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Fiona Shelton (Eds.)

CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION

PARADOXES AND ILLUMINATIONS

WAXMANN

Voices from the Classroom

edited by
Vana Chiou, Lotte Geunis, Oliver Holz,
Nesrin Oruç Ertürk, Justyna Ratkowska-Pasikowska, &
Fiona Shelton

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Contents

Preface

If you're reading this, it is likely that you have been brought to this publication by an interest in diverse voices, from diverse settings, with diverse experiences to share. This is the third publication in the 'Voices from the Classroom' series, which examines a broad range of educational themes. As editors of the series, and educationalists in the arenas of higher education and policy making, we wanted to bring together the different educational sectors, provide a space for research informed discussion and most importantly, listen to and learn from one another's voices of experience.

The purpose of the series is to publish studies which illuminate the field of education, using different research methods, within a theoretical context, which draw from educational and other disciplinary theory. The chapters span the different phases and contexts of education, reflecting the many puzzles we encounter as educationalists. This edition of 'Voices from the Classroom' brings together 45 chapters from eight countries which shed a light on different educational conundrums, and present thoughtful consideration of the different contexts and concepts under examination.

There are contemporary themes related to current issues in education, such as the conflict in Ukraine, learning from the COVID-19 pandemic and youth participation in policy making. There are also prevailing thorny issues that are investigated and discussed, such as teacher identity, digital practice and life-long learning. The contributions are a culmination of the educational paradoxes we experience every day, and through research and theoretical engagement, these paradoxes are illuminated with findings and ideas for future practice.

Socrates believed that in order to learn, we need to ask disciplined and thoughtful questions, testing tentative answers against reason and fact. In this edition, the authors do just that, they reflect on a broad range of topics that children, young people, students, teachers, lecturers and policy makers face day-to-day.

We hope you enjoy this edition and will learn something from these voices from the classroom that will inspire you, or create food for thought for your own practice.

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Andromachi Bouna Vaila & Alexandra Theodorou

Gender Identity and Stereotypes
The Role of Play in Kindergarten

The development and configuration of gender identity becomes an object of studies for the first time in the 20th century, when Social Sciences and human behaviour are increasingly catching the attention of scientific research. Researchers claim that gender stereotypes are being legitimized and reproduced through everyday examples of school life. Relevant research is carried out in the form of case study, in a kindergarten in North-Eastern Greece, with the main research question: How gender identities and stereotypes manifest in kindergarten? And what are the probable causes of children's perceptions around play? Methodology forecasted a flexible research plan that evolved during research and the primary research tools were journal recording and observation and later on, some criteria were added in the form of encoding tables with categorical questions. The sample contained 21 pre-schoolers coming mostly from middle class families and was randomly chosen. As it occurs from the results, the designated areas for activities inside the classroom reproduce the gender-typed character of the class. The allocation of the pedagogical material and consequently the setting of play, indicates that there is a dividing line which ranks men in the semantic field of the outside and the active and women in the household. Additionally, our study confirms findings of other studies that claim cognitive patterns, like stereotypes, become stronger as children get older, and usually align with the society's dominant biases.

Keywords: *gender identity, stereotypes, play, kindergarten, crossplaying*

Introduction

The primary questions that arose for the present study to take place were the following: What are pre-schoolers' perceptions of stereotypical play? Do gender stereotypes manifest in preschool age, and if so, how is that? What have may contributed to children's perceptions as of genders? To begin with, we believe we should make a reference to the theoretical framework of gender identities, as it is really interesting how this concept has developed through history. The configuration of gender identity was first studied in the early 20th century when the social sciences flourished, and the interest of scientific research focused on the study of human behaviour. The issues of gender identity are very complex and that is why a number of theories have been formulated from the beginning of the 20th century until today where every theory approaches the issue from a different perspective and as a result, a whole new context and meaning has been the word gender. The "gender" theory takes into account different factors, as depending on the time period and the prevailing socio-political conditions (Silva & Alves, 2020). The most modern approaches shift the focus from the biological and the cognitive-developmental to the psychosocial factor that contributes to the development of personality traits, the adoption of attitudes values while

addressing the established gender classifications and inequality (Bouna, 2019). On the one hand, the development and expression of the individual's gender is directly related to the formation of his personal identity and determines his course in social life (Bandura, 1999) and on the other hand is a process that is directly related and has its roots in the socialization of the individual and other factors, such as family, peer groups, teachers, and the media (Thanos & Bouna, 2015). Therefore, as indicated by relevant research, discrimination and the perpetuation of gender inequality are not expected to be completed both at the macro-level of social life and at the micro-level of the school (Psalti et al., 2007). Research also confirms that the effects of gender segregation are particularly prevalent among children and especially in situations of spontaneous play where children have the freedom to choose a teammate (Martin & Fabes, 2001). Through children's play at school, gender identities and the stereotypes they bring about are reproduced and normalized, leading to the reproduction of gender segregation (Thanos & Bouna, 2015; Epstein et al., 2001). In general, spontaneous behaviours and situations of increased freedom (e.g., formation of peer groups) reveal the cognitive patterns that children develop around what is considered "feminine", "masculine" and what is socially acceptable.

Gender theories

From the beginning of the 20th century until now, various approaches have been developed that take into account multiple factors and follow the trend of the social sciences in each time period. The model that initially prevailed was that of biological essentialism, which took for granted the alignment of the biological with the social sex (sex – gender) as scientists separated the two sexes and the qualities of masculinity and femininity based on the hormones of the human body (Risman, 2018). Biologically oriented theories are based on evolutionary psychology and present gender roles and behaviours as a result of inheriting reproductive and offspring strategies on the one hand and the "violent nature" of man on the other (Bussey & Bandura, 1999).

According to psycho-analytic theory, children, regardless of gender, in the first stage identify themselves with the mother (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). From the age of three to five, they begin to identify themselves with the same-sex parent, which leads to the adoption of similar characteristics. Subsequent modifications to the theory suggest that for girls, it helps to create a sense of self intertwined with care and reciprocity while boys seek to adopt characteristics that contrast with those presented by the mother in an attempt to separate themselves from her and in order to shape their personality. The modified theory as well as the original theory have not been proven empirically. Subsequent approaches began to demolish this one-dimensional approach to the physicalizing and biologicalisation of gender and proposed the view of gender as a dynamic process whose development is influenced by social, psychological and behavioural factors (Silva & Alves, 2020).

The cognitive-developmental theory of Kohlberg (1966) argues that the understanding of gender categories and the placement of oneself in one of these categories is of great importance for the development and shaping of the gender identity of the

individual (Martin et al., 2002). This placement occurs through three stages. Bem's Gender Theory (1981) argues that girls and boys are expected to acquire skills and adopt personality traits and self-perceptions related to female and male sex, respectively, as defined by the sociocultural environment. As part of this automated process, children learn to use information and connections they hold about gender to process and assimilate information (Bem, 1981). Similarly, social learning theory attributes the construction of gender identity and consequently to the adoption of gender behaviours in observation, imitation, reinforcement and practice (Bouna, 2019).

Approaches to the development of gender identity are gradually beginning to converge on the assumption that specific personality traits and specific behaviours are what contribute to gender identity and are based on and derived from social perceptions around men and women.

In her radical "theory of gender performativity", Butler (2006) rejects the dipole of masculinity and femininity as the predominant model for the configuration of gender identity as she perceives this categorization as a social construction and an arbitrary cultural contract. Moving on, she emphasizes the problematic of the dipole, declaring these contracts arise either considering only the visible characteristics of the human body or with a regulatory manner. As a result, many behaviours are being gender-typed and thus considered compatible exclusively with one gender (Bouna, 2019). Specifically, this dualistic approach, says Butler, imposes a regime of a self-fulfilling prophecy in which individuals expect and accept these two categorical subdivisions as an undoubted reality, when in fact, such classifications limitate and predefine the composition of their personal identity and their expression of their gender.

Another significant theory in the sociological approaches of gender identities was Pierre Bourdieu's "Masculine Domination" which focuses on the superiority of the male element over the female. Bourdieu declares that the oppressed also contribute to the symbolic violence they experience by subconsciously recording stereotypes and reproducing the classifications and hierarchy imposed by male domination. Individuals, Bourdieu explains, are "gender predisposed" since the beginning, regarding the characteristics and behaviours they are supposed to adopt, according to their biological sex, and then realize gender differences and segregation (Bouna, 2019).

Gender discrimination through play

Bem also refers to a "schematic selectivity" where certain characteristics are found in only one of the two sexes (Silva & Alves, 2020). Despite the fact that there is no longer any discussion of gender roles in Sociology, social expectations and gender stereotypes are inherent and evident through everyday examples. Risman (2018) argues, that although women no longer identify with the role of mother and wife as they once did, but nowadays claim positions that were once considered exclusively "male", it is possible, for example, a female judge that is being aggressive to disturb much more easily than the aggression of a male judge. This is because despite the demise of gender roles, there are elements of character and behaviours that have been identified with the female gender and others with the male. In a study that junior high school

students took part, it was quite interesting that the girls themselves were the ones who associated the most the female gender with the characteristics of care, discipline and diligence (Psalti et al., 2007).

As of kindergarten play specifically, children who have mastered the concept of gender for themselves and others (≥ 3 years) tend to choose teammates of the opposite sex more difficultly than children who haven't (Fagot et al., 1986). In elementary school the distinction between "girls'" and "boys'" games becomes clearer. According to Epstein's research in two London primary schools, which showed that not only boys' participation and success in football highlights their masculinity and status, but there is also an unwritten, informal rule that prohibits girls to get involved with football. Specifically, every time girls attempted to take part in boys' football game, the latter would repel them either by not giving them passes or by totally ignoring them and only play with each other. As a result, girls would no longer try to play with them or try to start their own game (Epstein et al., 2001).

Methodology

A case study was conducted in a public kindergarten in North-eastern Greece, in a one-month period. The sample consisted of eleven (11) boys (five younger pre-schoolers and six older pre-schoolers) and ten (10) girls (four younger pre-schoolers and six older pre-schoolers). The selection of the school and group of students to study was random. The families that children come from mostly belonged to middle class with a small percentage coming from the higher class of the local community. Most parents are in the military and some are private employees or freelancers owning small local businesses

During planning the research, our aim was to create a flexible research plan that would evolve and emerge during data collection. The social nature of our subject as well as the research difficulties that come along with very young ages both demanded finding ways to avoid ending on a self-fulfilling prophecy. That practically meant that we would observe anything at first and subsequently specify and update our research questions and record criteria. The research plan begins with an idea/problem that the researcher is trying to understand rather than a cause and consequence relationship the research questions arise primarily during the research (Robson, 1993). The initial idea/problem that the researcher poses is whether and how gender stereotypes manifest themselves among pre-schoolers. The research method used is semi-structured observation and included a developing encoding system. Certain repeated behaviours that were observed, led on observation categories and categorical questions. The categorical questions in the present study resulted from recordings of non-verbal behaviours (gestures, facial expressions), spatial behaviours, linguistic behaviours (expressing perceptions and beliefs) and hyper-linguistic behaviours (voice volume, interrupting interlocutors, etc.). The less structured approach we have chosen allows the observer freedom in terms of the type of information to record and how to record it, but he is then called upon to carry out the difficult part of synthesizing, abstracting and organizing data (Robson, 1993).

Specifically, the research plan included the journal recording by the researcher within three main axes: space, behaviours and play. On the first days, it was observed and recorded how and to what extent the kindergarten area is gendered: the classroom, the hall and the yard. At this point the first limitation of the research was detected: the school had decided for the classes not to take a break in the courtyard during this period due to bad weather conditions. Therefore, as far as the first axe is concerned, the observation focused on the space, its layout, the categorization of the corners and the distribution of the pedagogical material in them. This limited the forthcoming observation because play in the courtyard during recess is a moment of increased freedom and spontaneity for children, as the freedom provided by the courtyard gives the feeling of more flexible supervision by adults (Epstein et al., 2001).

In the following days the object of observation was the gender behaviours in the classroom: the degree to which they may exist and the manner in which they manifest. Initially, we did journal recording of everything that took place in the classroom during the daily program, and then we created an encoding system based on certain behaviours that were recorded and led us set certain criteria (table with categorical questions). These questions were used by the researcher on the following days and were related to whether or not and to what extent there were i) pushing, mocking from boys to girls and vice versa, ii) exclusion from games that are considered games of the opposite sex and iii) complaints/protests about mixed groups during organized activities or at lunchtime.

Later on, the observation focused on the gender behaviours and stereotypes that may manifest in children's play, whether it is free or organized, in the context of an activity guided by the kindergarten teacher. At this point the criteria were added regarding whether and to what extent there are complaints and protests during cross-playing (when individuals participate and engage in activities that are considered to be appropriate and suitable to the opposite sex), children's willingness to include opposite-sex classmates in play they organized themselves, any stereotypical views and discriminating perceptions expressed verbally, the girls' play in the building material and the boys' play in the dollhouse. Simultaneously, there were diary notes on boys' play that diverged the prevailing gender-related stereotypes.

Results

The area of the classroom is divided into the following corners: the "gathering" corner with rug and wooden benches, the book corner, the corner of the computer, the pastry shop, the corner with board games and puzzles, the painting corner, the dollhouse and the corner of the building material. The most popular among them appeared to be the building (or building) corner and the dollhouse, and the less popular are the library and the computer corner. The "gathering corner" is the reference point for the class' routines, the point where all the kids will gather at the beginning of the day and where the organized activities will start during the daily program.

Although during the day children would form almost exclusively same-sex peer groups, at the beginning of the day when not all the children have yet come, boys

would talk and interact with the girls with more confidence. At lunchtime they would also sit at same-sex groups. This would happen especially among the older boys, as the younger boys appear to be more flexible in forming groups that include girls (in food and play). There was an exception of the case of G.: a girl who sometimes would play with the boys and sit with them at lunch, while not going to the corner of the building material.

> At lunchtime, S. tells J. "I did not put G. in my group because she is a girl … and this is a boy group". This was followed by a discussion about colors by a group of children. The boy says "pink is girly, and I do not want it." "Blue is for the boys."

In an attempt to answer the questions-criteria we posed in the context of observing behaviours, it is found that there are no pushes or claiming space and material through pushing. Also, in general, no sex-based mockery was observed from boys to girls and vice versa with the exception of the case of J.:

> J. mocks H. who plays in the dollhouse saying in a derogatory way "he acts like a girl". Later that week, J. will talk about things girls can and cannot do, citing his parents as an example. "my dad drinks coke and smokes while my mom doesn't".

As for toys and other material with one of the two sexes according to prevailing stereotypes:

> D. referring to stickers he wants to exchange with his classmates, explains "these are not boyish, they are girlish". However, he does not seem to have a derogatory attitude, but he looks like he needs to distance himself from the "girlish". In another instance, where children are flipping through comic book with robot theme, one of three girls complains to the teacher that this is "boyish", and the teacher confirms that "indeed it's not for the girls". When questioned what they would ask Santa Claus for Christmas, the majority of children answered gender-stereotypical toys, girls' dolls, etc. and boys play mobile, etc. while only one girl asked for puzzles.

The corner of the building material (bricks, car tracks, etc.) is defined by the carpet, at the end of which starts the area of the dollhouse. For children, it only seems natural and self-evident that this is a "boys'" area. Most of the boys in class spend most of their free time there. On the other hand, the dollhouse (consisting of a kitchen, table and toys related to food and cooking, baby dolls, some disguises and a mattress as a bed) is an informal "girly" corner where the boys enter and perform a symbolic game with great comfort. There are with a few exceptions boys who are accustomed to playing mainly in the dollhouse and rarely in the building material. The children, through their daily life in the classroom, have set informal boundaries for these two corners, as to who "can" or "cannot" play in them. Most of the time at the beginning of the free play the children gather in the two corners, boys and girls respectively and it was strongly observed that many times the boys play their game while the girls stop their own game to watch diligently what the boys are doing.

The teacher asks, "Why don't you go play in the dollhouse?" S. answers "The dollhouse is a disgust for girls". S. is one of the boys who play almost constantly in the corner of the building material and specifically the symbolic game of "war". S. generally acts like he fights, attacks, clashes, kills or falls and his words are mainly about two things; his father, who is a soldier in the army and for the actions of the army. In the first days of the observation, to the question "Why don't you go play in the corner of the building material?", two girls answered, "We do not play there because it is the boys' corner" and continued "If we want, we can play, but we do not go". Once a girl was playing in the corner of the building material, but she didn't participate in the boys' game, rather she was sitting by herself playing with the Lego bricks.

For the computer corner, which generally does not belong to the primary preferences of children, the girls reported that

"We do not go to the corner of the computer because the boys usually go, explaining that many times they happen to want to go, but the corner is already occupied by a boy."

In the process, the observation focused on two groups of boys. The first group consists of two to five (as appropriate) specific boys, more often than J., S. and D., who play most of the free activities in the corner of the building material with their favourite symbolic "war game". These boys mainly showed rejection of any proposal made to change the game or go play somewhere else. In fact, they often extend their game outside the corner space of the building material, without respecting the game that was played in the other corners. The other group of boys includes H., M. and A., three younger pre-schoolers who show special interest in the dollhouse and almost every day play a symbolic game.

The three boys play a symbolic game in the dollhouse, which they call "baptism" and are disguised as A. priest, M. godfather and H. parent. They leave the dollhouse and walk around pretending to perform the ritual of "baptism". S. and D. say, "dolls are for girls". H. plays a symbolic game of cooking in the dollhouse. At that moment, three other boys, S., D. and J., enter the dollhouse and pretend to be ballerinas in a mocking way. H. tells me "the phone is ringing". "Won't you pick up?" I ask him. And he answers "no, I'm the dad". When H. (who generally likes the symbolic game with cooking, baby care, disguise) is with S. (the boy who constantly plays the symbolic "war game") then he only expresses his hyperactivity and enters the "war game". Later on, together with M., they play again in the dollhouse and pretend to be hosts who host a visitor, take care of her and cook for her.

Discussion

The informal process through which the gender character is determined and the separation of these two corners, the dollhouse and the building material, is established, strongly responds to the stereotypes around the behaviours and habits of the sexes. The way in which the pedagogical material is divided and consequently the game is formed, points to the observation that in many societies there is a dividing line that classifies

men in the semantic field of the outside and the foreign and women in the inside and the familiar (Beopoulou, 1992). We would say that the corner of the building material represents the energy, the drive, the "work", while the dollhouse represents the habits and chores that concern life at home. It is very likely that media also contribute to the perception of this classification of play. For example, in children's toys commercials the most common, if not exclusive, image is that of boys in dominant, active roles while girls in roles associated with home and family (Browne, 1998).

The choices and actions of the observed children are greatly influenced by the parents and the family in shaping the perception from a very young age of what is considered socially acceptable, common and appropriate for them (see J.'s view of what girls do or not do or S.' behaviours in the game), as depending on their gender they are encouraged to be active in a specific way and in different places (Bouna, 2019). It is indeed quite interesting that the parents' point of view is very important to the choices that children will make as for toys. In Freeman's (2007) study, children responded that their parents would not like them engaging in specific, cross-gender toys, even when parents for the same toys responded that they would not mind if their children would play with them, rendering them as gender-neutral or toys for both sexes.

Boys' activity with the computer seems to be different from girls', boys play more while girls do not show much interest in claiming time in the computer corner. Relevant research has shown that boys in general seem to be more familiar with technology, most likely due to their involvement with electronic games outside school, which gives new forms to gender-based social discrimination (Thanos & Bouna, 2015). In addition, there is an obvious difference in the attitude of boys towards girls, at times when not all children have arrived and therefore the usual homosexual groups have not been formed. This probably has its roots in the influence exerted by peers, and in particular those who are taken as "significant others" on the behaviour of the individual. In the case of H., when he meets S., he is involved in stereotypical play while alone or with other children he usually prefers to play in the dollhouse.

According to research, the formation of same-sex groups, has a major influence on children's behaviour, since over time, socializing and playing exclusively with same sex peers significantly increases stereotypical behaviours associated with one's sex (Maccoby, 2002). The difference observed in the flexibility shown by 4-year-old in comparison with the 5-year-old in the formation of groups based on gender, is connected with the fact that from the age of 4 the kids gradually start to choose groups and teammates of the same sex and this tendency increases in the following years of preschool and school age (Martin & Fabes, 2001). Same-sex groups that comprise boys have conflict, destruction and enforcement as primary elements of their symbolic play (Maccoby, 2002) which explains the obsession with the game of "war" by this group of boys. In addition, says Maccoby, boys tend to exclude girls from their play much more often than girls would exclude boys. The difference between the younger and the older pre-schoolers is even more evident in the choices and content of play, but we cannot decide whether this is related to their developmental level or to the personal preferences and temperament of the children.

The extension of the boys 'play outside the boundaries of the corner confirms claims that the boys' unconscious dominant sense of space is being expressed by the

intrusion of the space of the other groups (Thanos & Bouna, 2015). In the case of J. referring to the female sex with a derogatory attitude towards H., Giannakopoulos (2003) points out that very often the attribution of the feminine to others and their stigmatization as "feminine" is considered in some cases to work as an effective means of attacking and subduing them. The repetitive symbolic play of H., M., and A. in the dollhouse contradicts Freeman's assertion that girls are more likely to do things that were once considered "masculine" because of the now-expanded notion of femininity. Freeman supports this view by explaining that boys who play with "girl" toys are more likely to receive criticism and disapproval from parents and teachers than girls who choose to play with "boy" toys.

The kindergarten teacher in this case does not trigger the children to get involved in cross-playing, on the contrary she discourages S. and I. from playing in the dollhouse with the excuse that they "will destroy" the material and in other occasions she makes stereotypical comments about boys' and girls' books, toys, objects, etc. The teacher's behaviour is crucial to the configuration of the classroom's climate and the composition of the groups that are formed, as it may reinforce gender inequality and the gap between sexes, since teachers often jump to conclusions about students based on their gender and end up representing stereotypes, usually without realizing it (Aksu, 2005).

Conclusions

To sum up, we can conclude that preschool age is a vital period for children to gradually realize gender roles, to negotiate stereotypes related to play and subconsciously express their gender. Specifically, we came to the following conclusions: A) The space of the kindergarten classroom is often separated by gender and the way the educational material is designed reflects the dominant gender stereotypes. B) Children tend to form perceptions of gender do's and don'ts based on the behaviour and opinion of parents and sometimes teachers. C) As Thanos & Bouna (2015) also found on their research, gender segregation at school is also established in new forms: in our case, boys' familisation with technology establishes a regime of dominance over the corner of the computer. D) Boys extending their play out of their corner's space and violating the play of children in other corners of the classroom has become a normal and expected behaviour and E) Older pre-schoolers tend to form same-sex groups as it appears they have mastered the perceptions and expected behaviours about the sexes on a higher degree. Last but not least, students, especially boys, shape their behaviour towards the other sex depending on who is present.

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Maria Boutzarelou

Instructional Scaffolding in Kindergarten through the Use of Other-Initiations of Repair

The aim of this paper is to present and analyse the practices of other-initiation of repair which are used by kindergarten teachers to support their students' understanding and learning. Previous research on repair practices in educational settings has shown that teachers tend to use other-initiation of repair after students' wrong or inadequate responses to locate and specify the problem in their answers as well as to give appropriate guidance for its resolution. It has also been noted that practices of other-initiation of repair appear in the third slot of the triadic sequence Initiation-Response-Feedback, where teachers comment on students' answers and they are recycled until expected answers are given by the learners. However, the design of other-initiations of repair and the actions accomplished through their use in kindergarten classrooms have not been adequately described. Therefore, the present paper offers a detailed analysis of the formats and functions of other-initiated practices of repair and supports the view that they guide students towards the solution of problems providing them with the appropriate cognitive support or 'scaffolding'. Teachers are witnessed to design turns of other-initiation of repair which consist of more than one turn constructional units (TCUs) of varied formats. These provide learners with multiple verbal and non-verbal clues of increasing strength which offer them support adapted to their needs and background knowledge as well as to the nature of the problem and the objective(s) of the pedagogic tasks. In general, in the present paper it is demonstrated that learners are gradually guided towards self-repair, the discovery and provision of their own solutions to problems which in turn contributes to the progress and completion of the pedagogic tasks. To achieve this end, the researcher has employed the methodology of Conversation Analysis which uses recordings of natural talk to study the practices interlocutors use to perform actions through talk. Her data consists of approximately 18 hours of recorded interactions in public kindergarten schools in Greece and draws on a larger corpus of data she has been working on for her PhD thesis.

Keywords: *Conversation analysis, other-initiation of repair, scaffolding, self-repair*

1 Introduction

Previous research has shown that teachers in primary as well as in secondary education use triadic dialogue to help their learners participate and contribute to the successful completion of pedagogic tasks (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; McHoul, 1978; Mehan, 1979; Nassaji, & Wells, 2000; Waring, 2008). They tend to open turn sequences using questions or directives which are followed by learners' answers or responsive actions and they close these sequences providing feedback on learners' responses (Initiation-Response-Feedback sequences/IRF). When learners' responses are judged to be inappropriate or 'wrong' teachers tend to initiate repair sequences

that locate the trouble in the previous turn and ask for learners' solutions to the problem. Kindergarten teachers design and produce other-initiations of repair not only to raise learners' awareness of the trouble source in their talk but also to offer them the appropriate guidance and support to repair it themselves.

However, systematic research on the varied forms and functions of teachers' guidance during organised oral activities at kindergarten school is still limited. Therefore, the purpose of the present paper is to present and analyse the formats and functions of other-initiations of repair used by kindergarten teachers during oral activities in 'the circle' ('circle time' refers to the daily curricular event of gathering together around the teacher in circular configuration to carry out joint oral activities like 'doing the calendar' or story-telling) and demonstrate how these are used to support and guide learners towards self-repair and provision of their own answers to problems.

1.1 Organisation of repair in classroom contexts

Systematic research in the organisation of repair in educational settings is limited (Mazeland, 1987; McHoul, 1990; Macbeth, 2004; Seedhouse, 2004; Käntä, 2010). Mazeland (1987) noticed that teachers in German classes of primary school use the same repair practices as interlocutors in daily life and that they tend to adjust them to the pedagogic purpose and activities in the classroom setting. He also showed that the preferred action in the classroom is self-repair and that teachers tend to locate the trouble source in their learners' answers and expect them to repair it themselves. When self-repair is not possible, teachers tend to guide their students towards the resolution of the problem by analysing its cause or by providing learners with clues that indicate its solution.

Furthermore, McHoul (1990) described the organisation of repair in Australian classes of junior high school and noted that in teacher-centred classes the prevalent repair practice is other-initiated self-repair. That is, teachers initiate repair and students provide the repair solution. McHoul also referred to the fact that classroom talk in teacher-centred classes is organised in three-part sequences (Initiation-Response-Feedback/IRF sequences) which offer teachers the opportunity to initiate repair in the third slot of the sequence where evaluation of students' answers is given. He observed that learners' self-repair usually appears in the turn after the location of the problem and is usually followed by positive evaluation and the transition to the next step of the activity.

Also, Macbeth (2004) referred to 'repair' as well as to 'correction' in the classroom context. He stated that repair aims at the maintenance or restoration of intersubjectivity in communication whereas correction aims at the replacement of wrong answers with the right ones. He also supported the view that both repair and correction constitute two types of repair organisation that cooperate and may coexist in the same sequence. When this is the case, problems of understanding tend to be repaired before error correction (Macbeth, 2004, p. 728–729).

Lastly, Seedhouse (2007) and Käntä (2010) studied the organisation of repair in EFL language classrooms and argued that in educational settings what seems to

determine the definition of the repairable and how to correct it, is the learning and pedagogical goal which should always be considered by the analyst.

However, apart from this research, there has not been systematic description and analysis of the formats and functions of other-initiations of repair carried out in classroom settings and more specifically in kindergarten classrooms. Therefore, in the next section of this paper there will be a comprehensive description and analysis of the practices of other-initiation of repair that kindergarten teachers use to guide their learners towards self-repair during 'circle time'.

2 Methodology

The analytical approach adopted in this paper is Conversation Analysis (CA). The aim of this approach is the identification and detailed description of practices which interlocutors systematically use to understand and carry out verbal and non-verbal actions during conversations (Sidnell & Stivers, 2013).

Conversation analysis is an emic approach to qualitative research in the sense that conversations which are situated in specific settings, are studied and analysed through the eyes of the participants in the conversation without starting from predetermined assumptions or pre-existing theories (Kasper, 2006; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008). In the present study, the data under examination comes from recordings of talk between learners and teachers in Greek kindergarten classrooms. The recordings were made with the use of two digital recorders, and the transcription conventions used, are adaptations of the Jeffersonian notation system (Jefferson, 2004) which is selectively presented in the chart below.

Transcription Conventions

Symbols	Explanation
[	Left bracket: start of overlapping talk
]	Right bracket: end of overlapping talk
(2.0)	Duration of pause in seconds
(.)	Micropause. Pause less than half a second (0.5)
:	Prolonged sound
-	Cut-off
?	Strongly rising intonation
¿	A pitch rise weaker than a question mark
→	Change of speaker
°	Low sound
( )	Incomprehensible talk
(( ))	Description of gestures, moves, expressions

3 Data analysis

In the following extract we can see that Marina is asked to choose the right tag of the season to complete the calendar on the board. The teacher also asks Marina to read the name of the season which is written on the tag.

1]   "**The seasons**" T=Teacher
1. T   Ti epohi ehoume Marina gia pes
2.   ti mou kiolas.
3.   **What is the season Marina?**
4.   **name it as well.**
5. Marina   3.0) Pempti
6.   **Thursday**
7.→T 1st   **Pempti ine mera,**
8.   **Thursday is a day**
9. **2nd**   ti epochi ehoume,
10.   **What is the season**,
11. **3rd**   ehoume Fthinoporo, Chimona,
12.   **is it Autumn, Winter,**
13.   Anixi, i kalokeri¿
14.   **Spring or Summer¿**
15. Marina Kalokeri.
16.   **Summer.**
17. T   °Orea tha'tan ala °
18.   °**It would be fine but°**
19. → 1st   Ehoume kalokeri?
20.   **is it summer?**
21. Pedia   Ochi
22. Children **No**
      ((Some lines are omitted))
23.→T 2nd E, Mαrina¿(.)ti echoume gia pes mou,
24.   gia kita afto edo to dentraki.
25.   Hey**, Marina¿(.)What is the season? Tell me,**
26.   **look at this small tree.**
27.   Ti vlepis s'afto to dentraki¿
      ((She points at the poster she had made with the children))
28.   **What can you see in this tree?**
29.   Ehi fila?
30.   **Does it have any leaves?**
      ((Some lines are omitted))
50.   →T 1st E?(.)Ti ehoume lipon
51.   fthinoporo,chimona,anixi i kalokeri? (1.0)
52. **Eh?(.) What is it then, Autumn (1.0)**
53. **Winter,Spring or Summer?**
(2.0)

54.→T 2ⁿᵈ Chi-
55.   **↑Win-**
56. Marina mona
57.   **ter**
58. T   Chimona.Orea.
59.   **Winter. Fine**.

In turn 5, Marina gives the wrong answer which is 'Thursday'. In the next turn (line 7) the teacher initiates repair forming a turn which consists of three constructional units (TCUs). The first TCU (line 7) is a declarative statement that locates and defines the problem. Thursday is the name of a day and not the name of a season. The second TCU (line 9) is a category-specific interrogative that starts with the interrogative word "what" (Kitzinger, 2013; Kendrick, 2014). It specifies the problem and asks for its solution: 'What is the season?'. The third TCU (lines 11–13) consists of a question that offers candidate answers making it even easier for the child to say the name of the right season (winter). However, in line 15 Marina completes a self-repair and chooses the name of a season but her choice constitutes a new trouble source. The season written on the tag is not summer. Therefore, after the teacher's self-talk (line 17) a new initiation of repair follows which consists of nine TCUs of varied formats. The first TCU is a reverse polarity question (line 19) that makes relevant a negative answer which aligns with its negative supposition. The negative answer 'no' is given by the other learners in the circle, so the teacher uses the interjection 'hey' and the name of the child to attract her attention and separate her from the other children in the circle (line 23). The teacher also summons her as way to prompt her to give the appropriate answer to the question (Schegloff, 1968).

After the micropause, the teacher uses another category-specific interrogative that asks for the name of the season, and this is followed by the fourth TCU which is an imperative directive that prompts the child to answer (line 23). In line 24, the teacher uses another imperative directive that guides the child towards the repair solution by offering her extralinguistic clues that point to the correct answer 'look at this small tree'. In line 27, she uses another category-specific interrogative which contains extralinguistic clues that direct the child's attention to the poster of the tree that represents winter· 'What can you see in this tree?'. The teacher also uses a polar question that invites a 'yes' or 'no' answer and specifies the previous question· 'does it have any leaves?' (line 29).

In line 50, the teacher uses the interjection 'eh?' to ask for an answer which is not given. So, she uses the same question she had asked in lines 9–13, which offers candidate answers for the child to choose the appropriate one. However, Marina does not carry out self-repair and she remains silent for two seconds. Consequently, the teacher initiates repair since she treats Marina's silence as the new trouble source. She forms an incomplete turn (line 54) to be completed by the child making it even easier for her to say the right answer. Indeed, Marina self-repairs and completes the turn successfully (line 56) saying the name of the season which is 'winter'. The teacher confirms Marina's answer in the next turn repeating the name of the season and closes the repair sequence using positive evaluation with the particle 'fine'.

4 Findings

During the activity described in the extract above, Marina is asked to demonstrate her knowledge and understanding of the abstract concept of time (in this case the concept of seasons) and provide its linguistic representation (in this case, the name used to describe the season). However, Marina finds it hard to comprehend the meaning of time and she shows her confusion using the wrong time expression. Following that, the teacher tries to help the child understand the nature of the problem and find the answer by offering her the appropriate cognitive support through the recycling of other-initiations of repair of varied formats.

4.1 Formats and functions of other-initiations of repair

In the present data the teacher is witnessed to locate and define the problem for the learner to solve through a declarative statement (line 7). Through its use the teacher can specify the problem and explain its nature. In more detail, the declarative statement in this context functions as an indirect directive which gradually guides the learner towards the remedy of the problem.

Another format of other-initiation of repair located in the data is that of interrogative statements. These are not 'real' questions that is, requests for information that the teacher does not possess but they constitute 'test questions' (Searle, 1969) and requests for a demonstration of knowledge. In the present data they initiate a repair sequence and make relevant a second pair-part which answers the question and repairs the problem. They draw learners' attention to the problem and open a slot for them to offer their own answers. These are questions of many types such as category-specific interrogatives with the question word at the beginning (Kitzinger, 2013) (lines 1, 9, 25, 27), reverse polarity questions (Koshik, 2002) that function as negative suppositions and invite a negative answer (line 19), polar questions that ask for a 'yes' or 'no' answer (line 29), incomplete TCUs with rising intonation that urge learners to complete them (line 54) (Lerner, 1995) and questions that offer candidate answers (Kendrick, 2014) (lines 11, 50). Answers to these questions are known to the teachers and they are organized in such a way as to check and promote learners' grasp and understanding of the lesson's content on which new knowledge will be constructed. They also provide learners with multiple linguistic, paralinguistic (prosodic) and extralinguistic clues that guide them towards the preferred answer and the solution of the problem.

Additionally, teachers use imperative directives which prompt learners to modify their response and provide the appropriate answers themselves (line 23) (Kent & Kendrick, 2016). They are also used to give learners instructions as to what they should do to find the answer to the problem (line 24).

Lastly, teachers use discourse markers to initiate repair. For example, they tend to use address terms (e.g., learners' first name) to attract and maintain learners' attention and at the same time they function as implicit requests for students' response (line 23).

4.2 Instructional scaffolding and other-initiations of repair

According to Bruner (1978) scaffolding refers to the cognitive support an adult offers through dialogue so that the child can understand and complete a difficult task. In educational settings, when the learner is not able to manage the task alone the teacher intervenes in a sensitive and supportive way to guide them through the activity. However, as Mercer (1995) argues, the essential quality of scaffolding is that the degree of guidance and support it offers, increases or decreases according to the learners' competence. This means that scaffolding represents a changing process and requires teachers to be constantly aware of and responsive to their learners' needs and capabilities throughout the learning process. This helps them to offer the appropriate kind and quality of support and guidance to them.

In the data of the present paper, it becomes clear that the teacher's repair practices are designed to offer the appropriate guidance to the child that helps her participate in the pedagogic task, find the right answers to the teacher's questions, demonstrate her knowledge though self-repair and contribute to the progress of the calendar activity.

More specifically, after the child's wrong answers the teacher starts offering the child support of increasing strength in the same turn. The more support she offers the less cognitive load is imposed on the child and the easier it becomes for her to find and give the right answer. The teacher first locates and explains the type of the trouble source, then she uses a category specific interrogative specifying the time concept she is asking for (season) and after this, she asks a question with candidate answers which offers even more clues to the child to help her find the appropriate solution herself.

When the child's self-repair becomes the new trouble source – it fails to offer the preferred lesson-relevant term – the teacher initiates a new repair sequence offering more guidance towards the correct answer. Once more, the teacher designs her turn in such a way as to provide guidance of increasing strength and multiple clues of varied types that help the learner find the answer she is seeking. In line 19, she marks the learner's answer as problematic using a reverse polarity question which encourages Marina to self-repair and reformulate her answer. Then, she prompts Marina to answer and forms a more concrete question specifying more the type of answer she seeks (line 23). In line 24, she guides the child to use evidence from the classroom setting to find the answer and in line 27, she uses another question which gives more clues as to what the child should pay attention to in order to find the answer.

Lastly, in lines 50–51, she recycles the question she had used in lines 10–14 which offers candidate solutions to the problem. However, Marina fails to self-repair and give the appropriate answer and she remains silent. Therefore, in line 54, the teacher forms a separate turn and uses an even stronger initiation of repair which gives more obvious clues to the child to find the preferred answer. She produces an incomplete TCU giving the first half of the term so that the second half can be projected and completed by the child herself. Indeed, in line 56, Marina self-repairs and completes the name of the season the teacher had in mind, that is 'winter'.

5 Conclusion

In this paper the practices kindergarten teachers use to lead their learners to the discovery of their own solutions to problems are described and justified. The examination of interactional details brings into view how instructional scaffolding is realized in Greek kindergarten classrooms and how other-initiated repair practices contribute to this. In the data presented in this paper, the teacher seems to be oriented to teaching learners not only the content of the lesson but also the ways in which they can find the solutions to problems themselves. The teacher avoids giving the preferred answers herself and she recycles new initiations of repair until the child self-repairs and offers the answer herself. The repair practices are not only used to locate and specify the nature of the trouble source, but they are also used as the vehicle for instruction. Through their use, the teacher provides learners with the appropriate cognitive support of increasing strength which leads them to the resolution of problems, to the progress of the activity and the achievement of the pedagogic goal.

6 Limitations of the study

An important limitation of the present study is the recording time limit imposed by the Institute of Educational Policy in Greece (IEP). The recording time of the sessions was not allowed to exceed the time span of two teaching hours (90′) in each kindergarten school. Therefore, it was not permitted to record the conversations between teachers and learners during the whole day. This fact hindered researcher's and teachers' communication and cooperation and made the gathering of information on the selection and design of the learning activities difficult.

Also, another limitation of the research is the absence of video recordings. Although the video recording of the sessions was approved by IEP, children's parents and guardians refused to give their consent. However, since everything (e.g., prosody, facial expressions, gestures, body posture etc.) in conversation contributes to the comprehension and production of meaning it should be made clear that it is important for the researcher to have access to video recordings of teachers' and learners' verbal and embodied actions during sessions. Because in this way, he/she can describe in more detail and understand better the ways in which talk as well as bodily conduct inform the coordination and production of social actions and activities in kindergarten school.

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Aimilia Rouvali & Vassiliki Riga

Listening to Young Children's Voices in Education
An Effective Way of Enhancing Active Participation and Emotional Well-being

The current research investigates how pupils' voices can be heard and celebrated in the context of preschool education as a means of enhancing active participation in the decision-making process and educational design. More specifically, 21 neurotypically developing children and one child diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) were given the opportunity to express their needs, wishes, and experiences from their everyday life in Greek preschool education using a variety of fun, engaging and flexible tools. The tools used by the neurotypically developing children were cameras, tours, mapping, interviews with the researcher, and peer-to-peer interviews. An adapted version of the tools (camera and interview) was utilised to accommodate the needs of the preverbal pupil with ASC, in addition to observation and intensive interaction sessions. This variety of tools allowed data triangulation, creating a clearer image of the young children's lives and perspectives. The results showed that all pupils clearly understood their desires (favourite places, people, and activities) and could express them in a meaningful way when given the opportunity and the appropriate tools. Finally, emerging data from all parties indicated that young children tend to exhibit higher self-esteem and confidence when their voices are heard and considered in environmental and educational planning. Further investigation of the latter may be used to explore whether listening to young children's voices could be incorporated into the everyday routine to improve social and emotional learning and development.

Keywords: *listening, pupil's voice, preschool, active participation, educational design, emotional well-being*

Introduction

Nowadays, thanks to the adoption of the Convention on children's rights (United Nations, 1989) and the continuous development of theories around childhood, children are finally perceived as capable individuals and co-researchers (Rouvali & Riga, 2019). Thus, their place in the research and decision-making process is at last validated and celebrated (Clark, 2007; Clark & Nordtømme, 2018; Gillies & Robinson, 2012; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2019). A significant number of researchers have devoted their work to the development of innovative and exciting participatory tools and methods (Alderson & Morrow, 2004; Clark & Moss, 2001; Morrow, 2008), with art-based activities enriching and, in some cases, even wholly superseding the more "traditional" tools. In Portugal, the Childhood Association has developed the Pedagogy-in-Participation approach whose aim is the active involvement of children in the experience and the construction of learning in a natural and interactive way (Oliveira-Formosinho & Formosinho, 2012; 2016), inviting educators to incorporate

this new pedagogy into their continuous professional development (de Sousa, 2019). In United Kindom, carefully designed fabric dolls named the "Persona Dolls" (https://personadoll.uk) have been utilised to "encourage inclusion and participation as well as the celebration of diversity" (Wilkinson & Wilkinson, 2022, p. 375) among children two to seven years of age. A significant number of scholars have grounded their research on a variety of visual methods that extend beyond the expected drawing, photography, and videography, creating space for technology and/or media-based materials such as symbols, icons, logos, and even emoji (Fane et al., 2018) (a type of symbols used mainly in social media and mobile communication to convey meaning and concepts (Kralj Novak et al., 2015)).

However, there is still a gap between daily educational practice and the evolution of the academic world (Rouvali & Riga, 2019). According to Yoon and Templeton (2019) issues around time constraints, rigid curricula, and adults' expectations restrict children's participation and contribution. This is evident on both Greek and international level with the existing educational policies and practices emphasising "the external (testing, standardisation, accreditation, etc.) and not authentic elements of the worlds of children, teachers, and parents" (de Sousa et al., 2019, p. 299).

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who have traditionally been researched by proxy and perceived as not valuable research participants, tend to have even lower listening rates (Eisen et al., 2019; Holt, 2004; Ibrahim et al., 2022). Consequently, their voices remain unheard (Curran & Runswick-Cole, 2013; Mallett & Runswick-Cole, 2014), and their day-to-day experiences unacknowledged (Dimitrellou & Male, 2020; Shakespeare, 2015; Stalker, 2012). However, participatory research in the field has shown that children with SEND can be plausible co-researchers when approached suitably (researching with rather than researching on) (Abbott, 2013; Mallett & Runswick-Cole, 2014; Shakespeare, 2015; Staffrod, 2017). For Sewell and her colleagues (2022) listening and active participation should apply to all children and should include time investment, the creation of a safe space and active listening skills on behalf of the adults. Unfortunately, this is not common among children with SEND "whose cultural knowledge has been relegated to the peripheries of knowledge construction" (Sewell et al., 2022, p. 83).

Children's exclusion rates and obstacles to inclusion in active participation and decision-making process differ widely between neurotypically developing children and their peers with SEND, especially children with Autism (Zilli et al., 2020). A systematic review around the rates of active participation of children with Autism in the educational decision-making process pinpointed that most of the existing research consists mainly of large-scale survey data and/or a focus on formal processes and not their everyday life and experiences in education (Zilli, 2018). The lack of relevant training, resources, and time, as well as the increasing teachers' workload, have been pinpointed as barriers to the former (Howe & Covell 2007; Rudduck & McIntyre, 2007). However, for the latter, the significantly low listening rates originate "in established assumptions about their ability not only to express but also to have meaningful and valuable thoughts, ideas, and feelings, as well as in a very restrictive and limiting perception of the term 'voice'" (Rouvali & Riga, 2020, p. 465). Every child's "voice" is a means of communicating needs, feelings, and thoughts and pro-

viding meaning to every aspect of their lives (acts, ideas, objects). This perception of "voice" goes well beyond the limited written and oral communication constructs, the main communication channels used in education (Morris, 2003). Children with SEND (especially those experiencing multiple disabilities) have a great variety of ways to express themselves, from body language, facial expressions, and eye contact to communication aids or even silence (McPherson & Thorne, 2000).

The current study contributes to the growing research on young children's active participation and listening regardless of labels (typically developing children or children with SEND). The study presented is based upon the Mosaic Approach framework (Clark & Moss, 2001) as it has been reintroduced by Clark in 2019, the social model of disability, and the educational philosophy within the Reggio Emilia schools (Rinaldi, 2005). In place of presenting yet another project created by researchers for researchers, we aim to offer and propose a framework that empowers the teachers "to become the researchers of their class in a flexible, adaptable, and fun way that respects and celebrates children's rights and strengths" (Rouvali & Riga, 2019, p. 999).

The study

This article briefly outlines a research study on listening to young children's voices in education to enhance their involvement and well-being. Acknowledging the significant age range among the participant and its possible impact on their communication skills, a variety of verbal and non-verbal tools was utilised. More specifically, the purpose of the study was twofold. Initially, to investigate young children's needs, desires, and thoughts about their preschool. Furthermore, to utilise their views and wishes in the educational design.

The research questions included:
(1)   What do children like to do when they are in preschool?
(2)   Which is their favourite space in the preschool?
(3)   What is most important for them in preschool?

Materials and methods

The participants

Twenty-two children attending a randomly selected mainstream preschool participated in the study alongside their parents (one for each child) and teachers (six). Their age ranged from 26 months old to six and a half years old. Among the 22 participants, there was a young girl (in the context of this study, we will refer to her as "Mary".) diagnosed with ASC reattending reception class with 1:1 support from a specialist teacher. Mary was diagnosed with ASC at two-and-a-half years of age and presented significant difficulties in her communication and interaction with others, especially regarding new, unfamiliar faces. Her expressive language was limited to echolalia and

Table 1. The research tools

	Tools	Typically developing children	Mary
Non-verbal tools	Observations	x	x
	Digital cameras	x	x
	Map creation	x	
	Painting	x	
	Intensive interaction		x
	Close-ended questionnaire		x
	Sorting activity (with photos)		x
	Sorting activity (with symbols)		x
Verbal tools	Guided tours	x	
	Adult-led interviews	x	
	Child-led interviews	x	
	Questionnaires (parent)	x	x
	Questionnaires (teacher)	x	x

learned phrases, while her receptive one was better, working at a two-keyword level. She was comfortable using symbols to convey needs and wishes, and she benefited greatly from social stories.

The tools

The research methodology included a variety of verbal and non-verbal tools combined in different ways to accommodate the needs of all pupils (Table 1).

Neurotypically developing children

1. Observations
Observations constitute a prevalent data collection method in the early years and disability studies. They allow the researcher to gain insights that would be impossible to obtain otherwise (Bell, 2005; Rouvali & Riga, 2019). In the current research, detailed, non-structured observations were an additional tool to interpret data collected with the rest of the tools (Rouvali & Riga, 2019). In Mary's case study, the information from the observations was incorporated into her adapted version of the tools (a close-ended questionnaire and a sorting "I like / I do not like" activity).

2. Digital cameras

Child-centered research often utilises visual methods as they are perceived as a natural and motivational means of involving children in the process (Fane et al., 2018; Velasco et al., 2014). Visual data collection methods are equally popular in disability studies (Boxall & Ralph, 2009; Eisen et al., 2019). When using cameras with appropriate modifications, children with SEND may be involved more effectively, express themselves more clearly, and "develop new skills, confidence, and experience inclusiveness in their own terms" (Povee et al., 2014, p. 893). In the current study, all young participants (individually or in pairs moved freely around the setting and used the cameras to photograph people, objects, and places significant to them (Figure 1) as a way of illustrating their perception of their surroundings (Clark & Moss, 2001).

Figure 1. The playground (taken by Elias, four years old)

3. Maps of the school

The photos taken during the previous stage were later used to create the map of the school (Figure 2). The maps were another visual way for the young participants to illustrate their unique view of the preschool setting. A discussion was also held along with the picture selection and activity to understand better how each child perceived and experienced the setting. Each child was allowed to personalise the map, with most children choosing to draw on or annotate them. Due to the abstract nature of the maps, this tool was not included in Mary's case study. Her pictures were used in a close-ended questionnaire and a sorting activity.

4. Guided tours

During the following stage, children toured the researcher in various areas of the setting individually or in groups. For Chambers (1997), a guided tour offers children

Figure 2. Panagiotis (five years old) during the map creation

opportunities to observe, ask questions, listen, speak up, and learn about their surroundings. For Clark (2005), it also activates their bodies and motion.

5. Adult-led interviews

This study used open-ended questions in interviews formed as small group adult-led discussions. Examples of the questions included but were not limited to: Why do you come to school? What do you like the most doing at school? What do you not like doing at school? Is there anything that you find hard at school?

6. Peer-to-peer interviews

A significant number of participants exhibited an interest in the role of researcher-interviewer, resulting in creating a new tool. The interview was repeated to empower children's voices further and emphasise their ability to be their own advocates in matters that affect their lives. To successfully include this new tool, all young participants participated in role-playing, where they practiced the research questions and discussed how to lead an interview with the researcher. After completing the role play, one child was randomly chosen to undertake the role. To facilitate the data analysis, all interviews were recorded and analysed using qualitative analysis of the videos.

7. Parents' questionnaires

One parent for each child-participants was invited to participate by completing a questionnaire. Parents were asked questions similar to those children were asked during the interviews. This similarity allowed a comparison between all the answers highlighting similarities and contradictions.

8. Teachers' questionnaires

Teachers working with the participants were also involved in the data collection process through questionnaires like those of parents. For the study of parents' and teachers' questionnaires, the method of summative content analysis was utilised to identify the common themes that may emerge from the responses and the frequency of their appearance (Hseih & Shannon, 2005; McKenna et al., 2017).

Mary's case study

Aiming to acknowledge and celebrate Mary's unique strengths and abilities, an adapted version of the tools was used in her case study. More specifically, except for the observations and digital cameras, Mary participated in additional tools specifically designed to accommodate her needs and her preferred methods of communication.

1. Intensive interaction

Intensive interaction sessions were one of the tools that were included in the adapted version of the study as it mimics a caregiver's natural interaction with an infant by using interpersonal interaction principles based on intersubjectivity (Rouvali & Riga, 2020). Its purpose is to "support and develop the pre-verbal communication and sociability of people with profound learning disabilities and severe Autism" (Firth, 2006, p. 54). Grounded upon non-verbal communication, physical contact, waiting and timing, behavioural mirroring, and contingent responding, it emphasises each interaction's process rather than its outcome (Argyropoulou & Papoudi, 2012; Firth, 2006). In this study, the intensive interaction sessions allowed Mary to familiarise herself with the researcher and the researcher to obtain information that may not have emerged through any of the other tools.

2. "I like / I don't like" activities

For Mary, the next part of the data collection process (after the observations, intensive interaction sessions, and the digital cameras) was divided into two parts. Initially, she was provided with the photos she had taken alongside a few extras that depicted objects, places, and people that Mary did not photograph. We intended to ensure that Mary understood the purpose of the cameras and she did not photograph things randomly. Alongside the pictures, she was provided with an A3 piece of paper divided into two sections: "I like / I don't like" supported by symbols (Figure 3). She was encouraged to sort the pictures appropriately to indicate her preferences. In the second part, Mary repeated the activity, only this time, the photos were replaced by symbols that depicted the same objects and themes in her photographs (Figure 4). We utilised Mary's confidence in using symbols to compare the results and find possible contradictions or similarities.

Figure 3. The sorting activity (with pictures)

Figure 4. The sorting activity with symbols

3. Close-ended questionnaire

The last tool used by Mary was a closed-ended questionnaire supported by symbols to facilitate her understanding (Figure 5). The questions included were similar to those used during the interview process of her neurotypically developing peers and questions that arose during the earlier stages of the data collection.

Figure 5. The close-ended questionnaire
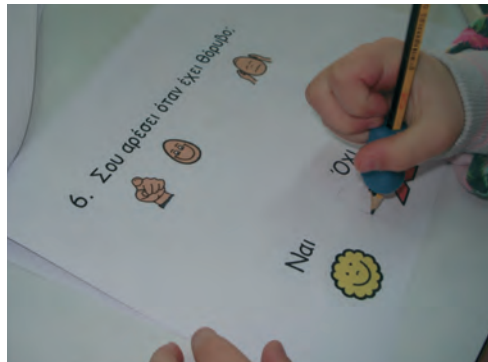
Results (neurotypically developing children)

Digital cameras

All the children used the cameras in the study group, and the data derived from them were analysed using the "photovoice" framework (Baker & Wang, 2006). The accompanying questions were not included as they were perceived as too vague for the specific audience. Instead, the researcher used verbal prompts such as "What is it in this photo?" and "Why did you choose to photograph that?". The themes that

emerged from this tool included: friends and classmates (37 %), the playground and its equipment (29 %), toys (11 %), indoor environment (9 %), and staff (6 %).

The guided tours

A checklist of all the places in and outside the setting was created to facilitate the identification of patterns and emerging themes during the tours. The results included an absolute percentage of (100 %) appearance of the playground, followed by each child's class (85.71 %), other classes (71.43 %), the dining hall (50 %), and the staff room (35.71 %).

The maps

The photovoice methodology was again used during the maps' analysis. During this process, both the young participants and the researcher annotated the map, providing further information about each photo and the reasons behind its selection. The themes that emerged included: the playground (45 %), the indoor environment (18 %), various toys (15 %), and other items (22 %).

The interviews

The interviews pinpointed children's reluctance to share their honest thoughts and preferences. The answers differed depending on who led the discussion (adult vs. peer). There appears to be a tendency among children to answer according to what they believe adults expect of them rather than what they enjoy, as it is evident from the answers given to the question "Which is your favourite place in the preschool?" (Table 2).

Table 2. Results from interviews

Adult-led interview	Peer-to-peer interview
My classroom (45 %)	The playground (50 %)
The playground (33 %)	My classroom (39 %)
Other places (22 %)	Other spaces (11 %)

The parents' and teachers' questionnaires

The categories that emerged from the two sets of questionnaires were nearly identical and included "relationships" (both with peers and teachers), "places" (indoor and outdoor learning environment), and "activities" (choosing time, literacy, numeracy, etc.).

Mary's case study

Observations

The themes that emerged from Mary's observations included: sensory input (sensory integration activities and causes of sensory overstimulation), preference for the only empty classroom in the setting, good relationship with her 1:1 teacher.

Intensive interaction

The information obtained from the intensive interaction sessions highlighted Mary's significant sensory processing difficulties, her difficulty interacting with others (except from her 1:1 teacher), and her preference for being alone in the empty classroom of the setting. During this stage, Mary expressed her interest in painting (without the presence of others).

Digital camera

The camera seemed to be the tool that Mary enjoyed using the most. The themes that emerged from the pictures she took included: the empty class of the setting (34.5%), the playground (when empty) (31%), her visual aids (12%), her 1:1 teacher (8.7%), the art area (3.5%) and the remaining (10.3%) various other things.

The "I like / I don't like" activities

The results from the picture-based activity completely matched the results from the symbol-based version. Thus, they are presented together (Table 3).

Table 3. Mary's responses to the "I like / I do not like" activities

I like	I do not like
(When it is) quiet	The noise
Group work	Group work
The swing	Snack time
Balancing	Morning routine (in the group)
The yoga ball	Change (in the routine)

The questionnaire

The results from Mary's questionnaire were similar to the ones derived from the previous tools.

The parent's and teacher's questionnaires

The categories that emerged from the two sets of questionnaires were nearly identical and included "need for routine" (both at home and in class), "sensory needs" (the effect of the environment on Mary's behaviour and well-being), and "visual aids". The results from parents and teachers wholly matched those of Mary's tools.

Discussion

The tools included in this research provided us with an abundance of information about these young children's lives in the setting. Acknowledging the significant age range among the participants and its possible impact on their expression skills, we utilised a great range of both verbal and non-verbal tools. Therefore, this enabled us to adopt the idea of "quilting" in research. and more specifically the idea of a "quiltlike bricolage" which "is a 'fluid' bringing together of perspectives" (Clark, 2019, p. 239). More specifically, the data that emerged from all tools were used to create a 'quilt' for each young participant, allowing us to observe the themes that emerge among the various 'quilts'. The main themes that emerged from the tools are:

(1) How do the children prefer to spend their time in the setting?

Table 4. Main responses to research question one

Neurotypically developing children	Mary
Playtime in the playground	Sensory integration activities (balancing, massage)
Painting with friends	1:1 session with the specialist teacher
Reading books	Painting on her own

(2) Which is their favourite place in the setting?

Table 5. Main responses to research question two

Neurotypically developing children	Mary
The playground (when busy)	The only empty classroom in the setting
Their classroom	The playground (when empty)
The nursery class	

(3) What is essential for them during their time in the setting?

Table 6. Main responses to research question three

Neurotypically developing children	Mary
Relationships (with peers and adults)	The sensory input of the environment
Playtime in the playground	The need for routine and structure
The nursery class	The relationship with her 1:1 specialist teacher

The results were submitted to the Head of the early years school, who took them into account and utilised them as the basis of the renovation plan a few months later. Furthermore, teachers in the setting started using some of the tools (cameras / maps / discussion with peers) as part of their social skills groups to develop confidence and promote social and emotional development and well-being. They also utilised them to modify both their medium and short-term planning to accommodate children's interests and wishes (e.g., more outdoor learning opportunities and interaction with the nursery children). During a follow-up discussion with the educational staff of the setting, they reported that the young participants were more engaged and keener on expressing views and wishes with both adults and peers. The findings of the current study confirm the existing literature. In recent research on young children's voices in education and its link with their well-being conducted by Fane and her colleagues (2020), the results highlighted that two very strong (yet uncovered) indicators of children's well-being are their agency and the play in learning. Similar conclusions were drawn by Anderson and Graham (2016). Their project constituted a large mixed methods study that took into account the views of students, principals, teachers, and other staff about well-being at school. The study's results unveiled that student perceived the notion of well-being "in multifaceted ways, including having a say, being listened to, having rights, and being respected" (Anderson & Graham, 2016, p. 348). In another research on children's well-being presented by Thomas and his colleagues (2016), the recognition theory was considered to pinpoint the importance of agency and relationships with others, a finding that was also apparent in the current study.

In Mary's case, the results were utilised to create her new individual learning plan (ILP). More specifically, the new ILP included:

a.   a structured routine supported by a visual timetable,
b.   three times a day one-to-one session with the SEN teacher,
c.   frequent sensory breaks,
d.   allocated time in the playground, regardless of the weather, and
e.   use of visual support to introduce Mary to new concepts and people.

The new ILP resulted in progress in her behaviour (a significant decrease in her episodes of aggression during group work) and her academics. This finding highlights the existing knowledge that should children with Autism (even those with minimal verbal communication) are given the appropriate tools and environment, they are capable of not only having but also expressing valuable and noteworthy ideas, preferences and wishes (Rouvali & Riga, 2019; Wilson et al., 2019). Finally, it is worth mentioning that Mary generalised using the "STOP" sign and the phrases "I like / I don't like" both at home and in the mainstream class, using them to show preferences, frustration, and unwillingness to participate in some activities.

The challenges

Researching with such a diverse group of participants posed challenges regarding the appropriateness and efficacy of the tools, as well as possible ethical implications. It is generally accepted that no two children are the same. Depending on the specific areas

of need and strength, similar tools and approaches can have significantly different results on children's participation based on the particular areas of need and strengths. Nothing was utterly fixed until the very end of the process to overcome this challenge and optimise the tools' effectiveness. But instead, the research team was attentive to the needs and wishes of the young participants by adding or eliminating tools appropriately.

Furthermore, involving the young children as co-researchers is considered a democratic and rights-based approach in research (Rouvali & Riga, 2019). Participatory research, however, is fraught with ethical questions, especially when children with profound learning disabilities and communication difficulties are involved (Davis et al., 2000; Murray, 2002). In light of this, gaining informed consent is vital for any participatory research study (Harcourt & Hägglund, 2013). In this study, the researchers informed both parents and young participants regarding the study's objectives and process and what they were expected to do should they agree to participate (the former through a report and the latter through an age-appropriate discussion with one of the researchers). In Mary's case, a social story was specifically written to provide all the essential information practically and understandably to the young participant.

The benefits

Children's participation in research and the associated benefits have been at the centre of several studies. By including children, practitioners can better understand the children's lived experiences in a way that would not be achievable through a proxy (Graham & Fitzgerald, 2010). In terms of the children themselves, Graham and her colleagues (2017) and Kellett (2010) argue that their participation and listening of their voices can significantly affect their well-being. Children who participate meaningfully have shown increased social and emotional capabilities, improved relationships, improved communication skills, and enhanced self-esteem (Mitra, 2004). Emerging data from all young participants confirmed the findings of previous studies. Teachers and parents/carers reported an increase in self-esteem and self-confidence in the young participants. In Mary's case, her parent highlighted that after completing the study, Mary used phrases like: "I like / I do not like" to indicate preferences and wishes for the first time in her life.

Conclusion

The current study aimed to investigate the everyday lives of a group of young children and their wishes, preferences, and needs within their educational setting. The results indicated the young children's preference towards the outdoor equipment of the setting. In addition, it was also prominent the extent to which they valued relationships with others (both peers and adults). Furthermore, despite not being a part of the initial aim of the study, significant emerging data pinpointed the impact that being

heard had on the young participants' well-being and confidence. Due to the methodology and design of the study, the current study results are limited but are highly encouraging. Because the study was carried out in a particular early childhood setting and designed based on the unique strengths of its participants, any generalisation of the results would be unsafe. Another limitation of this study was the relatively small sample size and the unbalanced distribution of children (gender and children with and without SEND). Neither the emotions experienced by young participants during this process nor the study's impact on their emotional and social development or the empowerment of their voices was officially documented and measured. Thus, future research could focus on how a similar approach with a more extensive and diverse group of participants can enhance young children's social and emotional development. However, regardless of its limitations, the current study achieved its main aim which was to add to the continuously growing literature on children's voices and offer a framework that empowers educators and celebrates as equals all parties involved in learning and the everyday meaning-making process.

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Parents' and Kindergarten Teachers' Views on the Introduction of Communication Rules to Preschoolers

The school unit is an open social system, in which cooperation between teachers and parents plays an important role. The new reality and introduction of modern pedagogical principles and trends in the teaching process renders necessary the acquisition of communication skills by teachers, parents and students. More specifically, communication in the classroom acquires specific characteristics. However, sometimes the communication process is hindered by breaching basic communication rules, which should not only be established but also followed. This study focuses on the communication rules that should be taught in preschool education, specifically, in kindergarten. The relevant literature review resulted in three thematic axes of communication rules taught in the classroom. The first one refers to rules linked to talking, the second one to rules linked to listening issues and the third one to issues of broader communication behavior. Based on these thematic axes, a questionnaire was created to study the views of preschool teachers and parents, whose children attend preschool education, about the communication rules that should be applied in the preschool classroom. The survey sample consisted of 87 parents and 39 preschool teachers. The results showed that, despite some disagreement, the views of preschool teachers and parents, in general, converge to the view that in preschool teaching classroom, communication rules must be applied in a way that do not disrupt the classroom calm and not hinder the scheduled teaching process with any negative consequence that could arise from the adoption of inappropriate and unforeseen communication behaviors.
Keywords: *listening, communication rules, talking, preschool education, communication behavior*

Introduction

Modern teachers aim to create a pedagogical atmosphere and warm interpersonal relationships, as these are factors that reinforce teaching and learning efficiency (Stamatis & Kostoula, 2021). More specifically, in preschool education, the preschool teacher during the teaching process is expected to develop communication skills and efficient interpersonal communication with preschoolers (Stamatis, 2015). However, during the teaching process, various diverging behaviors may appear, disrupting the learning process (Gilchrist-Petty, 2017). For this reason, classroom management skills are important, as they ensure the creation of an organized and safe environment supporting learning (Yıldız et al., 2020). Moreover, they constitute an important aspect of the teaching process with an important impact on students' learning and well-being (Lewis et al., 2011).

Setting communication rules works efficiently in classroom management, as these are the touchstone of the teaching process. They help students understand better the

classroom world and their position in it. Alter & Haydon (2017) consider that the classroom rules refer to what the teacher defines as acceptable behavior. According to Kostewich et al. (2008), classroom rules represent the teachers' expectations and communicate them in view of an efficient classroom management. Rules set limits on the students' behavior or contribute to the creation of a positive environment fostering the learning process. Aelterman et al. (2018) define as "classroom rules" the clear expectations related to desirable behaviors, for instance raising hands to answer a question, but also disturbing, unwanted behaviors of students in the classroom, such as bothering classmates or attempting to copy during a written test.

Boostrom (1991, in Thornberg, 2008, p. 94) considers that the classroom rules are *"the dos and don'ts of the classroom – all those guidelines for action and evaluation of the action that the teacher expresses or implies with words or actions."* The rules determine the students' behavior in the context of the classroom and can be written or oral. Often their purpose is to regulate or prevent any student behavior likely to disrupt the teaching process, cause injury or damage to any school or personal property. The teacher can aim at the elimination of such behaviors by teaching the "classroom rules" (Kostewich et al., 2008), as they are easy to implement and provide a measure of misconduct prevention (Alter & Haydon, 2017).

Some students accept the rules, internalize them and comply fully with them, while others perceive them as an external factor that forces students to comply. In this case, students do not accept and defy rules (Aelterman et al., 2018). According to Thornberg (2008), if students cannot perceive the meaning, the essence of a rule, they tend to consider it unimportant or superfluous. Therefore, students consider that such rules are mistaken.

According to Alter & Haydon (2017), efficient classroom rules must gather seven basic characteristics: (a) the total number of rules must be small (b) they should be created in cooperation with students (c) they should be formulated in a positive way (d) they should be of specific nature (e) they should be posted in visible spots (f) they should be taught to students, and (g) they should be linked to positive and negative consequences.

Creating rules in cooperation with the children and determining consequences in case these are breached usually has a positive impact on classroom management. Karabay & Asi (2015) believe that, when rules are established in classrooms, students' school performance is improved. In addition to school performance, efficient strategies of classroom management have a positive impact also on the cultivation of social skills, emotional condition and general behavior of preschoolers (Beazidou et al., 2013). Besides, according to Erwin (2016), a socially and emotionally supportive environment has a positive impact on learning and improves students' performance.

A factor that has a significant impact on the teaching process is communication between teachers and parents. Their efficient communication creates a sense of security, improves preschoolers' learning ability, and has a positive impact on their behavior. In this way, the school unit works smoothly and efficiently (Stamatis & Chatzinikola, 2021; McCarthy et al., 2011). As teachers understand the benefits of communication with parents, they apply active listening within the framework of efficient listening skills. They listen to parents carefully and observingly, they accept

their words, they adopt a neutral attitude, and they show empathy when they share their thoughts and feelings (Chatzinikola, 2021).

Methodology

The purpose of the survey is to investigate the views of preschool teachers and parents, whose children attend preschool education about the communication rules that should be taught to preschool children. To achieve this purpose, the following research questions were raised:

1) What are the preschool teachers' and parents' views about:
   a) the talking rules,
   b) the listening rules and
   c) the behavior rules,
   that preschoolers should respect in the classroom after they have been taught about them?
2) Is there a convergence of preschool teachers' and parents' views about the talking, listening and behavior rules that preschoolers should respect in the classroom after they have been taught about them?
3) In which talking, listening and behavior rules applied by preschool teachers in their communication with preschoolers can a statistical difference be observed in relation to their years of service?
4) In which talking, listening and behavior rules mentioned by parents as rules applied by preschool teachers in their communication with preschoolers, can a statistical difference be observed in relation to the number of children in their family?

In this survey, the close-ended type questionnaire was selected as the most appropriate research tool for data collection because it provides a form of close-ended questions that participants are invited to answer personally (Bryman, 2012). Participants were invited to answer the questionnaire by selecting between two opposite opinions (agree and disagree).

Within the framework of the statistical processing of the data collected with the questionnaires, descriptive statistics indicators were studied, both for categorical variables (e.g., man, woman) and qualitative variables with a double grading scale, such as frequency (N), the percentage in total cases (%), average (A), standard deviation (SD). To ascertain the correlation between a categorical variable (preschool teachers, parents) and grading scale qualitative variables, a t-test of independent samples was applied through the SPSS-28 program. For the statistical significance description, the p-value indicator was used (p-value < 0.01: Statistically strong relationship, p-value < 0.05: Statistically significant relationship, p-value < 0.1: Statistically weak relationship).

To ascertain the degree of relevance in relation to prior work experience, the following categorical variables were selected: a) 1–10 and 11–20 years of experience and b) number of children in the family: 1 and 3, to ascertain if there is convergence of views among them.

The survey sample consisted of thirty-nine (39) teachers and eighty-seven (87) parents (Table 1).

Table 1. Survey sample

Participants		Preschool teachers		Parents	
		Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
		39	31%	87	69%
Gender	Male	3	7.7%	32	36.8%
	Women	36	92.3%	55	63.2%
Age	18–25	5	12.8%	4	4.6%
	26–35	11	28.2%	29	33.3%
	36–45	7	17.9%	36	41.4%
	46–55	12	30.8%	17	19.5%
	< 56	4	10.3%	1	1.1%
Level of Education	Primary	0	0	1	1.1%
	Lower secondary	0	0	2	2.3%
	Upper secondary	0	0	28	32.2%
	Tertiary/Higher education	26	66.7%	39	44.8%
	MSc	13	33.3%	17	19.5%
	PhD	0	0	0	0
Years of experience	0–10	19	48.7%		
	11–20	13	33.3%		
	21–30	5	12.8%		
	31–40	2	5.1%		
Children AGE					
Years old	1	36	41.4%		
	2	33	37.9%		
	3	16	18.4%		
	4	2	2.3%		

Results

In the research question *"What are the preschool teachers' and parents' views about the talking rules that preschoolers should respect in the classroom after they have been taught about them?"* preschool teachers (T) and parents (P) agree that the child must wait for his/her turn to speak (T: 97.4%, P: 87.4%), must speak without fear or shame (T: 97.4%, P: 98.9%), must not speak at the same time as his/her interlocutor (T: 94.9%, P: 94.3%), must ask for clarifications when he/she does not understand (T: 100%, P: 98.9%), without screaming or raising his/her voice (T: 92.3%, P: 78.2%).

Moreover, preschool teachers and parents agree that the child should not speak during the lesson (T: 71.8%, P: 75.9%). When the child speaks with classmates, he/she

should be polite even when he/she disagrees with their opinion (T: 89.7%, P: 66.7%). Preschool teachers and parents agree with the opinion that the child is allowed to fool, swear or say "bad" words (T: 89.7%, P: 95.4%) (Table 2).

Table 2. Talking rules

Talking/Expression rules	Quality	Agree		Disagree	
		N	%	N	%
1. The child must wait for his/her turn to speak.	Teachers	38	97.4	1	2.6
	Parents	76	87.4	11	12.6
	Total	114	90.5	12	9.5
2. The child must not be ashamed or afraid to speak.	Teachers	38	97.4	1	2.6
	Parents	86	98.9	1	1.1
	Total	124	98.4	2	1.6
3. The child must not speak over his/her interlocutor's voice.	Teachers	37	94.9	2	5.1
	Parents	82	94.3	5	5.7
	Total	119	94.4	7	5.6
4. The child must ask for clarifications when he/she does not understand.	Teachers	39	100	0	0
	Parents	86	98.9	1	1.1
	Total	125	99.2	1	0.8
5. The child must not scream or raise his/her voice.	Teachers	36	92.3	3	7.7
	Parents	68	78.2	19	21.8
	Total	104	82.5	22	17.5
6. The child must not speak during the lesson.	Teachers	28	71.8	11	28.2
	Parents	66	75.9	21	24.1
	Total	94	74.6	32	25.4
7. The child is allowed to fool, swear or say "bad" words.	Teachers	4	10.3	35	89.7
	Parents	4	4.6	83	95.4
	Total	8	6.3	118	93.7
8. The child must express politely his/her agreement or disagreement with the opinion of a classmate.	Teachers	35	89.7	4	10.3
	Parents	58	66.7	29	33.3
	Total	93	73.8	33	26.2

In the research question, *"What are the preschool teachers' and parents' views about the listening rules that preschoolers should respect in the classroom after they have been taught about them?"* preschool teachers and parents agree that the child must listen carefully to what his/her preschool teacher says (T: 97.4%, P: 100%), to what his/her classmates say (T: 92.3%, P: 97.7%), to what his/her parents say (T: 89.7%, P: 100%). While listening, the child must not do other things (T: 76.9%, P: 69%), must look at his/her interlocutor in the eyes (T: 74.4%, P: 74.7%). Moreover, the child should not turn his/her back to the person speaking to him/her (T: 89.7%, P: 96.6%) and must not constantly laugh (T: 84.6%, P: 73.6%). Finally, the child must reflect well before answering a question (T: 69.2%, P: 73.6%) (Table 3).

Table 3. Listening rules

Listening rules	Quality	Agree		Disagree	
		N	%	N	%
1. The child must listen carefully to what his/her teacher says.	Teachers	38	97.4	1	2.6
	Parents	87	100	0	0
	Total	125	99.2	1	0.8
2. The child must listen carefully to what his/her classmates say.	Teachers	36	92.3	3	7.7
	Parents	85	97.7	2	2.3
	Total	121	96	5	4
3. The child must listen carefully to what his/her parents say	Teachers	35	89.7	4	10.3
	Parents	87	100	0	0
	Total	122	96.8	4	3.2
4. The child must not do other things when speaking with someone.	Teachers	30	76.9	9	23.1
	Parents	60	69	27	31
	Total	90	71.4	36	28.6
5. The child must look in the eyes of the person speaking to him/her.	Teachers	29	74.4	10	25.6
	Parents	65	74.7	22	25.3
	Total	94	74.6	32	25.4
6. The child must not turn his/her back to the person speaking to him/her.	Teachers	35	89.7	4	10.3
	Parents	84	96.6	3	3.4
	Total	119	94.4	7	5.6
7. The child must not laugh constantly when speaking with another person	Teachers	33	84.6	6	15.4
	Parents	64	73.6	23	26.4
	Total	97	77	29	23
8. The child must reflect before answering a question	Teachers	27	69.2	12	30.8
	Parents	64	73.6	23	26.4
	Total	91	72.2	35	27.8

In the research question *"What are the preschool teachers' and parents' views about the behavior rules that preschoolers should respect in the classroom, after they have been taught about them?"* preschool teachers and parents agree that the child must not isolate any classmates (T: 97.4%, P: 94.3%), on the contrary, the child must help them when in need (T: 100%, P: 100%), the child must be quiet when sitting with the group (T: 100%, P: 98.9%), share his/her toys (T: 97.4%, P: 90.8%) and apologize, if needed (T: 100%, P: 100%). In addition, teachers and parents agree that the child may express his/her feelings without words, through "body language" (T: 82.1%, P: 77%). Preschool teachers and parents state that the child is not allowed to hit classmates, even when he/she is angry (T: 94.9%, P: 97.7%), or break his/her toys or other children's toys (T: 97.4%, P: 89.7%) (Table 4).

To answer the research question, *"Is there a convergence of preschool teachers' and parents' views about the talking, listening and behavior rules that preschoolers should respect in the classroom, after they have been taught about them?"* a statisti-

Table 4. Behavior rules

Behavior rules	Quality	Agree		Disagree	
		N	%	N	%
1. The child must not isolate any classmate.	Teachers	38	97.4	1	2.6
	Parents	82	94.3	5	5.7
	Total	120	95.2	6	4.8
2. The child must share his/her toys.	Teachers	38	97.4	1	2.6
	Parents	79	90.8	8	9.2
	Total	117	92.9	9	7.1
3. The child must help his/her classmates when in need.	Teachers	39	100	0	0
	Parents	87	100	0	0
	Total	126	100	0	0
4. The child must apologize when needed.	Teachers	39	100	0	0
	Parents	87	100	0	0
	Total	126	100	0	0
5. The child may express his/her feelings without words, with "body language.".	Teachers	32	82.1	7	17.9
	Parents	67	77	20	23
	Total	99	78.6	27	21.4
6. The child is allowed to push someone when he/she is angry or in a hurry.	Teachers	2	5.1	37	94.9
	Parents	2	2.3	85	97.7
	Total	4	3.2	122	96.8
7. The child is not allowed to hit his/her classmates, even when he/she is angry.	Teachers	37	94.9	2	5.1
	Parents	95	97.7	2	2.3
	Total	122	96.8	4	3.2
8. The child is allowed to break his/her toys or other children's toys.	Teachers	1	2.6	38	97.4
	Parents	9	10.3	78	89.7
	Total	10	8	116	92
9. The child must be quiet when sitting with the group.	Teachers	39	100	0	0
	Parents	86	98.9	1	1.1
	Total	125	99.2	1	0.8

cal comparison of averages was made with t-test criterion for independent samples. The relationship of averages between preschool teachers and parents is statistically significant on the talking rules stating that the child must wait for his/her turn to speak ($p = 0.024 < 0.05$) and that child must not scream or raise his/her voice ($p = 0.025 < 0.05$). A strong statistical relationship is observed in the talking rule that the child must express himself/herself politely, when he/she agrees or disagrees with the opinion of a classmate ($p = 0.001 < 0.01$) (see questions 1, 6 and 8, Table 2).

The difference between averages of preschool teachers and parents is statistically significant in the following listening rule: the child must listen carefully to what his/her parents say ($p = 0.044 < 0.05$) (see question 3, Table 3) (Table 5).

Table 5. Preschool teachers/Parents – Talking and listening rules (Comparison of means)

Quality/Talking/Listening/Behavior rules	Teachers		Parents		Levene's Test		t-test	p-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F	Sig		
T1. The child must wait for his/her turn to speak.	1.026	0.160	1.126	0.334	15.633	< 0.001	−2.287	0.024 < 0.05
T6. The child must not scream or raise his/her voice.	1.077	0.270	1.218	0.416	19.831	< 0.001	−2.279	0.025 < 0.05
T8. The child must express himself/herself politely when he/she agrees or disagrees with the opinion of a classmate.	1.103	0.307	1.333	0.474	51.253	< 0.001	−3.262	0.001 < 0.01
L3. The child must listen carefully to what his parents say	1.103	0.307	1.000	0.000	49.892	< 0.001	2.084	0.044 < 0.05

Table 6. Years of service – Talking and listening rules (Comparison of means)

Teachers/Years of service	Years of service: 0–10		Years of service: 11–20		Levene's Test		t-test	p-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F	Sig		
T5. The child must not scream or raise his/her voice.	1.158	0.375	1.000	0.000	13.846	< 0.001	1.837	0.083 < 0.1
L5. The child must look in the eyes of the person speaking to him/her	1.369	0.496	1.077	0.278	25.037	< 0.001	2.123	0.042 < 0.05

Table 7. Number of children in the family – Speaking and listening rules (Comparison of means)

Parents/Number of children	Child:1		Children:3		Levene's Test		t-test	p-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F	Sig		
T1. The child must wait for his/her turn to speak.	1.250	0.439	1.000	0.000	46.154	< 0.001	3.416	0.002 < 0.01
T7. The child must not speak during the lesson	1.333	0.478	1.125	0.341	15.060	< 0.001	1.784	0.082 < 0.1
L4. The child must not do other things when speaking with someone.	1.444	0.504	1.125	0.342	38.303	< 0.001	2.667	0.011 < 0.05
L5. The child must look in the eyes of the person speaking to him/her	1.278	0.454	1.062	0.250	20.839	< 0.001	2.193	0.033 < 0.05

To answer the research question *"In which talking, listening and behavior rules applied by preschool teachers in their communication with preschoolers can a statistical difference be observed in relation to their years of service?"* a statistical comparison of averages was made with a t-test criterion for independent samples (Table 6). The relationship of averages for categorical variables 0–10 and 11–20 years of service for teachers is statistically significant in the talking rule according to which, the child must not scream or raise his/her voice (p= 0.038 < 0.1) (see question 5, Table 2). The relationship of means 0–10 and 11–20 years of service for teachers is statistically significant in the following listening rule: the child must look into the eyes of the person speaking to him/her (p= 0.042 < 0.05) (see question 5, Table 3).

To answer the research question *"In which talking, listening and behavior rules mentioned by parents as rules applied by preschool teachers in their communication with preschoolers, can a statistical difference be observed in relation to the number of children in their family?"* a statistical comparison of averages was made with t-test criterion for independent samples. The relationship of averages in categorical variables 1 and 3 children per family is statistically significant for the talking rule according to which a child must wait for his/her turn to speak (p= 0.002 < 0.01) and statistically weakly significant for the rule that the child must not speak during the lesson (p= 0.082 < 0.1) (see questions 1 and 6, Table 2). Regarding the listening rules and the same categorical variables, the following can be concluded (see questions 4 and 5, Table 3): Parents with one child in a family and parents with three children in a family with a significant statistical relationship mention that the child must not do other things when speaking with someone (p= 0.011 < 0.05) and that the child must look in the eyes of the person speaking to him/her (p= 0.033 < 0.05) (Table 7).

Discussion

The survey results show that preschool teachers and parents agree on applying communication rules in the preschool classroom. A relevant survey conducted by Karabay & Asi (2015) ascertained convergence of teachers' and parents' views about respecting rules in the classroom. They point out that a divergence of views was observed only about how teachers handle students' disobedience to the classroom rules.

In this survey, preschool teachers and parents agree on the talking rules that preschoolers must speak without fear or shame and should not speak at the same time as another interlocutor. They state that preschoolers must ask for clarifications when they do not understand, and preschoolers should not talk during the lesson. Moreover, they disagree on the opinion that the child is allowed to fool, swear or say "bad" words. The teachers that participated in a relevant survey conducted by Vijayan, Chakravarthi, & Philips (2016) stated that they established communication rules about talking. More specifically, they teach children not to scream or raise their voices during verbal communication. In addition, they stated that it is very important for preschoolers not to talk with each other during the lesson.

Regarding listening rules, preschool teachers and parents agree that preschoolers must listen carefully to what their teacher, as well as classmates, say. When listening,

the child must not do other things; on the contrary, the child must look in the eyes of his/her interlocutor. The child must not turn his/her back to his/her interlocutor and must not constantly laugh when listening. Finally, the child must reflect well before answering a question. A survey conducted by Matsagoura & Poulou (2009) regarding the relationship between parents and teachers showed that it is very important for a child first to learn how to listen to his/her parents and then his/her teachers to be able to follow the listening rules. A survey conducted by Sieberer-Nagler (2015) shows that teachers encourage students to listen carefully with the ultimate goal of encouraging them to become active listeners as well. A relevant study by Parsonson (2012) mentions that the main goal of teachers is to initiate students into how to actively listen to their classmates, not do anything else, and make eye contact during the conversation.

Regarding behavior rules, in this survey, preschool teachers and parents agree that preschoolers should not isolate any classmates but instead help them when in need. The child must be quiet when sitting with the group, share his/her toys and apologize, if needed. Moreover, preschool teachers and parents agree with the opinion that the child may express his/her feelings without words, namely with "body language." In addition, they disagree with the manifestation of violent behavior and state that the child is not allowed to hit his/her classmates, even when he/she is angry, and must not break his/her own toys or other children's toys. In a survey conducted by Dal & Akan (2018), it was ascertained that two of the most important problems preschool teachers face in the classroom are disobedience to the rules and demonstration of violence. Students should not demonstrate classroom behaviors, such as beating, pinching, hair pulling, pushing, kicking, and misbehavior to friends, fighting or isolating a classmate (Yildiz et al., 2020). Finally, in a survey conducted by Beazidou et al. (2013) regarding the ways of handling preschoolers' disturbing behavior, it was ascertained that many teachers teach specific rules in their classrooms. According to these rules, no violent behaviors are allowed.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the purpose of this study has been achieved. The views of preschool teachers and parents, whose children attend preschool education, regarding the communication rules that should be taught to preschoolers, were thoroughly examined. Regarding the first three research questions of the survey, despite some minor disagreements, preschool teachers and parents in principle agree that during the communication between children and the preschool teacher, it is pedagogically correct that preschoolers respect talking, listening and behavior rules that have been taught to them, like the ones mentioned in Tables 2, 3, 4. In the fourth research question, too, there was a convergence of parents' and preschool teachers' views with minor disagreements (see Table 6). Regarding the fifth research question, it seems that the views of teachers with 0–10 and 11–20 years of work experience, and parents, converge regarding the communication rules that must be respected during the communication process of preschool teachers with preschoolers. Finally, regarding the last