

Conflict management in day care: ZPD & the teacher's intervention



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Theoretical background

Sociocultural approach: development in social context

- Role of the teacher in conflict management
 - creating a Zone of proximal development: model of scaffolding/ informal tutoring in problem solving: focus on *a guiding teacher* using dialogic tools (Göncü & Cannella 1996, Buzelli 1995)
 - a focus on the role of the children: adjusting to moral values, logic-in-action and strategies of *the children* involved in the conflict from a broad relationship approach (Johansson, 2002, de Haan & Singer 2003, 2006)

Main questions

- How do teachers intervene?
- What types of intervention are most effective?
- What theoretical implications do the results have with regard to the concept of ZPD as a tool in the domain of social development?

Method: observation study

- 96 preschoolers
- 23 daycare centers
- 128 teachers



- Video- and audio taping 1 hour free play per child
- Conflict episodes of children and the teacher's intervention
- Transcription of conflict episodes with CHILDES

Theoretical concepts

- Conflict: “when one person does something to which a second person objects” (Hay 194, p.2)
 - One-turn conflicts
 - More-turn conflicts
 - Crises (Singer & Hännikäinen, 2002)
- Type of intervention
 - “Power’, directive, authoritarian
 - Mediation from the teacher’s perspective: a guiding teacher
 - Mediation from the children’s perspective; logic-in-action of the children
- Effectiveness
 - Acceptance by the children
 - Satisfaction by the children

Results: conflicts and intervention

	Conflicts (n=1144)	Intervention (n=226, 21%)
One-turn	43%	12%
Two/more- turn	51%	19%
Crisis	6%	74%

A comparison: Finnish, Italian, Dutch day care centers

Day care center	Dutch (Singer&de Haan, 2006)	Finnish (Singer& Hannikainen, 2002)	Italian (Booy,2005)
Number of conflicts per hour	12	4	22

Teacher intervention in peer conflicts: type of intervention

Teacher intervention	Directive	Mediating teacher guided	Mediating child
	54%	39%	7%

Effectiveness of teacher intervention

(children N=59, conflicts n= 574, interventions n=152)

	All children	One child	No children	Neutral
Acceptance	58,6%	19,7%	15,1%	6,6%
Satisfied	17,8%	21,1%	24,3%	36,8%

Effectiveness of teacher intervention: type of intervention

	All children	One child	No children	Neutral
Satisfied				
Directive	7,6%	21,2 %	34,8 %	36,4 %
Mediating	30,8%	23,1 %	13,8 %	32,3 %

p= <.005

Accepted

Directive	50 %	25,8 %	24,2 %
Mediating	73,8%	18,5 %	7,7 %

p= <.05

Effectiveness of teacher intervention in peer conflicts

Before conflict	Afterwards	
	Alone	Parallel/joint
Alone	79 %	21 %
Alone + teacher intervention	81 %	19 %
Joint/parallel	20%	80%
Joint/parallel + teacher intervention	22%	78%

Theoretical implications: a relationship approach

- Zone of proximal development:
 - direct intervention: scaffolding the three R's
- Zone of proximal development:
 - The role of the children
 - 'Tacit' (non-verbal) communication and distal arrangements (Rogoff, 1990)
 - Community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991)

ZPD: the three R's

- The three R's: dialogic tools
 - Recognition of the logic-in-action
 - Observe
 - Ask questions, verbalize feelings, (intersubjectivity)
 - Resolution
 - Discuss (co-construction)
 - Suggest what to do
 - Remind of moral rules
 - Reconciliation
 - Restore relationship
 - Refer to togetherness
 - Routines and rituals



Tacit communication and distal arrangements (Rogoff, 1990)

- 'Scaffolding' in emotional and non-verbal way of communication
- Choice of activities in space and time and organisation of companions is a 'superordinate level of guided participation' (Rogoff, p. 7)

Rethinking the concept of 'community of practice'

Social learning = increasing participation in community of practice

Creation of

- 'we-feeling', togetherness
 - rituals; verses, songs, dances, games
 - good manners
 - rules of the group
- Culture of tender affection



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The social lives of young children

Play, conflict and moral learning in day-care groups



*With contributions from
Anke van Keulen and Nienke Bekkema*