# THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SOCIO-HUMAN POSITIVE TRENING WITH YOUNG SCHOOL CHILDREN

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**Abstract**

Communication is the relationship through which the interlocutors can understand and influence each other through the continuous exchange of various coded information.

By communicating, the child learns to act and live with others, to take into account the wishes and demands of others, and at the same time he wants to take his own wishes and demands into account.

The effective communication is one of the most important parenting skills and aims the way the parent should communicate with their own children.

Being a parent is, for the most people, the biggest challenge of their lives. Raising children with a positive attitude is important. The way we raise our children can have a powerful effect on their future – on their happiness, on their learning ability, their willingness to live in an organized setting, and their chances of having deep and fulfilled relationships. Having a good self-esteem is essential in achieving these goals; children blossom when parents recognize and respond to their needs.

Indeed, love, attention, patience, wisdom, approval, guidance, devotion, work, and more are needed to create a favourable context for the formation of positivity in young school children.

To raise a child in a positive way requires the involvement of parents and all those who care about the quality of our children's lives and the future of the society we live in.

***Keywords:*** communication, socio-human positivity, young school age.

Indeed, parents are responsible for the future adults they form. It takes love, patience, wisdom, devotion, work and more to create a favourable context



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for the formation of positivity in children. More than ever, now, the role of the family is overwhelming in the formation of future the responsible and autonomous adults.

The effective communication is one of the most important parenting skills. In connection with this, Thomas Gordon, 2014, pays a special attention to the way the parent has to communicate with their own children. "A dialogue is authentic if each personality engages entirely, manifests oneself sincerely expressing the emotions, ideas and experiences of others, because he/she wants to understand them, if necessary to change his/her attitudes and intentions, cooperating with others in a joint search "(Albu, 2002). Regarding the language of acceptance, Gordon points out that acceptance must be manifested and there is nonverbal communication of acceptance and verbal communication of acceptance. The author points out that some children do not communicate with their parents for fear of being criticized as a result of their behaviour being rejected, and so of their own. "Accepting the other as he/she is, represents an important factor in creating a relationship in which he/she develops, makes constructive changes, learns how to solve problems, moves towards mental health, becomes more productive and more creative and to capitalize his/her full potential. When a person feels that he/she is truly accepted by another, then he/she is free to go further and think about how he/she wants to change, how he wants to grow, how to become differently, how to grow more than he is now " (Gordon, 2014). Meanwhile, the author states that parents should have this ability to communicate therapically with children. This ability is present in some parents, intuitively, but it can also be learned.

There is first the "non-verbal communication of acceptance", i.e. the nonverbal messages, through mimics, gestures, other behaviours. Such messages are often unconscious, parents do not realize that they are sending such messages. For example, there are parents who do not realize that they are sending a message of not accepting their own child when controlling them excessively, when they have a facial expression of contempt or denial, when they indicate a negation with the index finger. Even having no attitude can communicate something: the fact that the parent accepts, agrees with what his/her child says or does. And when the parent offers help, he/she can convey the message that it is not good what the child does, he/she does not accept the action, the method, and intervenes to correct it. If the parent says nothing, he/she will tell the fact that he/she agrees with what the child says, does. Thus, silence as "passive obedience" is a powerful non-verbal message, especially when the child feels the need to "tell" about an



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unhappy experience, releasing his/her feelings, negative experiences. Following the confession, it is possible for that child to find explanations, answers, showing, demonstrating that he/she can develop constructively.

The verbal communication of acceptance is important in what the children's parents say and how the parents say they accept them or not. The positive communication is vital in the parent-child relationship. Parents upset about their children's behaviour, words can convey negative messages: orders, commands, warnings, threats, moralizing replies such as: "Do not cry anymore!", "Do not ruin the toy!", "If you are not good, I'll punish you!","Respect the elders!", "It's not good what you do!" These negative, non-acceptance messages can be turned into positive messages: "The toy is beautiful. Keep it! "," I would love you to be good!","The elders deserve respect!","An educated child behaves beautifully forever!". Important positive assessments by which the parent accepts his/her child are: "You can do very beautiful things!", "I agree with you!", as an introduction to various arguments, explanations.

Thomas Gordon talks about twelve locks of communication on children, that affect the parent-child relationship because the parents' verbal responses can be interpreted in a negative way by the child. So, if mother tells her little girl who complained that her girlfriend does not like her: "I would suggest that you treat your girlfriend nicer, and then she may also want to play with you", the child can "hear" / "understands" a hidden message, like, "Do you think it's my fault, then?", "Do you think I'm doing something wrong or bad?" When parents say something to a child, they often tell him/her something about him/her. So the conversation can be constructive for the child or destructive. The twelve locks in communication are

- orders, directives, commands ("Do not talk like this!");
- warnings, threats ("You are no longer allowed out!");
- urges, sermons ("You must do what is right!");
- tips, suggestions, solutions ("Go and make friends with other girls!");
- lessons and logical arguments ("Children must understand each other!");
- judgments, criticism, disagreements ("You do not think clearly!");
- praise, acceptance ("I think you are right!");
- invective, ridicule, offense ("You act like an animal!");
- interpretations, analyzes, diagnostics ("You say this only to annoy me!");
- calm, compassion, consolation ("Tomorrow you will feel better!");
- investigation, interrogation ("Who put this idea in your head?");



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- retreat, distraction, condescension, postponement ("Let's not talk about it!")

Most parents are based, in their verbal communication with their children, on these communications locks. The way to communicate recommended by Gordon is called "the road opener" or "the invitation to say more". These are reactions that do not communicate any of the listener's ideas, judgments or feelings, and which invite children to express their own ideas, judgments, feelings: "Understand," "Oh.", "What if ..."Interesting.", "Tell me too!","I would like to hear!","I would be interested in your point of view!", "Let's talk about it!". These "urges" to communication must be accompanied by the "active listening" of the parent through which he "keeps open this gate" of communication with messages that show the child he understands what he/she communicates / his/her needs.

Among the benefits of active listening, Gordon lists: it favours the affectionate relationship between parent and child, facilitates the child problem solving, and listens to parents.

In forming the ability to listen actively, the parent "learns" attitudes such as: truly hearing and really wanting to help the child, to accept the child's feelings, no matter what they are.

The negative aspects of active listening are those related to the "time", "attitudes" and "understanding" of the parent who should suspend all his/her activities for "listening" to the child, he/she must respond "empathically" to the needs expressed by the child, understanding what he/she feels, what the child thinks.

In communication, essentially is the honest, realistic and courteous feedback about the way they speak, behave. Through this type of feedback, children are aware of what they are doing, talking and they can choose the positive one. The feedback prepares the child with the feedback from other people in the child's future life and not all will be positive. On the other hand, perfect parents communicate positively, using an appropriate language to develop the children's trust. In this sense, Sargent, 2011, speaks of developing a positive and self-reliant attitude through effective communication: it is not necessary to be praised for anything and especially undeserved because they will lose their sense of reality. They should avoid the self-deception (for example, encouragement by parents, unjustifiably, the children in what it is called talent - singing, painting, dancing; with disastrous results - public ridicule of the child). The sense of reality is very important, but the (perfect) parent's ability to



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accomplish this is necessary. Ironing, negative communication does not help. Excessive criticism does not educate but affects self-esteem. It is beneficial the language that helps children to make useful opinions about themselves and others; the "toxic" language should be avoided and replaced with positive suggestions.

In the parent-child communication, it is important how the children's opinions are formed, especially as 90% of these opinions about themselves are formed until the age of seven. That is why the parent has to listen to the children's opinions about themselves and other people, so that the children develop opinions that will be useful to them when they are adults and this is done by drawing conclusions from own experiences: "attach an experience, including that they are told, to a meaning that they create in their minds. Some opinions will be constructive, others will be limiting or even destructive [...] if they hear something enough often, for them it becomes a truth "(Sargent ,2011).

So, if a parent tells the critic to the child, he/she will even form a negative opinion of himself/herself. For example, a parent who tells a child that he is not good at Mathematics is wrong because the child will always have this opinion about himself/herself, even when he/she would take good grades in Mathematics; he/she will never be content with himself/herself. The impact of the negative messages is very strong, so the parent must think about the possible consequences of such messages: "You will never be good at school!", "You are a clown!", "You are the black sheep of the family ". Sometimes, in a few cases, a critical message can motivate a child to prove the opposite, even in these situations, the impact is negative on the child. Labelling has effects on the child, so it has to be avoided, analyzing and commenting on the behaviour: the label "You're a fool!" is different from the appreciation of behaviour: "It was a stupid gesture to do this!" "Perfect" parents make the distinction between person and behaviour. The positive communication means to send the child the message that not with his/her person is something wrong, but with his/her deed, his/her behaviour at a certain moment.

In the same way, parents must realize that a negative ban is harder to "rumble", followed by the child, than a positive counsel/request. The negative language is present all the time, even if the intentions are very good. To educate, any parent uses bans such as "Do not beat!", "Do not yell!", "Do not argue!", "Do not put your fingers in the socket!" But, "the mind cannot process the negation" No!" because it exists only in the language, not in experience. When parents say to the children, "Do not run on the street!", the little ones have to go through a



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sophisticated process to understand what his/her father or mother said, "because they do not perceive the denial, but just running on the street, that's exactly what do will do. If we turn the negative urge into a positive one, such as "Go on the sidewalk!", the message is immediately understood, and the children imagine how they walk on the sidewalk and this will do. The "perfect" parent needs to think about what a child wants to do and formulate the request/requirement in positive terms. Sargent, 2011, proposes a demonstration list:

1. Do not look at someone else's work. /Focus on your work.
2. Do not argue at the playground. /Play nice with the other kids.
3. Do not make noise. / Sit down quietly!

The positive language is the most effective in the parent-child relationship. In the positive communication, the questions are also essential. The ability to ask the right question is very important. With the help of the questions, the parent can determine the problem/problems the child is facing or can help him/her find solutions.

Children understand the messages they receive in a different way from adults, they give their own meaning to deeds and ages. Some children think that they can not do certain things, they are not loved, that other children do not like them. Parents can find out the way their child thinks through questions such as "How do you know?" Or "What do you mean by that?", "What do you mean by ...?", "Why is it a problem for you? "What made you feel that way?". The result could be the discovery of your children's thoughts. When they say they are not loved and they are asked why they think so, the parent finds out the source - who rejected him/her or told him/her that he/she does not love him/her.

Parents play an essential role in the development of the child, precisely through the behavioral model, the cultural and social values, the customs, traditions, roles and interpersonal behavior manifested in the daily environment. The family relationships influence the development of the child’s personality, especially the parents who are responsible for ensuring the living conditions that imply an affective component in the communication.

"The parental competence is a system of knowledge, skills, abilities, supported by specific personality traits and that allow the parent to successfully fulfill the parental responsibilities, to prevent and overcome crisis situations in the benefit of the child’s development, and thus, to achieve the goals of the educational activities "(Glăveanu 2012). The author of this definition investigated the educational strategies used by parents and the results were



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presented in the book "Modern Psychological Research: Directions and Perspectives", coordinated by M. Milcu, W. Griebel and Ana Raluca Sassu and published at the University Publishing House in Bucharest. The study presents the factors of parental competence as follows:

- knowledge refers to the parent's ability to know the level of the psychosocial development of the child and the ability to explain the child's reactions; to understand the child's needs and the optimal methods of education and relationship;

- discipline refers to the parent's ability to communicate assertively and effectively in the process of learning the social rules and moral norms; and the management of the reward and punishment regime;

- time management - the ability of the parent to determine the quality and amount of time spent with his/her own child and the ability to manage the child's time (in the activity-rest relationship);

- affective support involves the parent's ability to know and use effective ways to prevent and manage tensions and stress;

- crisis management refers to the parent's ability to be a good leader, i.e. to find solutions to overcome educational crisis situations (school performance, discipline issues).

All of these factors imply a positive communication. The result of the formation of a harmonious personality of the child is what he calls Osterrich P. (1973) the "accepted child" characterized by originality, spontaneity, autonomy and capacity to figure it out, preference for building games and imaginative tendency to impose, the desire to face difficulties, perseverance in the pursuit of goals (Glăveanu, 2012).

In describing the parenting skills, specialists refer to personality traits, peculiarities and characteristics of interaction situations (personal or traits model; emotional intelligence and other factors, the situational model and interactionist model).

*The personal mode (of features)* promotes the parents' behaviours and their influence on the child's behaviour: we talk about social and psychological skills. The psychological skills contain cognitive elements and affective attributes. The social and emotional ones are essential to success in professional and personal life, including communication skills, social interaction, active engagement.

"Social competence" is the capacity that allows achieving higher results in social tasks and is assimilated to the experience of people and groups"



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(Glăveanu, 2012). The social competence plays an important role in the current context when young school children enter the school environment and learn to communicate, react, manage their emotions, crises, etc. The child also learns some rules: to be respectful, kind, receptive.
Ecaterina Vrasmas (2008) shows a series of features that lead to efficiency in assuming parental responsibilities: love, acceptance, sensitivity to children's needs.

A new concept is the emotional-social intelligence proposed by Daniel Goleman (2004): the emotional-social competence is an acquired skill and the result of which is a common performance in the professional, social and personal field. Goleman states in the preface of the volume "Emotional Intelligence in the Child Education" (Elias, Friedlander 2012) that the "family life is the first school of emotions. In this intimate crucible, we learn to recognize both our own emotions and the reactions of others to our emotions; how to think of these emotions and how to choose the reactions; how to read and express our hopes and fears. This emotional school does not just mean what parents say to their children or what they do for them; it also involves models offered by parents as to how to treat their own emotions and those that arise in the spouse's relationship."

The education based on emotional intelligence starts from the idea that all the actions can create a healthy family balance and relationships with children. The parents' actions must emphasize the importance of feelings that help both parents and children, controlling emotions instead of impulsive actions, when feelings are overwhelming.

Generally, the children's lives, especially those entering the school system, are tough, uncertain. It's easy to lose control, with negative effects. Children need a positive environment. Education based on emotional intelligence includes principles that are the basis of this type of education.

Family is the environment in which the child must feel affection, safety. Under these circumstances, every family member must be aware that he is part of that family. Discussions between family members at dinner, for example, are a way of raising awareness and defining the family. Establishing rules/principles is important: to listen to one another, to hear each other's point of view. Open discussion with children includes the child's ability to communicate some requirements: not to be criticized in front of his friends; to respect his/her personal area and the secret of correspondence.



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In education based on emotional intelligence, communication is important, how parents talk to children. From a desire to protect children, parents tend to tell the children what to do, relying on their previous experiences. But children probably will not listen because they need their own experiences to learn how to solve their own problems. Parents must understand that they will not always be with their children, guide them, advise them, provide solutions.

The purpose of education is to teach children to think by themselves, to take into account social, moral rules. Most of the parents are also subjective when it comes to their children. Controlling emotions is vital in family members' relationships, especially in the case of "difficult" children. "When the child screams," I hate you! ", the parent does not go through the following thought:" My child is frustrated and exposes my negative emotions to me because I am a sure target." On the contrary, the parent reacts by virtue of feeling hurt, provoking strong emotions, though ideally everything would reduce to a rational assessment of the situation and a well-thought-out action. This intensity of emotions can make parents react instinctively and slip on the slopes of old templates taken from their own childhood "(Elias, Friedlander 2012). Guided with skill, children understand that inappropriate behavior does not give them what they really want, that is, to be loved and accepted - the principle of emotional intelligence, quite difficult to respect in a world dominated by momentum impulses and violence transmitted all the time through the media. It is important for parents to know how to help their children, to figure out what they want and to resist the impulse to act on the basis of strong emotions or media-inspired desires.

Nowadays, children are subject to many influences, sometimes contradictory, and to help children, parents should "preach" less and listen more, building relationships by communicating with each other. In this regard, Elias, Tobias and Friedlander, 2012, propose in the volume "Emotional Intelligence in the Child Education" a set of guiding principles of emotional intelligence in the parent-child relationship: everyday principles, techniques to ask questions, suggestions for long-term success.

The principles for each day refer to habits related to the family environment; thus, in the modeling process, the children learn by following their parents, and they, in turn, guide them through examples. For success, the parent needs to acquire self-control and communication skills to provide a model of behavior and communication. Many children learn some abilities from parents without realizing it. Advice and clues to use previously acquired skills are relevant because remembering is a useful learning method. Obviously, repetition



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must not be turned into a bickering, especially in combination with reprisals, criticism. Children can be co-opted into some household activities, reminding them to be "nice" to help raise the table, for example, and to lay it. An effective method is paraphrasing, that is, repeating in another form what you have previously said. The parent has been gently reformulating the child's statements in a positive language.

Questions can explain some aspects of behavior and language. There are several types of questions. The most commonly used questions are: causes ("Why?"), most variations ("What do you remember?"), those asking for an answer ("Yes"/"No") or an elaborate answer ("What Happens?"). Of all these types of questions, the most difficult for the child is to answer the question ("Why?"), especially since such a question has an accenting tone. The most appropriate are open questions, such as ("What Happened?", "How Do You Feel?").

Also important are the principles of "suggestions for long-term success". These relate to certain attitudes and actions within the relationship between parents and children. To help children identify and solve their problems effectively, parents need to be armed with patience and perseverance, they must prove flexibility and creativity, but also adaptation (Elias, Friedlander 2012).

The family is the vital social group in providing education and training for the child in a dynamic society. The parental skills must also be related to the family typology (traditional /modern; parental/single parent; extended, and provenance). The family well-being is developed in relation to the family resources and in relation to the family feelings and the ability of its members to cope with the challenges of life. In this context, the positive families ("positive families") define families giving children the conditions for healthy development, happiness, effective adaptation and school success, giving them positive and hopeful values, setting them goals for the future, supporting them to confront with the challenges of everyday life and know/can ignite the sparks and activate the latent forces of children and have the power to direct them from "living" simply to "flourishing" (Negovan, 2013). The positive family means a positive climate, positive patterns, positive parenting roles.

The positive climate refers to models and positive perceptions of the child's abilities and skills, realistic expectations, according to the child's needs. The parental-material, educational, instructive, affective support influences the physical and intellectual development of the child and is reflected in spending time with the children, discussing with them, focusing on daily issues, encouraging and manifesting the affection for the child, in *the proactive education* Negovan, 2013).



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The influence of parenting, the positive education is reflected in the child's personality: "self-image, self-esteem, value system, self-confidence, feelings of well-being and psychological comfort, satisfaction and optimism about its evolution as a human being, as a member of a healthy community "(Negovan, 2013). Children learn from their parents' knowledge, skills, attitudes.

The specialized literature presents different models of parents; there are also positive social role models with direct effects on the development of children as adaptable adults. We are talking about positive (socio-professional, spiritual, existential) models, validated or not by society. On the other hand, failure is an unconscious urge to not imitate the model. Negovan points out that "a certain life model, although positive in its nature, is not successful and does not become attractive for a child or young person (I was fair and honest ... I do not understand why he/she has been formed like this...) in two typical situations: one that depends even on parents and one that depends on the environment. In the first situation, the model was not explicitly presented by parents as positive in relation to certain standards (sometimes divergent from those in the social environment) or its imitation or sequential reproduction by the child was not reinforced (by appropriate rewards - more often moral, not material). In the second situation, the social toxic environments invade positive role and life models (as defined by positive psychology) while validating negative role models "(Negovan, 2013).

Thus, communication plays an important role in shaping the socio-human positivity in young children, requiring the involvement of parents and all those who care about the quality of our children's lives and the future of the society we live in.

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