

THE LEARNING-MENTAL DEVELOPMENT RELATIONSHIP - PART OF SOCIAL PROGRAMS FOR HEALTH IN PRE-SCHOOL

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Abstract

The study presents the role of the psychoeducative intervention in preschool and the possibilities for it to consist of a real support to make learning strategies at this age more efficient. When choosing the themes of the intervention we have used class indicators that target the level of intelligence, cognitive development in terms of language-communication, but also the behavioural disfunctionalities of the participant group. The results thus obtained take us to the emphasis of the positive role of the intervention on the class level, but also for finding new themes to take on in future.

Key words: psychical development, learning, streamlining

INTRODUCTION

Psychic development is conditioned by a big variety of factors, them being either of endogenous nature (hereditary) or of exogenous nature (through the environment). Looking at the interaction between the two categories of influence this materializes in diverse groupings, phenomenon responsible, in grand terms for how specific the developmental trajectory of an individual is. Because of this it is important to study the way in which the spontaneous development of the subject is enhanced by the environmental stimuli, but also by the formal conduct that comes from the socio-cultural environment with the aim to create an advantageous mutual corroboration of the two categories of influences. (Buică, 2004).

Starting from the concept of psychic development formulated by Zlate, which says that this represents the process of forming and continuous developing of certain psychobehavioural qualities, functions and structures, process that forms though the subjective harnessing of the social-historical experience with an adaptive role, which caters for the continuous dynamics of the psyche.(Zlate, 2004). This is hence, in a permanent argumentation and structural reconfiguration. But also in a flexible dynamic, the acclimation becoming possible due to the connective process of learning. In its largest definition, learning is an evolutive process, of informative-formative essence, which consists of acquiring, by a human being - in an active, explorative manner - of one's life experience, and, on this basis, in selectively and systematically changing one's behaviour, in its amelioration and perfecting in a controlled and continuous manner under the

influence of variable actions of the ambiance (Popescu-Neveanu, 1977).

Seen as an activity done in order to acquire information, learning is in rapport with psychic processes, both for the premises and for the product. Learning cannot be reduced to any of the processes it goes through, but it also can not be conceived outside of them. We can consider that the activity is one that is a result of several psychic processes, orientated teleologically, hetero- or auto- motivated, including the usage of the entire personality. The informational assimilation is followed by the operational adaptation, which allows the organic inclusion of the new acquisitions in the system of the existent ones.

The diversity of the types and forms of learning, but also the perspective upon learning as a whole are of nature to complicate the equation "learning-development", especially if we take into account the mythological effects of the different classical pedagogical paradigms. The relationship between learning and mental development is not of interdependence of one or another, neither of coincidence, but of interaction and interdependence. (Crețu, 2001).

Vîgotski (Buică, 2004) has introduced the concept of „a zone of proximal development” defined as the difference between the potential development level (attested by the performance realised under the guidance of a competent adult) and the actual level of psychic development) which denoted the subject’s capacity to solve a problem situation, in an independent manner). Vîgotski considered the fact that as an essential clue, learning creates the area closest to development, which means it provokes, brings to life and puts into motion an entire series of development related processes, which are now possible for the child only in the sphere of interrelation with the people around and only in the collaboration with the ones alike, but which, opening the internal course later become an interior good of the child. The existence of an ample zone of proximal development represents a condition necessary to the positive evolution of a child, but does not deem it sufficient. The second compulsory condition, respecting the optimal learning periods, derives from the existence of the so-called development periods. Straying away from these, upwards or downwards, i.e. the periods too early or too late of the learning cycle, are always harmful from the developmental point of view, reflecting unfavourably towards the course of the intellectual development of the child.

When one talks about mental development, one has to notice its manner, characterised through quantitative and qualitative acquisitions both in all the referential mental domains (intelligence, affection, language, activity, etc.), but also in the global level of the personality, altogether along a process lengthy time-wise.

In contemporary society a preschool child is in contact, especially in kindergarten, with an environment different than the one of the family, and he or she observatively transcends the social environment (the street, the shops, the means of transport in common). Though integrated in the same social life, the three components of the environment solicit the child not only adjustments of the behaviour in systems nuanced by different demands (depending on the conditions

from home and their intersection with the ones in kindergarten or depending on the different conditions of protection and affection), but they create, at the same time a better perception of the diversity of the world and life, a more dense and complex training of decision making, curiosity, emotions and knowledge in numerous novel situations. Under these conditions the bases of the child's personality are developed, but also his or her knowledge, communication, expression capacities and the emancipation of the personality. At the same time, the capacities to project, in the context of the events the child goes through are developed. The knowledge capacities become complex, but are specifically impregnated by the characteristics of the age (Șchiopu și Verza, 1981). Simultaneously, along with the development of the perceptive-observative capacities, one develops the representations (evocative, of completion, of anticipation and fantastical).

The fluidity of this plan of mental products – reverse of the perception of reality - feeds the imagination, the behaviours and the mental strategies which are charged by an ample symbolistic and a complex emotionality, which give the preschool period that uniqueness which makes it the childhood's golden age. The fundamental type of activity is the game, which represents a descentering of the psyche from the perception activity towards the cultural-social implantation activity, though ample and complex symbolistics. The type of relations thus nuance and diversify, having the behaviours in the contexts of children's collectives amplified. The differentiation of the behaviours depending on ages and occupations takes place simultaneously, as these are all in the cultural- social ambiance of the child. One thing that is especially active is the formation of behaviours engaged in the development of the autonomy, through the organisation of skills and habits. The preschool child starts to meet the interior and the exterior of the house and of the kindergarten, the street he or she takes to kindergarten, or eventually the supermarket or the mall. The child starts to know the names of furniture, of the rooms, their distinctive characteristics, he or she can identify the place of different objects and also develops attention for devices (phone or table in general). The child's curiosity explores the characteristics of each member of the family, their identity, their behaviour; and also the knowledge of all the people at kindergarten realises as an identification of who they are. The preschool child starts to be interested by the living conditions, by the basic activities and professions, but also in the goods involved in these activities.

The world of tools starts to be known: the plough, the field engine, the seeding machine, but also the bicycle, the bus, the train, the plane, etc. He or she starts to know circulation signs, for pedestrians, the signal lights. He or she builds up on knowledge concerning the city, the village and importance advances are made in terms of the knowledge of nature, plants and their life, their parts, animals. There are quantitative generalisations that start to consolidate, the practical logic of relations, the size, the quantity, spatial, the temporal and spatial equation, part-whole, the succession and the simultaneity, the comparison.. The observation of the child's is moored in diverse, complex situations. The perception of time and space starts to become operative. Experience consolidates perceptive constants,

conservatives and sizes from the distance. In all the aspects from above one has involved the development and the operation with language.

Psychoeducative intervention, both the short and longterm one, actions positively upon the spirit and the persoality, averts anxiety and negativism, activates motivation and pulses, becoming an energizing factor of the preschooler's involvement in the developmental process. While adopting the interventional methods and techniques we take into consideration the factors that belong to the mental structure of the children, their age and the manner in which they manifest their behaviour. The work together with the educators will lead to a harmonious development of the child and its streamlining, and thus will consolidate the positive qualities with superior motivations for activity, but it manages to avert the mental conflictual states, the inferiority feelings, and some negative behaviours.

OBJECTIVES

- The identification of the level of intelligence in preschoolers;
- The identification of the psychomotric level of development;
- The identification of the class' behavioural issues;
- Starting from the first three evaluative objectives, one realises a psychoeducative intervention for the class of students, one which follows the amelioration of the relationship between the mental development and the learning.

HYPOTHESES

- Between the level of the child's intelligence and the cognitive development, there is a positive corellation.
- The preformances of the children can be ameliorated through a psychoeducative intervention.

INSTRUMENTS AND SAMPLE

The sample of preschoolers was formed of 23 children. In order to realize the study we started from gathering data about the subjects through an interview given for completion to the educators, through the study of the children's cards – which were completed by the psychologist of the kindergarten. The questionnaire completed by the educators followed the interception of the functional and dysfunctional parts of the class, but also the identification of the formal or informal leaders of the class. The data thus collected through the children's cards, were those in regards to the intellectual level, the cognitive and psychomotric development of the children, but also the behavioural issues they may have. The data on the cognitive development of the children - language and communication, were obtained through the application of the test with the same name. The test is made of 9 items, and through their addition it results a cognitive index. The results are obtained through the addition of the scores of each item, and the scores can be between 0 and 23. The scale and the interpretation of the test belong to Clinciu. (Clinciu, 2005)

For the second hypothesis of the study we realized a psychoeducative intervention at the class level.

RESULTATS OF THE STUDY

Hypothesis 1: The data obtained through this hypothesis are relevant for the construction of the psychoeducative intervention. Following the statistical interpretation of the data one can discover the fact that there is a positive correlation between the two dimensions studied (the level of the general intelligence and the cognitive development - language and communication), the value of the correlation coefficient is $r=.831$ on a significance step of $p=0.01$. The data obtained drew the attention towards the dysfunctionalities upon the class of preschoolers.

Hypothesis 2:

The psychoeducation intervention was realised on the following themes: the streamlining of the class relationing, the stimulation of the language and the communication, education for a sanogenous behaviour, techniques to stimulate the perceptive- motrical function.

The study of the psychical maturity of the child, necessary for the appropriation of the spoken, but especially the written language, targets the knowledge of the intellectual factors which determine the success in learning. The learning of language thus supports not only the mental functions which are already matured, but also the ones on their way to mature. One of these factors is the perceptive-motric function, which means the aptitude of the preschooler to perceive with exactity spatial configurations, to compare them between eachother, hence to see the space and shape, to remember the shape which can serve as content to different mental operations. The stimulation of the perceptive-motric functions supports thus the learning process. The choice of the themes for the psychoeducative intervention targeted the stimulation of the preschooler's functions in order to sustain an adequate learning process. The level of the development of the thinking and language conditions the evolution of memory. Voluntary memorizing develops more in a game activity at this age, as games favour a specific motivation.

It is imposed thus to create special learning situations which should interest and motivate the children. (Bonchiş and Secui, 2004). Following the psychoeducative intervention the changes at the class leve; were – data rappedorto the acquisitions in communication language grow from 17,32 to 19,88, we can attest a better relationing in the class, the solutioning of existent conflicts, differences in the perception of the children in rappedort with different roles that they hold in the class, the boost in the level of responsibility in terms of realizing the tasks, the formation of correct learning behaviours (from the position of the body to the way in which the children get involved and finish the task at hand), the formation of positive attitudes towards class work.

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