

COMMUNICATIONAL – LINGUISTIC COMPETENCES IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

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Abstract

Communicational -linguistic competences of educators from preschool education according to various surveys of educational and linguistic terms, recognize the importance that they have within the overall development of preschool children, as well as the qualitative exercise of the profession of educator.

The importance of communicational – linguistic competence f educators even during in their initial education is paramount, not only to the development of language and speech in preschool children, but also for the development of the basic educationaly- social, communication relations and relations in everyday life and conditions. Preschool period is the starting point of personality development in all aspects, making communicational and linguistic abilities and skills are fundamental to the mentioned development.

Communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool education developed since their initial education, constitute basic skills that are among the primary in their profession and the professional practice.

For the immediate treatment of communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool education, research was conducted from qualitative and quantitative character, with an appropriate methodological approach and procedures, and based on which are drawn conclusions and recommendations.

Keywords: communicational – linguistic competences, preschool educators, initial education.

Introductory approach to communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool education

Communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool upbringing and education constitute competences of special significance, because they imply summarize of the basic upbringing - educational work and actions of educators themselves. The age, developmental specificities and the needs of preschool children assume compulsory possession of highly developed communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool upbringing and education because later educational achievement of children largely depends on the quality of the communicational - linguistic competences of children (Esser et al.2006; Henrichs et al.2010), that is recognized the quality through the practical application of its holdings of communicational – linguistic competences. Distinctiveness of communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool upbringing and education also is recognized and is associated with the preparation of preschool children for primary education (Halle et al. 2003; Droge et al, 2010), indicating the significance and the importance of mentioned competencies of educators in the overcome and ease of the transition from one subsystem to the other, which unfortunately is often stressful and represents a big step and challenge for preschool children. Communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool upbringing and education also are a kind of a core competencies in the process of initial professionalization, as well as of their further professional development, taking into account the nature, specificities and the needs of preschool children, their cognitive, affective, emotional, social and cultural development, but also the uniqueness of preschool upbringing and education as engagement.

Importance of the communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool upbringing and education

In determining the communicational - linguistic competences of educators from preschool upbringing and education primarily emphasizes the possession of academic, scientifically based knowledge, abilities and skills, with an emphasis on the existence of an

intention to further professional development, or motivation and responsibility towards their professionalism.

According to Hopp et al. (2010), when we talk about communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool upbringing and education, are associated with three main components, namely *knowledge*, *skills* and *action*. Under *knowledge* by mentioned author/s, is considered the broad linguistic knowledge from different linguistic aspects, then the manner and nature of communication, and the process of cognitive perception of language and the manner of using the types of communication, understanding the dialect and the development of speech in preschool children, the social and the cultural context of the manifesting and the language in development in children and everyday life. In this context, especially in knowledge component includes the manner of acquisition of linguistic knowledge, abilities and skills by children, then the study of another language, as well the living in a multicultural environment and surroundings. Under *capabilities* component means the way of application of the language, finding the necessary strategies, methods and tools of work, and the way of diagnosis, planning and support of the necessary linguistic behavior of children. The component of *action* means possessing the skills required for linking theory with practice, ie monitoring, finding and applying the necessary, appropriate methods, tools for different linguistic - communicational aspects. Under the mentioned component includes the understanding of motivation and abilities related to language and communication in different environments.

Regarding the importance of communicational – linguistic competences of educators from pre-school education is preferred the existence of certain conditions, including: *possession of academic knowledge; existence of required quality knowledge and understanding of linguistic-communicational educational field; having the necessary abilities, skills, motivation, creativity, critical views and attitude to communicational - linguistic skills, learning, development processes and needs of preschool children; as well an understanding of social and cultural context of education*. Communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool upbringing and education represent: a prerequisite for the overall professionalism of educators; advancement of pre-school educational practice; basis for the development of the overall approach to working with preschool children; opportunity for understanding and developing communicational - linguistic skills, abilities and knowledges by age characteristics of children; development of communicational – linguistic competences of children; permanent

search of the educator to professional communicational - linguistic development. The previously mentioned relates to the principal communicational-linguistic competences not only to the educators, but also to all other entities who directly or indirectly are related to preschool upbringing and education due to the understanding that language and communication are one of the "liveliest" agents of child development, which happens so much intentional and also free, unplanned, through support, imitation, modeling, interacting with others or in a different social and cultural contexts.

Basic components of communicational – linguistic competences at educators related to the children in preschool upbringing and education

The primary components of communicational-linguistic competences of educators from the preschool upbringing and education, cover a wide range of communicational and language aspects, primarily because of the nature of the preschool activity. In this direction we talk about string of tangled communicational and language scientific knowledge, abilities, skills, capabilities, etc. of educators in the practical upbringing - educational work should be ample appropriate and innovative strategies, methods, forms, tools, techniques and approaches of work aimed at achieving higher goals and quality of preschool education and upbringing.

As basic components of communicational –linguistic competences among educators in terms of preschool upbringing and education of children, can be listed the following: recognition of the level of communicational - linguistic development of the child; promotion of verbal communication and speech; strengthening and enrichment of the vocabulary and manner of used communication; developing early literacy through different approaches, in accordance with the age characteristics of children; encouraging continued interest and motivation in communication, language and speech; enabling for communication with others and with itself; training to convey the needs, ideas and thoughts; using various sources, methods, techniques of communicational - linguistic training; proper monitoring and evaluation of communicational - linguistic achievements of the child; recognizing and working with children who have communicational - linguistic difficulties; encouragement of further development of children

with a higher degree of communicational - linguistic skills; developing a communicational and linguistic competence at preschool children.

In the mentioned context it meant the ability of the educators from preschool upbringing and education for applying the methodologies required in terms of monitoring, evaluation and improvement of its work, professionalism and professional development in terms of communicational - linguistic skills.

The connection of communicational – linguistic competences of educators with various educational areas in preschool upbringing and education

Communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool upbringing and education are related and actually are getting recognized in the field of upbringing - educational areas such as communicational - linguistic development; social and emotional development; cognitive development in a process through learning and playing.

Communicational - linguistic area covers a wider framework of aspects that are of a great importance for the development of preschool children due to the fact that communicational – linguistic knowledge, abilities, skills in preschool children are develop in tangle; they are associated with the cognitive, social and emotional development; are significant the linguistic - communicational knowledge as a basis for understanding of the concepts in various fields (eg. mathematics, nature, etc.); contribute to improving of the educational achievement of children; and help children to enrich the experiences that are needed in life.

Social and emotional area in the context of pre-school upbringing and education takes important place because it is the basis for building further social and emotional relationships, approaches and relations with others and with itself as a prerequisite for a fulfilling and happy life. In this context the relationship of communicational – linguistic competences of educators in the social and emotional areas of upbringing - educational work with preschool children, is recognized and contributes to: the development of social interaction of preschool age; development of social competence in preschool children; development of skills for understanding of the social processes and emotions which contribute to the development of new social and emotional understanding and relations; solving problems, misunderstandings, etc .;

development of better relationships with others if they are able to understand, listen and respond to others; understanding and managing of their own emotions and the emotions of others; better expression of their own emotions.

Cognitive field within the pre-school upbringing and education is an area of great importance for the further overall development of the child's personality. Because the connection between cognitive area with communicational - linguistic skills of educators implies correlation that directly influence the development of pre-school child and the achievement of higher goals. Or the cognitive area of preschool upbringing and education as an essential tool for the realization is integrated in speech, language and communication between teacher and child.

Therefore, the connection between communicational - linguistic skills with cognitive area in realization of the overall educational work with children of preschool age is: crucial; it has a direct impact on the development of cognitive abilities, capacities, etc. of the preschool children; it helps in the development of the cognitive processes (thinking, memory, perception, categorization, etc.); it enables connection of various concepts with their importance; influence the development of creativity and imagination.

New challenges in the context of communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool care and education

Challenges in the context of communicational – linguistic competences of educators from preschool upbringing and education include building and supporting of: special access to initial education to communicational- linguistic competence of educators; existence of various modules in initial education for communicational - linguistic education of educators; strengthening of the connection between theoretical and practical training in initial education of the educators on communicational – linguistic field; support of the open system of initial education for professional development of educators. In this context it is assumed an accession of qualitative change in the following aspects: pre-school upbringing and education to be treated and become part of the educational system (MES); development of programs, manuals, standards, etc., with special emphasis on communicational – linguistic field; redefining the legislation on pre-school upbringing in terms of structure, development, evaluation, monitoring, etc. of communicational –

linguistic field and competences of educators; updating standards for communicational – linguistic field of preschool upbringing and education; establishment of continuous training and support for educators in terms of communicational –linguistic skills; building a system of institutional and non-institutional support and collaboration with educators in terms of communicational – linguistic competences; and similar.

A survey

In terms of the mentioned problems, a study has been conducted of a qualitative nature using a descriptive method and explicitly - descriptive approach, and application of content analysis as a research technique. The sample is consisted of analisis of the curricula of three higher education institutions that educate pre-school teachers (Pedagogical Faculty "St. Kliment Ohridski",Skopje, Faculty of Educational Sciences "Gotse Delchev" Stip and Pedagogical Faculty "St. Kliment Ohridski" Bitola). Regarding the problem of research have been reviewed the expected communicational – linguistic competences of educators in initial education, ie different curricula and teaching languages that are present in mentioned sample of research. The aim of the research concerns the analysis of existing communicational – linguistic competences of educators in the mentioned institutions for their initial education, their scope and diversity. For this purpose are set series of hypotheses in the form of research questions pertaining to the existence, coverage and differences in the anticipated communicational - linguistic competences of the future educators of the mentioned institutions of initial education. The obtained data were processed by appropriate quality procedures or by drawing conclusions we were guided by the analysis of data which are categorized by general and specific descriptors of qualifications and based on indexing of the contents under the previous classification, will be shown exacted common conclusions presented in certain categories covering the similarities and differences.

Analysis and interpretation of the data from the applied technique - content analysis

In the comprised institutions for initial education of teachers for preschool education, the competencies for the specified personnel can be categorized according to the anticipated general

and the specific descriptors for qualifications in accordance with the arrangements for national framework of the higher educational institutions (*knowledge and understanding; application of knowledge and understanding; estimation, communication skills and study skills*).

General description of qualifications:

Knowledge and understanding:

- “Demonstrates knowledge and understanding for the social and cultural dimension of educational / cultural - educational institution”. – “Knows, understands and differentiates upbringing - educational and functional objectives in the realization of the activity of educational / cultural - educational institution”. (Faculty of Pedagogy-Skopje)
- “Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the contents of the upbringing - educational areas planned with national plans and programs for educational work in kindergartens, therefore, knows and understands the structure and objectives of the preschool curriculum”. (Faculty of Educational Sciences - Stip);
- “Demonstrates knowledge and understanding in the scientific field of study that is upgraded upon the previous education and training, including the knowledge in the domain of theoretical, practical, conceptual, comparative and critical perspectives in the scientific field according to appropriate methodology”. (Pedagogical Faculty-Bitola).

Application of knowledge and understanding

- “It is competent for academic reading and writing, is able to apply the rules of spelling and pronunciation, is able to apply the functional linguistic literacy, is recognizing the different language styles and possesses linguistic norm of all language levels”. (Faculty of Pedagogy-Skopje);
- “Ability to apply knowledge in the field of upbringing – educational contents set by the pre-school curriculum in the planning, organization, implementation and evaluation of educational work in preschool institutions”. (Faculty of Educational Sciences - Stip);
- “Can apply the knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to the work or profession”. (Pedagogical Faculty -Bitola).

Communicational skills:

- “Ability to communicate in the default language of the state norm (Macedonian) language and their mother tongue”. – “Knows and uses the terminology that is characteristic for the profession”. (Faculty of Pedagogy - Skopje)
- “The student is able to communicate using the default Macedonian language and the Cyrillic alphabet”. (Faculty for educational sciences –Stip).

Specific descriptors for qualifications:

Communicational skills:

- “Knows and implements strategies of pedagogical communication”. – “Shows skill for applying of the principles, forms and the methods of interactive communication in the educational process, encourages interaction and communicational skills for regulation of the social and interactive behavior among children / students in the group”. – “It recognizes diversity among children, implementing modern strategies for compliance and uses models for fostering mutual acceptance and tolerance”. (Faculty of Pedagogy - Skopje)
- “Shows developed ability for effective communication in oral and written form”. – “Skills for speech and communication, independently and in a team”. – “Applies interactive communication in micro and macro environment and is able to encourage the development of communicational skills in preschool children”. (Faculty of Educational Sciences - Stip);
- “Successfully and effectively establishes communication with pupils”. (Pedagogical Faculty – Bitola).

Concluding observations of the research

According to the analysis of the above mentioned general and specific descriptors for qualifications in the reference sample survey of higher educational institutions for initial education of educators, we can make the following conclusions:

1. After all subcategories (*knowledge and understanding; application of knowledge and understanding, estimation, communication skills, and learning skills*) designated in the general and specific descriptors for the qualifications of the analysed higher educational institutions, more or less there are similarities in determining the required competences of educators with the completion of initial education. Differences occur only in terms of access to determining the manner of description of the descriptors after the listed subcategories in each of the institutions for the initial education of teachers for preschool upbringing and education.
2. In the mentioned subcategories of general descriptors for qualifications, communicational – linguistic competences are formulated in more general language as part of the overall activity in the area of preschool education, while in specific descriptors for the qualifications, they are presented in detail.
3. In the subcategory of *communication skills* of the specific descriptors for qualifications, there is more clarity regarding the clarification of the necessary competences, but with less coverage in terms of language and speech.
4. Clarity in the description of communicational – linguistic competences of educators (either in general or specific descriptors) are descriptively better displayed while covering the areas of upbringing, educational, social, cultural aspect, as well as the method of communication with children, parents, collective, community and other relevant institutions.
5. Regarding to the analysis of the general and specific descriptors for qualifications of the mentioned higher educational institutions, an indirect question is asked relating to clarity, ease in identifying and detecting the mentioned communicational – linguistic competences in terms of determining the extent of their presence in the final output result of the educators of the initial education.
6. The need for review, harmonization and update of the contents of the course programs of higher educational institutions obliged for the education of the teaching staff regarding the communicational – linguistic competences of the educators themselves and also to the preschool children.

Conclusion

Communicational – linguistic competences of the future educators in preschool education are among some of the most important in terms of realization of the educational work of educators with preschool children. If the age is taken into account, the needs and the developmental characteristics of preschool children, the goals, specifications, social and cultural context of the pre-school upbringing itself and education and as well the professionalism, academic knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, abilities and skills, and personality of the educator, communicational -linguistic competencies of the educator constitute the necessary basis for successful implementation of preschool activities and development of preschool children. The existence of different approaches to determining the communicational – linguistic competences of educators from pre-school education in various institutions of initial education in small hand it incites thinking of introduction of basic starting principles, cores, standards regarding to mentioned competences, in order to overcome inequality but also enabling the improvement in terms of professionalisation of teachers' staff and their communicational – linguistic competences in national level.

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