hello Everyone" and repeated it many times so children could remember it easier. It was a very short song and we played it few times. The first lesson, children were a bit shy and did not want to sing with us and with Cookie, but it is a natural behavior for children in situations that are new to them. We involved Cookie: one of us had it and played his role. Children saw that Cookie is singing and greeting everybody. We tried to engage our bodies and move to the music. Some children danced with us, some of them only observed. Every lesson, they liked it more and were more confident and sang with us.

Hello

After welcoming, we sat down on a carpet and created a circle to see each other well. We usually wanted to remind them what we had learnt last lesson, or repeat what we had already known. The very first lesson, we started with a word *Hello*. Before we played the Hello song, we explained to children that Cookie is their friend, but he does not speak Czech, only English, and when he wants to greet someone he says "*Hello*". We repeated the word with children few times and we played the song. Then when we were sitting on the carpet in a circle, we tried to make everybody to repeat "Hello" separately. Cookie always said for example "*Hello Honzík*" and Honzík would answer and greet Cookie by saying "Hello Cookie". We did it with all children and then repeated it again, but together. Sometimes, when children said something very quietly, we tried to encourage them not to be shy and say it more loudly. We said that Cookie has difficulty hearing them and they have to speak up. I think that this fact was very interesting for children. I could see that they really wanted Cookie to hear them, and they tried to show him that they can do it for him. They enjoyed being praised by Cookie after nearly shouting at him so he could hear them. Then we gave a picture of Cookie to everybody for coloring.

Good Bye

As was stated above, the lesson had a given structure. Each lesson ended in the same way; with a Good Bye song. Just as we taught them to say ”Hello” at the beginning of the first lesson, at the end we explained that if Cookie leaves we say “Good bye” or “Bye bye”. Cookie said “good bye” to children and we sang a Good Bye song. Since then children always knew what does the Good Bye song means. From my point of view “bye, bye” was a very easy expression for children to pronounce. They liked the word very much and repeated it many times.

Vocabulary

The purpose of early lessons was to teach children vocabulary of animals. We used pictures of animals from the set of materials Cookie and Friends, but it did not include common animals like dog, cat, or horse. There were rather exotic animals like turtle, monkey, kangaroo, crocodile, snake, and others, but children knew them all. We created additional cards that were needed. We started to teach vocabulary of animals again with the help from Cookie. We showed a picture of an animal so all children could see it, and Cookie said the name of the animal in English. Than we all repeated it together at least twice. If we heard that somebody pronounced it wrong, we repeated the word multiple times. We did not point it out to every child individually. We tried to involve all children in all activities together in order to avoid stress. It is definitely a preferable method because children in a collective are more confident and feel more comfortable.

We reviewed the vocabulary of animals usually at the beginning of a lesson and then sometime before the end. We always added new words and used different ways of teaching. For example, we distributed cards of animals on the floor in the middle of our circle, then Cookie would name one animal and children were supposed to choose the right one. Than we gave it to Cookie and we repeated it all together. In this manner, we continued with all cards in the circle. Sometimes we distributed cards all around the class. It was a pleasant variation for children because they could run around the classroom, and they would become livelier when they were looking for the right card.

One time we brought a big piece of paper and we wanted children to choose one card and try to draw the animal on the paper. We wanted to create a zoo on the paper. Children could see their production and they worked together on a common goal.

When they were able to remember it better, we added a new vocabulary consisting of toys and things that surround us like sun, tree, ice cream, car, ball, and others. We also incorporated colors. In the case of teaching colors, we tried to combine it with other words. For example, we had a card with picture and we asked about the color. We pointed the colors out on things or toys in the classroom, on children's clothes, or on pictures we drew. We were constantly asking them about the color. Children got very excited especially when they realized, they were wearing the color we were looking for in the classroom.

Songs and Nursery Rhymes

We also wanted to teach them something more than just simple words. Little by little, we implemented songs, rhymes, and complex sentences. We used CD with songs from the set of methodological materials. As we mentioned earlier, each lesson started with Hello song. But there was also a song about colors and about Cookie. Sometimes we used it to entertain children when they seemed to be tired or not interested in certain activity.

Sometimes we brought different prepared songs, for example, the Hokey Pokey song. It is well known English song for children and it has its specific choreography. We learned the steps and showed it to children along with Cookie. During this activity, you involve your whole body from the head to toes. You are jumping with others in the circle and going forward and backwards holding hands. It is very amusing activity. When we sang about a certain part of our body, we would point at it or touch it. Children could easily understand what we were singing about.

Another song children learned was a song about a scarecrow. It was a short story about Dingle Dangle Scarecrow. We involved the whole body like we did with the Hokey Pokey song. After that, we gave children a picture of scarecrow to color it and bring it home so they could easily remind what they had done in English lesson and tell their parents.

We taught children a simple nursery rhyme Teddy Bear. Again, we used our body language to express what we were trying to say. For example, if we said "Teddy bear, teddy bear turn around, teddy bear teddy bear touch the ground", we really turned around and then touched the ground. The children could easily understand what is being said in the rhyme. There were many teddy bears in the classroom. We ended up using them to support our nursery rhyme about teddy bear and each child held a plush teddy in his/her hand. After the song, we gave them coloring paper with a bear and while they were coloring it, again we and Cookie asked them about the colors they were using.

Simple Phrases

When children got comfortable with simple words, understood Hello and Good Bye, and could sing and tell rhymes with us, we wanted to teach them more complex basic phrases. We started with the phrase '*What is your name? /My name is'*. We told children about what we were going to do and showed them though role playing with Cookie. Cookie asked one of the teachers "What is your name?" and she answered "My name is Klára". Then we all repeated the question. When we could see that children started to understand, we addressed each of them and asked the same question. Furthermore, we wanted children to ask Cookie about his name. In this case, we could see that not all children really understood what was required from them, especially the younger children.

Rewards and Positive Evaluation

At the very end of each lesson, we thanked them for a nice cooperation and we praised them. We had little stickers of animals prepared. Children really liked it and were excited when we placed the stickers on their T-shirts. Positive evaluation plays a very important role in the process of education and communication with children. They need to hear that they are doing well. Furthermore, it makes them feel more confident and less timid.

Changing Activities

As the theory points out, children are not able to pay attention for a long period of time. Sometimes a certain activity is not right for them in a certain moment. When we see that they are losing attention or they do not want to cooperate with us, we should change an activity.

We applied this strategy very often in order to adapt to certain situations. Sometimes children were tired because they went swimming prior to the English lesson. In this case we would switch to a calmer activity, such as coloring or any activity on the carpet. On the other hand, when children were inattentive, and it did not seem beneficial to all to make an effort to continue in certain activity, we switched to more enjoyable one. For example, if they could not keep attention during a vocabulary activity, we included dancing or singing to make it more entertaining. It was very useful method. It was definitely better than trying to keep focus on one activity.

4.4 The Observed Characteristics of Preschool Children

Second chapter describes preschool children as a group in general. Nevertheless, each child in the group is individual with individual needs just like all people in this world. I think we can recognize all characteristics of preschool children in every person.

As was mentioned earlier, the lessons should last thirty minutes maximum. However, they were not able to keep attention for a very long time, and they activities needed to be changed very often. They themselves also needed attention. Some of them required more attention than others. They liked to talk about themselves and their families, even though we were for instance in the middle of a vocabulary exercise. They were also easily influenced by others. There were few stronger personalities, and they were easily able to lead others for example into non-cooperation or inattention.

Children were very happy to learn with the help of Cookie and other characters. They actually did not realize that they were learning. Our goal was to teach them in a playful and funny way, and we succeeded. They were able to learn vocabulary through many used methods. We had to repeat all words, rhymes, and songs many times before they were able to remember them. Children learn unintentionally and they like interesting and entertaining activities. It is the key to effective teaching of children.

4.5 Barriers in Effective Communication

The process of teaching is not always exemplary. Sometimes, we have to face certain difficulties or problems. Children are inscrutable and moreover, to teach them in their early age requires appropriate knowledge and responsibility. Furthermore, it requires knowledge about how to deal with occurred difficulties. During our training practice we discovered certain difficulties.

Age Difference

The first one was children's age difference. The age ranged from 3 to 6 years and we could see the differences. There was one girl who turned 3 only recently and she was on a different level of mental development than a boy who was nearly 6 and ready to go to school. Simply, we were not able to teach each child the same amount of the curriculum. However, in my opinion, it was not a serious problem since, as we mentioned many times before, the purpose of our lessons was mainly to familiarize children with English language and with foreign pronunciation. The main goal was to teach them the basics. Children that

were older and more skilful learned more while the younger children learned to understand and perceive the basics. But we considered our goal to be accomplished because all children have learned vocabulary, rhymes and songs after we repeated it many times. They also acquired foreign pronunciation.

Attendance

Another fact that made it difficult to teach children well was their presence at the lessons. Attendance in the kindergarten is not compulsory like in elementary school, moreover, children of preschool age get sick very often and they pass it to one another.

The number of children was different every lesson and we never knew how many children will come. This fact had an impact on the course of the lessons, and made the English teaching a bit more complicated. For example, the first session we had only 6 children and sometimes there were only 3. It was pointless to teach them new vocabulary or anything else since there was so few of them. On the other hand, one time there were about 10 children in the class, which was very uncommon for our lessons and we were not used to it. When they were in such a high number, it was more difficult to keep their attention. They did no obey and they were talking to each other. We observed that they often made groups of friends and stopped paying attention. We tried to space them out but when there were too many children, it was not easy. Each lesson was unpredictable, but we were teaching in the kindergarten, and it is a typical fact.

Language Abilities

No all children in the kindergarten had proper language abilities to learn foreign language. Therefore, we were given a list of children who were able to attend English lessons. We were also informed that they have good language abilities to learn foreign language. Children, who were not on the list, had visited a speech therapist and had not passed logopedic examination. We noticed that one boy had difficulties with pronunciation. He would pronounce "*t*" instead of "*k*". At the beginning we would correct him because we did not know that he had a speech problem, but once we realized it, we stopped correcting him, not to make him feel unpleasantly in the group. But he won't be able to learn English before he has a good pronunciation in his native language.

Another example was the youngest child, to whom we did not understand Czech very well, so in English it was not much better, but this was caused by the early age.

Inattention and Complaining

Another difficulty we had to deal with was inattention of children. Sometimes the situation in the classroom was worse than usual. Children were not able to pay attention to what we were doing. We cannot say whether it happened more often when we were doing vocabulary, or during more energetic activities like dancing and singing. As we know, children are unpredictable and the mood in the group can change in a moment. I should point out that children had a swimming course at the same time as we had the English lessons. It had an impact on our lessons, because children told us few times in the middle of an activity that they were tired. Actually, this was said by one child and others joined him and supported his words. In such moments, we were forced to change activity immediately. We tried to adapt the activities to their needs and condition. But what can we do when children continue to complain and stagnate? In such case, we could not have let children to command us. After some time we tried not to respond to complaining/muttering; not to consider it as important. We simply ignored it, children did not start fussing and moreover, the initiator stopped. In contrary, when we started to ask about the problem, why they did not like what we were doing, the situation worsen. But this cannot be applied on every situation. It depends on many other factors and you have to know the group better.

Too Friendly Atmosphere

As teachers we should build a respect necessary for relationship between teachers and students. Of course, we should be friendly and nice to children, but on the other hand, they have to respect us as certain authority.

They should address us by "*Paní učitelko*" and say "*Dobrý den*", but sometimes when they saw us before the lesson started, they would say "*Ahoj*" to us. They considered us to be their friends. On one hand it was good because they felt comfortable with us, but they needed to understand that we were strangers visiting their kindergarten to teach them English.

Now I would suggest only "*Hello and Good bye*" instead of "*Dobrý den* and *Nashledanou*"; not to make them confused. But we did not. We started to use English in the moment when we were sitting together in the circle with Cookie.

4.6 Evaluation of Used Methods of Adapting Communication

I would say that all methods of communication used during teaching English were successful because we knew which one to use. We were able to adapt to a specific group, such as children of preschool age, and to their needs. Despite the fact that sometimes we had to face some difficulties, consequently we did a good job. Children recognized and acquired pronunciation of a new language. They did understand basic phrases and a lot of vocabulary. They learnt many songs, rhymes, dances and games. Moreover, they enjoyed our lessons and had fun. This was the purpose of our English lessons and our communication methods.

5 UTILIZATION OF ACQUIRED EXPERIENCE IN MANAGERIAL WORK

The last chapter describes the utilization of knowledge learnt from the practical part of this thesis. I would like to show, that the experience acquired from adapting of communication in the kindergarten can be used in any other field of practice, such as for example, business administration.

Even though kindergarten and business administration seem to be very different fields of practice, they have much in common. In both fields, communication plays a key role, and it is the essential part of success when it comes to interacting with people.

From the experience in the kindergarten I can say, that we always have to analyze client as a whole; his needs, skills, and abilities. Then we adapt our behavior and moreover, communication to the client. For example, in the business and market practice, the client is the most important subject; everything is being adapted to him. It is necessary to focus on his needs. Basically, the preparation and knowledge of the background is the first step. In the kindergarten, we went through a basic training on how to communicate with children, and what is important to know during the English teaching. Just like in the business administration, the manager needs to be prepared before a meeting. He should at least have the basic information about the client he will be in contact with. Of course, every person is individual, and the manager will adapt the communication during the meeting depending on the situation. However, in business administration, there also exist set of communication rules that need to be followed and respected.

Managers should also be flexible. The skills to plan in advance, but also to be ready to change plans according to a situation is required because otherwise, it could lead to an inefficient communication. During our English lessons, when we noticed that children were not paying attention, or that a certain activity was not the best one at the moment, we always tried to be flexible and adapt the activity to the current needs of children. Without such flexible process of adapting, teaching would not be effective. Children would not be interested in the English lesson anymore, and it would be absolutely counterproductive. This process can be applied on any other situation when people communicate, or even more when employees communicate with clients. They always need to try to adapt the communication to his needs because ultimately, a satisfied client is the important result.

To summarize, the knowledge and the experience, acquired during English teaching in the kindergarten, can definitely be applied in practice. When the main job description is to communicate with people, it is important to adapt communication methods to the client in accordance with his needs.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I would like to sum up the most important ideas of my thesis, and compare communication with a client from business administration and a client from kindergarten.

Communication is the basis of each human activity, and is crucial for people who work in contact with others. Managers deal with others most of the time during their work time, and it is very important to have great communication skills and be able to communicate effectively. To reach this goal, they need to know which way of communication should be used. They adapt their language and communication method to the recipient. In business administration, it is not only a colleague or an employee, but most importantly, the client. Client is the target of the whole endeavor of business. Managers want to meet the client's needs, and in order to achieve it, they have to adapt their methods and also communication. The same case is teaching English in the kindergarten. The parents of children ordered certain kind of service. The teacher is in the position to meet their expectations and to teach English to children. However, before he/she starts, he has to know who the client is, in order to make the service high quality. The teacher has to adapt to the needs of the client, and children in the kindergarten have very specific needs.

At the end, we can say that there are many parallels in adapting communication methods, when we compare business administration and kindergarten. Even though each client has a bit different needs, we always have to take into account that our communication needs to adapt in some way because they are different groups. On the other hand, we should not generalize the characteristics of a group in such an extent because each member of the group is an individual with his own characteristics.

Communication is constituent part of effective interaction with people. Therefore, good communication skills should characterize every manager, teacher, lector, or assistant. Appropriate adapting of communication methods to client's needs is the key to effective communication, and it is not possible without analyzing client's needs and abilities in advance or during the process of communication.

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