

STUDIES

Prosocial Behavior Education in Children

*Jiří Mareš**

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Abstract:

Introduction: It is paradoxical that more attention is currently paid to negative features in children's and adolescents' behavior (aggressive behavior, bullying) than to the positive ones (helping, social support).

Purpose: This literature review describes how children's sensitivity to helping other people develops and how children acquire competences in helping.

Methods: The literature search was conducted in databases using keywords "child", "prosocial development" and "prosocial behavior". Publications (papers or monographs) published in English or Czech between 1989 and 2016 were retrieved.

Conclusions: The study identified the following sources of prosocial behavior: use of fairy-tale motifs in the case of babies (e. g. the motif of good deeds) and targeted family education with the use of direct and indirect procedures. Targeted education of children in preschool was accomplished by experienced teachers. Education in providing help and social support to schoolmates (including the so-called partnership and peer teaching) at elementary school was identified as a special case.

Key words: child, education, prosocial behavior, social support, helping; comforting.

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Everyday Family Experience: A Child's Home Preparation for School

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Abstract:

Introduction: The family life of a child of compulsory school age is influenced by the way that a child's educational career is discussed and practically supported. This is transmitted into normal family life through the completion of the child's homework and any other school-related responsibilities. The parent is considered an actor who contributes significantly to the supervision of the child's homework.

Methods: This research project explored how parents and children describe their experience of homework through semi-structured interviews with elementary school pupils and their parents. The results are presented in our study. Seven, mostly university-educated parents and six pupils were interviewed at the start of compulsory schooling, when the bonds and interaction are the most intensive between parents and children in the context of homework. The transcribed interviews were analysed using the technique of open coding. Codes identified were repeatedly read, reviewed and subsequently grouped into categories with the aim of description and explanation.

Results: The survey revealed that the completion of homework in the parent - child interaction is an implicit part of everyday family life. Homework and advance home preparation are considered to be the responsibility of the parent as well as the child, on the other hand, the home preparation is also time-consuming and gender-marked.

Limitations: The limitations of the study relate primarily to the construction of the research sample. The intentional sample of parents was determined by socioeconomic status and quantity and also by the parents' willingness to share their parenting experience, and for the child by the extent of data gathered. In further research, this will be supported by observation in the home setting.

Conclusions: The research findings contribute to a description of the child's life in the family and confirm the importance of inevitable parental participation in their educational socialization at the beginning of compulsory school attendance.

Key words: home preparation, homework, parent, child.

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Grading of Pupils in History: One-Year Research in the Czech Republic

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Abstract:

Introduction: The aim of the research was to point to a wide range of factors of the pupils' grading in History classes and to find out if this grading on the given sample corresponds with the context of the independently selected variables: pupils' weight, inclination to the Socratic type of values, type of family, and parents' education.

Methods: A sample of 1819 7th grade pupils was made up of the pupils of randomly addressed primary schools willing to cooperate. In the course of one school year, a questionnaire survey was carried out on this sample: each of the 14 regions of the Czech Republic was represented by 5 to 9% of the respondents. Data were evaluated at a 5% level of significance by means of the Chi-squared test.

Results: In all the monitored cases, a statistically significant link was demonstrated between the dependent variable (pupils' grading) and independent variables, i.e. the results in History have a wide-spectrum effect.

Discussion: The research findings correspond with the results obtained by other scholars, and external factors (independent variables) significantly affect the pupils' school success regardless of their mental and intellectual dispositions.

Limitations: School success is simply monitored through numerical grading of pupils, which does not always and completely reflect the pupils' progress in terms of their development. It was not a longitudinal survey but only a single one-year research from which no major conclusions can be drawn.

Conclusions: It was confirmed that the results of pupils in History, or their historical knowledge, represent a broad-spectrum matter in which the multiplication effect of external influences must be counted. In the future, research should be carried out in longer time ranges and with a greater emphasis on the causality of the phenomena.

Key words: school achievement, grading, knowledge, skills, History.

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Children's Initiations in Communication with Preschool Teachers

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Abstract:

Introduction: This paper deals with an important aspect of preschool teachers' everyday professional life – interacting with children during educational activities in kindergarten environment. The research of real situations in kindergarten, still rare in Czech pedagogical discourse, indicates the limitedness of preschool teachers' communication following already fixed communication structures and patterns. There is not much evidence that teacher-child communication in kindergarten is initiated by children with any frequency. The aim of our research study is to describe preschool children's initiations in communication with pre-service preschool teachers and identify teachers' strategies in mutual communication.

Methods: The research is based on qualitative analysis of data obtained through participated unstructured observation (37 video recordings of micro educational situations with the duration of 3 to 15 minutes were collected) and written reflection of pre-service preschool teachers (55 participants). Each part of the observation took place in a different class of a standard kindergarten. In one case, it was a homogeneous class of children aged 5-6 years, and in the second, a heterogeneous class with children aged between 3 and 5 years. Our data material in the form of written reflections and transcribed video recordings was then processed through the qualitative content analysis.

Results: Research results show children breaking the communication structure managed by the teacher, and the teacher's strategies in these situations. We identified five main circumstances of preschool children's initiations as communicating their own experiences or associations related to the topic presented by the teacher.

Discussion: Our findings show a certain range of responses of future teachers to children's initiation in interaction during educational activities. Besides evidence of releasing communication in terms of teacher management, less suitable kinds of responses to children's initiation appear. The teacher is not able to give up control over the ongoing communication.

Limitations: Selected research sample consists of pre-service teachers, who represent only a partial sample of potential interactions in the kindergarten environment. Thus, to some teachers, the findings apply only partially in practice; with other teachers, we could possibly expand our research even deeper. This choice to use only a partial sample reflects both practicality and the need to improve the competence of future teachers through recording their unscripted interactions with children.

Conclusions: Children need teachers who are sensitive to their initiations and offer space for children to initiate communication. If we want to have students at the

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primary and secondary levels of education with developed life skills and the ability to discuss and argue, we need to offer such manner of communication as early as in kindergartens.

Key words: teacher-child communication in kindergartens, preschool teacher, pre-service teacher, children's initiation; communication structure.

Physical Games as a Means of Developing Children's Social Skills in Kindergarten

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Abstract:

Introduction: The text presents the results of a study conducted in the years 2015 - 2016. The objective of the study was to examine a programme of physical activities aimed at developing children's social skills.

Methods: The research was conducted in a kindergarten. This was a deliberate choice on the basis of availability. The experimental group comprised of 24 children, the control group comprised of 11 children. A 12-lessons programme of physical activities was applied, with a frequency of 1 lesson per week. Entry and exit measurements were taken before the commencement of the programme and after its end, with the help of structured observation, CATO projective tests and interviews with teachers. The data were processed by means of a descriptive statistics level by comparing the average levels. The achieved changes in the level of social skills were subsequently displayed through percentage values.

Results: The results indicate that physical activities have a positive effect on the development of children's social skills. Although the changes are not significant, the experimental group recorded greater changes than the control group in all the evaluated areas; in terms of the overall results, it was actually more than twofold.

Discussion: The results cannot be generalized. The results are only valid for our group of children. The reason is the insufficient size of the research sample.

Limitations: A significantly limiting factor showed to be the low number of children in the control group. This caused a lack of balance between the two groups in terms of the number of children and their entry level. The length of the intervention program was another limit.

Conclusions: Despite the limits of the study, the authors view the results as positive. The reason is the improvement in all the children's social skills in all the monitored areas, and the more than twofold improvement by the experimental groups compared to the control group.

Key words: preschool child, kindergarten, physical activities, psychomotor games, social skills.

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ARTICLES

Speech Therapy Prevention in Kindergarten

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Abstract:

Introduction: This contribution presents the results of a research focused on speech therapy in kindergartens. This research was realized in Zlín Region. It explains how speech therapy prevention is realized in kindergartens, determines the educational qualifications of teachers for this activity and verifies the quality of the applied methodologies in the daily program of kindergartens.

Methods: The empirical part of the study was conducted through a qualitative research. For data collection, we used participant observation. We analyzed the research data and presented them verbally, using frequency tables and graphs, which were subsequently interpreted.

Results: In this research, 71% of the teachers completed a course of speech therapy prevention, 28% of the teachers received pedagogical training and just 1% of the teachers are clinical speech pathologists. In spite of this, the research data show that, in most of kindergartens, the aim of speech therapy prevention is performed in order to correct deficiencies in speech and voice. The content of speech therapy prevention is implemented in this direction.

Discussion: Awareness of the teachers'/parents' regarding speech therapy prevention in kindergartens.

Limitations: This research was implemented in autumn of 2016 in Zlín Region. Research data cannot be generalized to the entire population. We have the ambition to expand this research to other regions next year.

Conclusions: Results show that both forms of speech therapy prevention – individual and group – are used. It is also often a combination of both. The aim of the individual forms is, in most cases, to prepare a child for cooperation during voice correction. The research also confirmed that most teachers do not have sufficient education in speech therapy. Most of them completed a course of speech therapy as primary prevention educators. The results also show that teachers spend a lot of time by speech therapy prevention in kindergartens. Educators often develop the communication skills of children by interesting ways and methods.

Key words: speech therapy prevention, kindergarten, teachers in kindergartens.

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Social-Emotional Health of University Students and the Importance of Its Research

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Abstract:

Introduction: Health and well-being are crucial for individuals, a particular country as well as the whole society. Therefore, it is important to focus research on it, and the Social-Emotional Health Survey – Higher Education used on the sample of university students is a good example of it.

Purpose: The aim of the article is to bring information on the current issues of social-emotional health in Slovakia and the possibilities of its measuring with the emphasis on the brand new international questionnaire method Social-Emotional Health Survey – Higher Education (SEHS-HE) by M. Furlong.

Methods: The method measures four basic dimensions and twelve psychological indicators of social-emotional health of university students. It helps to find the strengths and health predictions of students.

Conclusions: Mental health of young people is the priority of the Slovak National Treating Program for Children and Youth, from which goes the necessity to identify the mental health of various groups of people especially of children and youth, to support it and to create the conditions for its optimal development.

Key words: mental health, social-emotional health, university students, civility.

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Education of Elderly Patients Within Nursing Care in Slovakia

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Abstract:

Introduction: The paper deals with the issues of the education of senior patients within nursing care. The aim of the paper is to find out the level of nurses' knowledge and skills in educating elderly patients and to discover how these are reflected in the reality of clinical practice. It is a case study focused on showing the current real state of clinical practice related to the given topic.

Methods: This paper will introduce the outcomes of a qualitative research (semi-structured interview, semi-structured observation, documents analysis) based on theoretical background. The research was carried out during the survey fellowship in the Slovak Republic and the respondents were nurses working in standard hospital departments. Certain phenomena, relations and influencing factors were clarified through the follow-up analysis. The gathered data were processed by using qualitative methods in the form of case studies.

Results: The qualitative survey has revealed certain deficiencies in nurses' knowledge and in the reality of the education of elderly patients in clinical practice.

Discussion: The deficiencies in knowledge and skills are essential in the reality of clinical practice.

Limitations: The research sample was made up of educating nurse/nurses working in geriatrics, in long-term care departments or internal departments. It included a total of 16 respondents.

Conclusions: Sufficient attention should be paid to the training of nurses which should be focused on the specificities of educating seniors/senior patients as well as on the reality of education that is performed. It is necessary to provide training for working with this specific age group even in pre-gradual nursing education.

Key words: education, educational process, specificities of education of seniors, nursing care, educating nurse.

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Study Circles in Online Learning Environment in the Spirit of Learning-Centered Approach

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Abstract:

Introduction: In the era of information society and knowledge economy, learning in non-formal environments gets a highlighted role: it can supplement, replace or raise the knowledge and skills gained in the school system to a higher level (Forray & Juhász, 2008), as the so-called “valid” knowledge significantly changes due to the acceleration of development. With the appearance of information technology means and their booming development, the possibilities of gaining information have widened and, according to the forecasts, the role of learning communities will grow.

Purpose: Our starting point is that today, with the involvement of community sites (e.g. Google+, Facebook etc.) there is a new possibility for inspiring learning communities: by utilizing the power of community and the possibilities of network-based learning (Ollé & Lévai, 2013).

Methods: We intend to make a synthesis based on former research and literature focusing on the learning-centered approach, online learning environment, learning communities and study circles (Noesgaard & Ørngreen, 2015; Biggs & Tang, 2007; Kindström, 2010)

Conclusions: The online learning environment can be well utilized for community learning. In the online learning environment, the process of learning is built on activity-oriented work for which active participation, and an intensive, initiative communication are necessary and cooperative and collaborative learning get an important role.

Key words: study circle, online learning environment, learning-centered approach.

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Family as One of the Most Important Factors in a Child's Upbringing

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Abstract:

Introduction: The development of a child takes place according to certain laws, each one of which has its own individual dynamics, so, every child becomes a unique human being. Children gradually collect information about themselves and the world around them. They receive feedback about themselves from people who take care of them – mainly their family, mother and father. Their positive responses support the child's feeling of being loved, worthy of interest, which has a positive effect on them.

Purpose: Family environment is likely to have the strongest impact on the child's behaviour. Educational procedures, family climate, relationships between parents, those between parents and the child, the degree and methods of satisfying the child's needs, moral values, and social ties of the family – they all affect the child's behaviour.

Methods: In the presented paper, traditional desk research methods were used.

Conclusions: Behaviour is learned and has its purpose. Family teaches the child many things, e.g. how to cope with simple tasks, as well as about complex social inclusion.

Key words: child education, marriage, family, family education, the role of mothers, the role of fathers.

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INFORMATION

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Hana Lukášová – Tomáš Svatoš: *Prof. PhDr. Jiří Mareš, CSc. – On the Occasion of His Jubilee Celebrations*