

Communication and Listening Skill Training for Bunda PAUD at Pakal Surabaya to Meet the Competency as Professional Educators

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Abstract

This service is intended to improve the soft skill as the competency of educators in terms of communication and listening skills of PAUD educators (Bunda PAUD) in interacting with their students. The training participants are some Bunda PAUD who represent some PPT (Pos PAUD Terpadu) in Pakal district. They will practice in developing their communication and listening skills, especially those related to non-verbal communication. This training is conducted in order to refresh and improve their non-verbal communication so that they are ready to teach offline. During the offline teaching process, they will interact directly with their students in which previously they have been doing the online teaching activity during the covid 19 pandemic period. The training focuses on the practice of these soft skills by conducting role play between Bunda PAUD and team of trainers who act as early childhood students. This training showed significant results in the form of increased understanding in which Bunda PAUD can perform the appropriate nonverbal communication skills. The listening skill can also be detected from feedback given by PAUD educators. During the practice of role-playing, they also implement efficient non-verbal communication of haptics, oculosics, and proxemics. This community service also provides monitoring and evaluation for Bunda PAUD by attending some PPT.

Keywords: early childhood education, communication skill, listening skill, soft skill

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) has been regulated in the Law governing the Education System in Indonesia. Thus, PAUD educators can also become professional educators who also meet competency standards in carrying out their work in the field of education. Competence is supported by three main components, namely knowledge, skills and abilities. Competence is defined by Mansfield (Armstrong, 2006) as a person's underlying characteristics that have an impact on superior performance. Furthermore, competence (Armstrong, 2006) is expected by the organization to be practiced by employees who are in an organization in carrying out their work.

The quality of PAUD educators plays an important role in being able to provide quality teaching for their students. Early childhood students are individuals who have unique characteristics according to their age, namely 0 years to 6 years. They enter a complex stage of growth and development which includes moral, cognitive, affective and psychomotor development. At that age appears the golden age, which is the best period of time to be able to instil knowledge and also the child's personality. PAUD Central Java (2015) explains that PAUD educators are professional educators who perform tasks related to planning, implementing and assessing learning outcomes. Besides, they also guide, train, nurture and protect their students. As an early age educator, Bunda PAUD must have sufficient competency to perform at work by showing her knowledge, skill and ability.

From the initial discussion conducted during the field survey period, These PAUD students showed different characteristics from those in basic education because they had some language barriers which were not very fluent in speaking. In addition, they also could not express their feelings easily. There were also PAUD students who even have complex backgrounds where their parents were working partners who are not necessarily able to

accompany their children during the learning process in early childhood education. meanwhile early childhood is classified as a child who still needed extra attention and guidance from his parents so that early childhood is was maximized in its growth and development period. Besides, entering the beginning academic year 2022/2023, early childhood education also implements face to face teaching as all level of education system conducts the same thing. Firdaus et al (2022) also mentioned that during the covid 19 pandemic each education unit has implemented online learning for more than two years. This shift of learning process in the middle of year 2022 must be prepared. The early childhood education can also be prepared by conducting refreshment in communication skill as this skill is beneficial in interaction between Bunda PAUD as the educators and their students. The training of communication skill can enhance PAUD educator as this skill highly related with educator competency.

METHOD

The implementation of this community service includes transfer of knowledge session (material session), the discussion session, and role play session in practicing directly the given skill. There were about 40 participants of Bunda PAUD at Pakal District and the team for this community service consists of 6 members (3 lecturers and 3 students). The material sessions were divided into two. The first material was about the importance of early childhood education and the second material was about the communication skill of PAUD educator. The role play session involved students who were part of the training team from Bachelor of Management study program and master of Management study program. There are 4 methods used in this community service in which began with survey session. Briefly, all the stages can be explained below:

Stage 1.

At this stage an initial survey was conducted as a Training Needs Analysis (TNA). Training needs analysis was implemented because as Bunda PAUD provides teaching to early childhood, they really need the sufficient skills that correspond with competency. Moreover, entering the endemic period, educators need to apply their skills more in face-to-face sessions with their students. Based on the analysis, communication skill is given especially the nonverbal communication which mostly reflects the communication process. Denby (2010) The TNA can give benefit in deciding the appropriate activity of training as it provides the current and expected efficiency level. Bunda PAUD is expected to perform efficient communication so that skill can help her in interacting with students of early childhood.

Stage 2

This was the training session. At this stage, training gives clear understanding about the nonverbal communication in which participants can fill the gap in completing efficiency at work. As mentioned by Shree (2017), Training is an ideal approach, a method in developing human resource with skills that can lead to efficiency. It is a way to improve efficiency since it is the learning of knowledge and skill (Nazli et al., 2014). During the training session, participants of training is given two material. The first material is about the integrated holistic PAUD service.



Figure 1. Material session about The integrated holistic PAUD service

This material was about the service for early childhood service that can meet students' needs by providing efforts to stimulate, guide, nurture and provide learning activities that lead to children's abilities and skills. Early childhood students also perform different behavior in which must be detected by Bunda PAUD as the educators. The second material was Communication and listening skill. The communication skill is mainly focused on the nonverbal communication.



Figure 2. Training session by delivering Communication and Listening Skill

The material about communication has mainly focused on the nonverbal communication of early childhood students. Their nonverbal communication can be stated as social cues that were so important in detecting their behaviors. Social cues of early childhood students were facial expression, personal space, tone of voice and body language. The students' social cues actually are the result of the students' viewing the world. So, by understanding their cues, Bunda PAUD can have empathetic feeling and see the world in their vision. Educators who have empathy are associated with the terms "walking in another individual's shoes" and also "seeing the world through the eyes of another" (Brooks and Goldsterin, 2008). PAUD Educators have learned some types of nonverbal communication that can easily implemented while interacting with their students.

Bunda PAUD has learnt kinds of nonverbal communication such as haptics, proxemics (the use of personal area in communicating message), oculosics (eye behavior), *Kinesics* (gestures, body movements, facial expressions) and haptics (the use of touch to communicate). Meanwhile, the listening skill is practiced on how educators can give feedback by nodding and giving affirmative statements about what is told by their students. Those two skills are relatively related so Bunda PAUD directly combine those skills while interacting with their students

Stage 3

The next stage was discussion and role play session. During the discussion session, they can share questions concerning about their experience dealing with early childhood students. An interesting question was delivered about a student with tantrum condition that was used to throw things around him. Bunda PAUD can be more aware in detecting his behaviour and make sure that he won't injure himself and others. Bunda PAUD can get closer into his personal area to calm him down while he was having tantrum. Once his anger was lower, his behaviour can be more stable and won't hurt others and himself. After discussion session, participants were given two different cases. The first case, it was about interaction between Bunda PAUD and her students (this scene was performed by two UPN Students). From Picture 3, based on the scenario, The training team who acts as Bunda PAUD performed inappropriate way in communicating with her sad students. This sad facial expression was then observed and analysed by participants. Picture 3 below represent the social cues of students which have to be analysed



Figure 3. The First Case about inappropriate communication

Participants learned to analyse social cues of the student actor. The social cues showed that the student actor performed sad facial expression, closed gesture, and she also declared her personal space. After that Bunda PAUD as the participants practiced to implement nonverbal communication. This practice can be seen from Picture 4 below.



Figure 4. Participant performed nonverbal communication skill

From the picture above, it can be seen that participant entered the student's personal space (proxemics) in order to calm her. She also maintained to face the student directly who at first was sitting at distance (Picture 3). Participant also implement haptics by giving a nurturing touch.

The second case was about two students who were in a quarrel fighting for a bottle to play bottle flip (Picture 5). Bunda PAUD as the training's participants perform the appropriate nonverbal communication by implementing combination of proxemics, eye behaviour, kinesics and haptics to handle the situation. Before that, Bunda PAUD also practiced on listening to her student. She gives affirmative statement about what happens to her students.



Figure 5. The 2nd Case about students Fighting

Bunda PAUD as the participant performed how to handle the situation by implementing nonverbal communication as trained during the second material. Participant has implemented haptics and proxemics (picture 6). She was capable showing eye contact and giving smile while communicating with her early childhood students (acted by Fatimah). She was also capable in implementing haptics (the use of touch to communicate). The touch was given to nurturing both of them who were quarrelling.



Figure 6. Bunda PAUD performed roleplay

These role plays that gave two case studies were led and reviewed directly by the trainer. The review was given to give feedback about the appropriate nonverbal communication performed by the participants. Other participants took notes and also participatively observed the communication skill of their friend.

Stage 4

The last stage of this community service was monitoring and evaluation activity in which were directly conducted by visiting some PPT (Pos PAUD Terpadu). During team visits, skill of Bunda PAUD was observed and then reviewed. It was noticed that Bunda PAUD as educators are able to show eye contact while teaching their students. Early childhood education applies singing and dancing in their teaching and nonverbal communication is integrated automatically within those two activities



Figure 7. Visiting PPT in Monitoring Evaluation activity

RESULTS

This community service activity was attended by 25 representatives of PPT (Pos PAUD Terpadu) at Pakal sub district in Surabaya. The objective of this community service is to enhance communication skill of Bunda PAUD who have been given training about communication and listening skill in which can be related with their early childhood students. To find out the objective of this training, monitoring and evaluation activity is conducted after the training session. The community service team directly visited the PPT and conducted observation and evaluation. During that visit, team was also accompanied by a district employee. There are some conditions that are considered important during the monitoring and evaluation activity namely: 1) Each PPT has different schedule in which it only gives service three times a week in the morning and in the afternoon, 2) the ratio of students and educators are different in some PPT. There is a PPT that has many children for approximately 30 students. Others can have only students under 15 children. The PPT also has 4 to 6 educators, 3). the location of each PPT is varied. It is different from one another. There is a PPT that shares place with meeting place (Balai RW). Others are separated from Balai RW.

During the visit, team of community service conduct observation and evaluation about how far the skill (communication and listening) are implemented by the educator. The evaluation can be seen below:

- Bunda PAUD nonverbally communicates with their students from the beginning process by the time students entering the room. She gives eye contact, haptics (greeting showed by students), smile, and entering students' personal space.
- During the process of learning, Bunda PAUD ask students to sit closer and circling her. This showed the seating dynamics and good distance in maintaining communication.
- Listening skill can be seen from the emerge of feedback, nodding and also voice segregate (uhm, and mmh)

DISCUSSION

Communication and listening skill of educators have played important role in interacting with their students. Skill of educators is not limited only in communication skill but listening skill is also interrelated in the implementation of communication process. Bunda PAUD as educator in early childhood education is having different characteristics of students. In this community service, the students' age is ranged from 3 to 5 years. This has already set a condition that has direct contribution to the process of communication between educator and students. Educator's communication skills are beneficial for them in transferring knowledge to students (McCarthy and Carter, 2001). Khan et al. (2017) mentioned that educators who are incapable in executing communication skill can breakage students learning and academics. He also implied that this skill is needed by effective educator in which involving with listening and also speaking, reading and writing skills.

In implementing communication and listening skill, PAUD educators also learn to analyze the social cues of their students so that they can implement the appropriate communication skill. Early childhood students are different with students of other level of education. Some of them probably are not fluent in speaking and they also have difficulty in expressing what they feel. Analyzing social cues is helpful since this cue can relate on what they feel, behave. These cues also relate a lot with nonverbal communication such as facial expression, body language, eye contact. Some students who are in having problems also show personal distance. They withdraw from crowd.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The training for developing communication skill was implemented in order to updating the communication skill of Bunda PAUD as a professional educator. Online learning is a type of teaching that is implemented without direct interface and online (Rohman et al., 2021). As the situation of covid 19 endemic has been formally considered by the government, the learning process is shifted into offline and this is implemented by all level of education unit. That condition also contribute to the preparedness of educator in interacting with the students directly, especially the PAUD educators. Soft skill as components of competency is highly needed to accelerate human resource performing their jobs. Concerning with communication skill, it was reviewed by Robles (2012) and Shakir (2009) as the top ten soft skill urgently required by human resource at work. Communication skill for Bunda PAUD as professional educator corresponds with the pedagogical competency about having effective, empathetic, and polite communication (PAUD Jateng, 2015). During the training, participants learnt type of nonverbal communication and then they directly implemented them in a role play of two cases.

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