



Erasmus + VET Strategic Partnership

IENE 8 – Empowering Migrant and Refugee Families with Parenting Skills

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DIALOGUE AND RESPECT

Authors:

Andrea Kuckert-Wöstheinrich

St Augustinus-Gruppe

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National and Kapodistrian
University of Athens



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DIALOGUE, COMMUNICATION, AND MORE

Communication is essential to human beings. Humans cannot survive for a long time alone and without other people because they are social beings. Humans talk in order to describe something, to express something or to receive a reaction. Communication is therefore not only a factual exchange of information, but it also connects people on a social level and serves for communication through emotions. There are various forms of communication:



- a) Communication between individual persons (interpersonal communication)
- b) Communication within groups (organized, online, offline)
- c) Mass communication by media to consumers
- d) Communication can take place with a time delay or at the same time (asynchronous/synchronous).
- e) Communication can be directed from one person to only one or more persons.
- f) Communication can also be directed from more persons to a greater number of persons (one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-many).

The kind of **dialogue**, which will be dealt with here, takes place between individual persons or in groups and normally describes a form of direct communication between two or more persons who are in the same room. On the other hand there is the monologue, during which only one person communicates and the listener does not actively participate.

OBJECTIVES

In this learning unit young adults with a refugee background will learn:

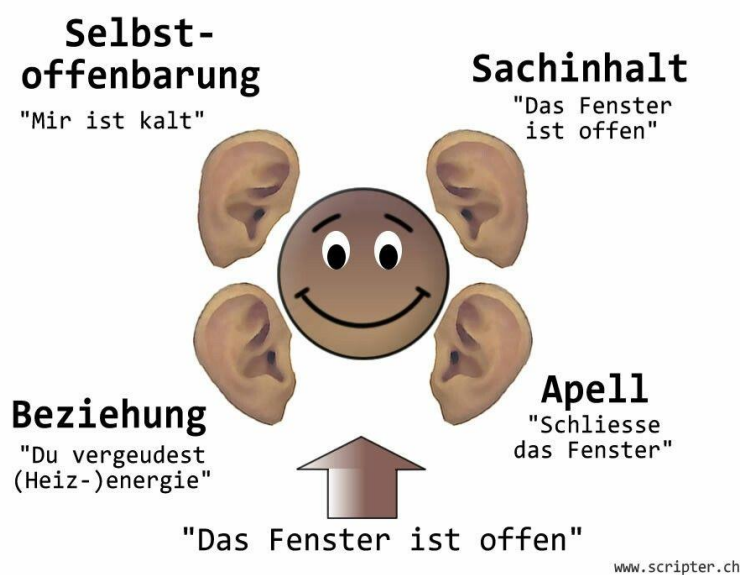
1. the definitions of dialogue and respect;
2. the challenges that lie in a dialogue, that means in a conversation;
3. strategies that will ensure a good dialogue;

DEFINITIONS AND THEORIES ON DIALOGUE

„Dialogue is a chance to discover something new, not a guarantee to preserve old things.“ (David Bohm). **Dialogue** stems from the Greek word *dialogus* and describes the action of “talking to each other”, “discussing“ or “the flow of words“. A face-to-face dialogue includes the direct exchange of information between two persons who are in contact with each other. Simply put, it is always about a person (sender), who conveys a message to a second person (receiver). In doing so, it is normally always about the exchange of information. The person who sends the message is at the same time also a receiver of a message and vice versa. In this context, the encoding and decoding of

the information is also important. By this we mean the interpretation of the information. Do I understand what the other person wants to tell me exactly in the way he or she meant it? And what is necessary in order to speak of a successful dialogue? The way of speaking as well as facial expression and gestures influence the dialogue in the same manner as the connection that both persons have to each other. In a dialogue today, I am also influenced by my own biography, where I come from and how I learned to talk.

In this context the model by Schulz von Thun (1981) proves to be helpful. Imagine, the two of you are sitting in a room and you are having a chat with friends. Your friend looks up, takes a look at the window and says: "The window is open." Now, there are various possibilities as to how one can



absorb and deal with this information. Schulz von Thun described it as the four-sides model. If one sticks with the pure factual level, then it simply means to notice that the window is open. Self-revealing simply means that I am cold because the window is open. The level of appeal suggests that the other person, that means your friend, should close the window. From the perspective of the relationship level, the message is conveyed that the other person is simply wasting heating energy. Positively speaking, it could also mean:

fresh air is good for your health. It's great that the window is open. It is important to mention here that the way I am connected to someone else has considerable influence on communication. (Watzlawick 1983). It makes a difference whether I am sitting on a couch with a friend, having a chat and saying, „the window is open“, or whether I am sitting with my father or grandfather or in the classroom during a lesson. How I am connected to someone, whether I like him or not, whether I know him or not, whether he reminds me of someone whom I liked very much or not has influence on the conversation with the other person. A statement can therefore be understood in a very different way and it is not always easy to find out what the other person actually means.

Translation of the above picture:

Statement at the bottom: "The window is open".

Upper left corner: Self-revealing: "I am cold". **Upper right corner:** Factual content: "The window is open". **Lower left corner:** Relationship: "You are wasting (heating) energy". **Lower right corner:** Appeal: "Close the window".

A young man from Syria (19 years old) is completing a **voluntary social year** in a nursing home. In his homeland, he left school after graduation and wanted to study law. The political circumstances forced him to flee and after the German language course he sought on the advice of his refugee godfather a professional orientation. At home, he had already helped his grandmother, who was ill tied to the bed. The young man is trained and quickly his skills in dealing with the "old" are recognized. Calmly and friendly, he does all the tasks assigned to him. He cares for people with respect. He listens, asks about the biography of the very old, does not judge prematurely, supports the colleagues. "Why he wants to care for the elderly", the practice leader wants to know. "I want to take care of how I would like to be cared for in old age." Everyone is thrilled. He should definitely go into the nursing education. Only one thing worries everyone. Every morning he comes to a different time. Sometimes he manages to get there on time for the shift. Then he comes one hour late, two sometimes. Sometimes he misses a whole morning. There are talks with him. "You have to be on time." "Set an alarm clock." "Again too late, that's not possible." The colleagues are dissatisfied, although he works so well. At some point, someone comes up with the idea to ask him. "Why do you always come too late?" The young man is astonished. "Too late? I work here voluntarily. I am doing a voluntary social year. I can come whenever I want! "

The example shows how important it is to observe and ask questions. Many refugee families are used to a completely different life and have worked hard to feed their children, who were left on their own. Playing with the children, showing them the limits, promoting them, are not necessarily part of the education in other countries. It is important to keep talking, not condemning, but understanding, explaining, empowering. And like in the example: People can interpret things totally different. The challenge is to understand and explain why things are handed differently. In the case of the young boy it was agreed upon that he could start one hour later in the morning and stay one hour longer.

KEY POINTS

PowerPoint

ACTIVITY

The four-sides model by Schulz von Thun includes:

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

REFLECTION ON A TOPIC: DIALOGUE

Respect means for me:

I talk to a friend: what does respect mean for him?

I am sitting in school and I am supposed to talk about the topic home / origin. What would I tell the others?

I tell my new friend from Germany something about the same topic.

And then I meet my cousin. We come from the same village.

How will my story change if I tell it to different people? And how does this affect me?

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Recently, I was sitting together with a friend and he told me something which was absolutely crazy. But then it turned out that I completely misunderstood the story: what went wrong? Should I have shown more respect?

LITERATURE / RESOURCES

1. Bohm, D.
2. Pictures: www.pixabay.com
3. Picture four-sides model: www.scripiter.com
4. Schulz von Thun, F. (1981). *Miteinander Reden 1. Störungen und Klärungen. [Talking to Each Other 1. Disruptions and Clarifications]* Reinbek: Rowohlt Verlag.
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6. Stadt Essen. *Interkulturelle Dialog. Jugendliche im Gespräch über Gott und die Welt, Heimat und Herkunft, Facebook und die Liebe. [City of Essen. Intercultural Dialogue. Young People Talking about Everything under the Sun, Home and Origin, Facebook and Love]*.
https://media.essen.de/media/wwwessende/aemter/0513/dialog/Dialog-_Broschuere_Druckversion_klein.pdf

Solutions: