

STAGES OF COMMUNICATION IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

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Abstract

Introduction: communication is an activity of transfer and exchange of thoughts, messages or information by speech, visualization, signals, writing or behavior. According to the definition of de Valenzuela, communication is “an act by which a person gives or receives information for another person’s needs, desires, perceptions, knowledge or affective states”. Problems in communication, as defined, in children with autism depend proportionally on their intellectual and social development. The skills of communication have their own developmental course, where there are stages of development: pre-intentional reflex communication, pre-intentional reactive communication, pre-intentional proactive communication, intentional primitive communication and stage of intentional verbal communication. The purpose of this paper is to present the behavior of children with autism who are in different developmental stages of communication.

The objective of the paper is an analysis of the behavior of an autistic child who is in a stage: pre-intentional reflex communication, pre-intentional reactive communication, pre-intentional proactive communication; intentional primitive communication and analysis of the behavior of a child with autism in the stage of intentional verbal communication.

The research will be based on qualitative data obtained through researching the the literature in English language and through the use of Internet sources. The data will be systematized and presented in tables.

Conclusion: the level of development and progress of the child with autism, the acquisition of new concepts, skills and abilities depends on successful communication. In the daily contact and work with children with autism, it is necessary to estimate

the stage of communication of the child for further development of communication and social skills, through planning the content and activities for individual and group work. Based on the developmental level of the child, today there are possibilities to use a number of alternative and augmentative communication tools such as computer programs, images, signs, symbols, etc.

Keywords: autism, communication, children

Introduction

Communication is a basic human capability that has evolved since ancient times in human evolution. It is an activity of transferring and exchanging thoughts, messages or information by speech, imaging, signals, writing or behavior. According to the definitions of the World Health Organization (World Health Organization, 1992) and the American Psychiatric Association (American Psychiatric Association, 1994), one of the characteristics of children with autism that defines autism is the problem in their communication. In fact, this feature is most apparent in children with autism who are at low or high functional level. In daily contact with children with autism, their parents and professionals often encountered the phrase “the child doesn’t communicate” with which they are doing a great oversight in assessing the capabilities of the child. Assessing the level of communication in the child with autism is the first thread in treatment. To be able to understand it, to begin to “learn”, means you should try to communicate in a way that the child can understand, while communication can be verbal or nonverbal. The purpose of this paper is to give a detailed theoretical description of the stages of communication in children with autism: pre-intentional reflex communication; pre-intentional reactive communication, pre-intentional proactive communication; intentional communication and primitive stage of intentional verbal communication. For that purpose literature in the English will be researched and analyzed, and the data will be placed in tables and systematized according to the stages of communication of children with autism.

Methodology of research

Subject of this research paper is presenting the stages of communication of children with autism.

The goal is to make presentation of the behavior of children with autism who are on different development stages of communication.

For achieving this goal the following tasks were set: analysis of the behavior of a child with autism who are in stage of: pre-intentional reflex communication; pre-intentional reactive communication, pre-intentional proactive communication; primitive intentional communication and behavior analysis of children with autism on the stage of intentional conventional communication. During the research, in order to make the analysis more comprehensive literature from English-speaking countries and Internet resources were used.

Results and discussion

Communication of children with autism

The word “communication” comes from the Latin word “communis” which means “to share “. According to the definition of de Valenzuela communication is “an act by which a person gives or receives information from the other person about her needs, desires, perceptions, knowledge or affective states” (Catherine M, Gina G, Stephen CL, 1996). Communication is sending verbal or nonverbal message to another person and it is much more than a speech and language, which includes speech and language presented as verbal communication on one hand, and signs and symbols as nonverbal communication on the other. If both parties mutually respond to the messages that are sent, bi-directional communication or interaction occurs.

Problems in communication are defined in children with autism depending on their intellectual and social development. Children with autism often do not respond to verbal messages from adults and they often find themselves in a situation where they cannot communicate and do not know what to do about it. The first step that parents do is check hearing and visiting speech therapist. However, communication is evolving before speech develops as nonverbal communication, and children with autism can include gesture, mime, crying, running with hand, looking at the desired subject, grabbing, demonstrating, using pictures or echolalia. Although echolalia

is repeating someone else's words, it is a sign of early development of speech in children, because after it has memorized situations in which certain words are used, then the same words can be repeated when he is in the same situation. It is actually the beginning of verbal communication. Successful communication with a child with autism does not mean only to detect and inform the way children communicate, but to know why the child communicates (The National Autistic Society, 2013).

Stages of communication in children with autism

The skills of communication have their own developmental course, where there are stages of development communication.

Stage of pre - intentional reflex communication

A child at this level has a limited range of reflex behavior that can be recognized by an adult with no opportunity to discover their meaning and intent. The child's behavior may be associated with hunger, anxiety, pleasure, likes or dislikes, need to get something known, fear of unknown, rejection or acceptance of something. Any change in behavior with change of the situation of calm child, experiencing stress or change in interest may have communication value of an adult who works with children with autism, in which he responds to intensive reflex reactions and behavioral changes in the child. These behaviors can be caused by internal and external stimuli received through the senses (visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, and vestibular) (Bulleen Heights School, 2006).

Table 1: Indicators of behavior in the stage of pre-intentional reflex communication

Stage of communication	Reason	Indicators
Stage of pre-intentional reflex communication	Hunger, thirst, anxiety, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, desire, need, fear of the known and unknown, uncomfortable experience, enjoyable experience, rejection or acceptance of something	sucking, grabbing, crying, fear of sound or movement, crying, screaming, mumbling, making grimaces, gaze

Pre intentional-reactive communication

At this level the child receives all sensory stimuli through road and starts to discriminate. Reflex behavior begins to disappear. The child shows behaviors of reactive events in its environment-related objects and other people. However, the intent and meaning of communication is still interpreted by adults (Ann Quill K., Bracken K, 2000).

Table 2: Indicators of behavior in the stage of pre-intentional communication reactive

Stage of communication	Reason	Indicators
Stage of pre-intentional reactive communication	Hunger, thirst, anxiety, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, desire, need, fear of the known and unknown, uncomfortable experience, enjoyable experience, rejection or acceptance of something.	Crying, expanding movements of body parts, turning back, moving his hand to his mouth, strengthening the body and speech apparatus, grimace, smile, visual exploration of people and objects, the appearance of eye contact, the child anticipates, shows the responses of the tone and voice of facial expression, application of sound source by turning the head and ears, an early stage of understanding the causal connection.

Pre - intentional proactive communication

The behavior of the child has already become with a target. The attempts of the child to act on the environment are signs that adults should take note as communication with intent. Then vocalization shows up (release sounds - vowels) to themselves, to others, to people and toys, which will be observed variation in the pitch of the tone, volume and quality, the emotional coloration of anger and pleasure. Between an adult and a child there is dialogue of sounds. The child begins to abstract the meaning of the quality of voice and facial expression, requires sound source, and shows interest or response to a particular object or situation. The attempts of the child to act on the environment are a sign that adults should observe as communication with intent (Bulleen Heights School, 2006).

Table 3: Indicators of behavior in the stage of pre-intentional proactive communication

Stage of communication	Reason	Indicators
Pre-intentional proactive communication	Hunger, thirst, anxiety, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, desire, need, fear of the known and unknown, uncomfortable experience, enjoyable experience, rejection or acceptance of something.	Grabbing , hitting , pushing , shaking , rocking various items , repeat the action - punching the glass from the table , the child may show that “ wants more “ shows “lock” or “ bye “ , he starts to look for items if his hide requires objects by demonstrating with his hands , follow objects with eyes to follow the gaze of adults , locate and search audio source , shows the reaction conducive or angry voice makes vibrations in their own voice to express pleasure or displeasure , required items to show what he wants and is close to famous people .

Intentional primitive communication

At this stage the child begins communicating with the intention through actions on people and the environment, through activities limited by lack of clear meaning and content. It increases the level of understanding of non-verbal communication. The adult must know the context of the situation, to understand the content and function of communication (Bulleen Heights School, 2006).

Table 4: Indicators of behavior in a primitive stage of intentional communication

Stage of communication	Reason	Indicators
Intentional primitive communication	Hunger, thirst, anxiety, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, desire, need, fear of the known and unknown, uncomfortable experience, enjoyable experience, rejection or acceptance of something	Grabbing a glass, pushing the cup, manipulating objects while watching adults doing adult until the desired object, using hand adult squeals, shouting, vocalization, the child begins to understand the meaning of words that communication denote place, activity, object, look in the eye when communicating, the child can tell if something wanted or not by turning the head or pushing through, an increased level of understanding of nonverbal communication - body movement, and facial expression show starts to turns to its name, but only in certain situations, the child understands that certain objects can represent certain situations, and this is an early stage when we need to start encouraging the development of skills to use the method of sharing images .

Intentional conventional communication

As far as the communication capabilities become more formalized or conventional the child progresses in their use, expressive or receptive. It is important to distinguish between expressive and receptive communication skills of the child, because usually receptive skills are more developed specifically for children who have not developed speech. Therefore, it is understood that in these children receptive speech will reach the reference level and while expressive speech will be intentionally primitive level. At the intentional level child learns that words have meaning; words are used and why exactly do speech serves. To have a successful communication the child should be able to understand the language and the world around him. Children begin to communicate with intention through the development of pre - linguistic skills such as:

Preparatory Skills:

- Ability to pay attention (to focus on objects and people), to concentrate and to use perceptual abilities such as auditory and visual discrimination (Cumine V., Dunlop J., Stevenson G., 2000).
- They need to have something that would require communication, to deny when they are required or to enjoy something.
- It is necessary to understand the causal connection, that their conduct would cause any effect.
- The child wants to communicate with another person and understand that the other person can cause pleasant sensations-care, facilities, food.
- Have a means of communication and one that will communicate.

Pragmatic Skills:

- Dedication of attention: vocalization of thoughts, words, signs, symbols and gestures.
- Requirements: objects, activities, help, need.
- Indication: the need for vocalization or choices, words, signs or symbols.
- Callback: in game actions, conversations etc.
- Imitation: sounds, words, signs, symbols or actions in context (games, role plays).
- Giving: information and service.
- Refusal or denial: facilities, services or information.
- Certification: comments on another person by the use of words, signs, happy, etc.
- Use of non-verbal skills: natural gestures, tracking movements of the body with respect, etc. (The National Autistic Society 2013).

Intentional communication is based on theory of mind in two directions - the person who initiates communication and sends meaningful message that the person who receives the information (Reverse Autism Now, 2013).

The development of communication in children with autism are now commonly used techniques and strategies augmentative and alternative forms of communication involving a method of sharing photos, interactive communication board, books, communication, use of gesture, computer tools that synthesize speech etc..

Conclusion

The child from an early age, before the first year, starts to communicate. Autistic children that start late the communication is evolving into a different shape. Recognizing of communication shape is very important at the very beginning of development. When children are unable to communicate and to show their needs, parents who want to help the situation constantly do things instead of them, such as dressing, undressing, tying shoes, washing hands, feeding etc. This “help” from parents has negative impact on children’s development. These activities associated with care for the children are very important for the acquisition of basic movements and independent activities, the acquisition of independence, autonomy and security.

Knowing the stages of communication allow us to accurately determine the way and to begin to communicate with the child. This will provide better working conditions to it, so we can directly influence its development. Therefore, it is necessary to use alternative forms of communication in order to approach more closely to the world in which children with autism live.

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СТАДИУМИ НА КОМУНИКАЦИЈА КАЈ ДЕЦА СО АУТИЗАМ

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Апстракт

Вовед: Комуникацијата е активност на пренесување и размена на мисли, пораки или информации преку говор, визуелизација, сигнали, пишување или однесување. Според дефиницијата на Де Валенцуела, комуникацијата претставува „акт со кој едно лице дава или прима информации од друго лице за неговите потреби, желби, перцепции, знаења или афективни состојби“. Проблемите во комуникацијата кај децата со аутизам зависат правопрпорционално од нивниот интелектуален и социјален развој. Вештините на комуникација имаат свој развоен тек, при што постојат стадиуми на развој на комуникацијата, и тоа стадиум на: прединтенционална рефлексна комуникација; прединтенционална реактивна комуникација, прединтенционална проактивна комуникација; интенционална примитивна комуникација и стадиум на интенционална вербална комуникација.

Целта на овој труд е да се презентира однесувањето на децата со аутизам што се наоѓаат во различен стадиум на развој на комуникацијата.

Задача на овој труд е анализа на однесувањето на детето со аутизам кое се наоѓа во стадиум на: прединтенционална рефлексна комуникација; прединтенционална реактивна комуникација, прединтенционална проактивна комуникација; интенционална примитивна комуникација и анализа на однесувањето на детето со аутизам во стадиум на интенционална вербална комуникација.

Истражувањето ќе биде засновано на квалитативни податоци добиени со темелно истражување на литература од англиското говорно подрачје и користење ресурси од интернет. Податоците ќе бидат систематизирани и табеларно прикажани.

Заклучок: Од успешната комуникација зависи нивото на развој и напредок на детето, стекнувањето нови поими, вештини и способности. При секојдневниот контакт и работа со децата со аутизам, неопходна е проценка на стадиумот на комуникација во кој се наоѓа детето за понатамошен развој на комуникативните и социјалните вештини низ планирање содржини и активности за индивидуална и групна работа. Во зависност од развојното ниво на кое се наоѓа детето, денес постои можност за користење голем број алтернативни и аутментативни средства за комуникација, како што се: компјутерски програми, слики, знаци, симболи итн.

Клучни зборови: аутизам, комуникација, деца