APPLICATION OF EDUCATIONAL DIALOGUE MODEL IN THE PROCESS OF SUPPORT RENDERED IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION TO A LEARNER WITH HEARING DEFICIT

D. Al-Khamisy, A. Dłużniewska

The Maria Grzegorzewska University (POLAND)

Abstract

The work presents authorial educational dialogue model which derives from the philosophy of M. Buber and E. Levinas. The dialogue is not a method, neither it is a technique nor a skill. The dialogue is an act of adoption of a specific attitude towards oneself and the interlocutor. It is an act of having deep contact with oneself and the other person while maintaining personal authenticity towards the other one. Such a dialogue is like discovering humanness in both participants of the dialogue. Full mutual acceptance and mental devotion are vital in this process. It serves releasing potential in both participants and their full mutual recognition. It is discovering something new, explaining something unclear, checking something which is not certain, estimation of something unmeasured. It is an act of create a new energy which is powerful and useful. It is gaining deep understanding among a teacher and learners, and among learners themselves. It should take place in the atmosphere of mutual kindness and respect (D. Al-Khamisy, 2013:126). Such understanding of the dialogue imposes on the teacher and other student's supporting workers the necessity of togetherness in acting and in experiencing the reality. In true educational dialogue deep recognition means gathering as much information as possible about teacher's and student's entities accordingly. Recognition means also seeing strong and weak points in the partner of the dialogue, it is acting together and carrying support.

The aim of this article is to answer the question, if inclusive education - as a process of supporting a learner with hearing deficit - is in fact a meeting of people who truly support one another. It also aims at finding the answer if it is possible to use the proposed model for planning and implementation educational support in three integrated levels of the dialogue: cognition, understanding and finally – being together. The applied research method is individual case studies, the technique is observation, interview and the analysis of documentation. Learners with hearing deficit serve as subjects of the study.

Conclusions:

The conclusion of the considerations is strong suggestion of introducing the presented model into reality. The partners of the dialogue, namely teachers with their needs and abilities as well as learners with hearing deficits pass special levels appointed by the model and they complete such tasks which allow them to participate in the process of support. It appears that it is possible to introduce the above presented dialogue among teachers and students with hearing loss in inclusive education. The model appears to carry universal potential in planning support of students with a variety of disabilities.

Keywords: support, educational dialogue, student with hearing deficit, inclusive education.

1 INTRODUCTION

Theoretical background of educational dialogue. The outbreak of the positive psychology allowed to perceive a disabled person holistically and gave foundations to the discussion about disability from the perspective of the positive attitude paradigm. Positive psychology is concerned with a man as a whole – not only his weaknesses, illnesses or other aspects which need correction, but also with all ordinary features or desired functions [1]. In this way the change towards the main object of rehabilitation took place. It crossed the area of abnormalities, disorders and pathologies and focused on positive aspects of functioning of the disabled [2]. It means that the present process of educating such people who are rehabilitated or educated to live social life should include regular actions aimed at correction and compensation together with recognition of talents and overall development of internal resources of a disabled person. These are - first of all - personal, individual features such as: resilience, meaningful coping with problems or self-determination. Only an autonomous and fully engaged in life person is capable to face such challenges. In dialogue, interpersonal relations such an individual is perceived as unique, exceptional and independent.
The present educational dialogue derives from M. Buber and E. Levinas’s philosophy. It is not one of many methods of work used while teaching, in a broad sense it is rather teacher’s way of being with learners which embodies the core of bringing up process. True dialogue embraces turning to somebody and being with him/her in so-called “vibrant mutuality” [3]. This is relation between persons in so-called common space, in case of school it is between a teacher and a learner (including learners with hearing impairments). Such relation expresses itself in mutual awareness and sharing experiences on both intellectual and affective levels, because they assure full understanding, trust, sense of safety and proper interpretation of accompanying processes. All of this is accompanied by consistency and acceptance of another person’s inner world, in spite of big differences in individual possibilities and emotions. Such relational climate allows a teacher to reflect on his/her own knowledge, respect of own self and - on the other hand - care about his/her student’s balanced educational and emotional development. This approach demands from a teacher freeing from invalid limitations, superstitions and stereotypes to be able to function as kind of adviser or even therapist in good and supporting atmosphere.

The conception of true emotional dialogue demands from a teacher to perceive his/her student as “microcosmos” with a separate, autonomous structure of entity, though not yet discovered. A pedagogue should strive to find potential in a student as well as talents, strengths, and then help a student to develop them into passion. In such setting a student becomes a subject of “specific entity-project” and pedagogue’s role is to support him/her in the development of these capacities. In such a way the objective of pedagogue’s care becomes personal unity of an undergoing maturation process of a teenager as well as the need to feel the desire for unity in a learner and strengthen it. Entity of something “what is already shaped” needs educational influence to make this entity full and finished [4]. Dialogue, according to E.M. Griffin’s model [5] imposes on education the necessity of understanding myself, you and understanding ourselves. The resignation from any of these parts makes the dialogue transform into artificial, fictional and therefore pedagogically ineffectual. There is no true dialogue without self-understanding, understanding another person and - finally - understanding both these sides simultaneously as partners, who truly want to communicate in search of sources of educational success [6]. There is no end and solution of something once and for all. We are on our way, we are searching, finding and verifying a variety of meanings and values [7]. Such searching, discovering and checking is best assisted by educational dialogue, which is conducted in the atmosphere of mutual trust, equal rights, freedom, respect and love. In such understanding of educational dialogue there are three mutually complementary and mutually dependent perspectives: cognition, understanding, being together.

Basic criteria of cognition perspective is achieving as much information about own self and about another person as possible. These two conditions should give a teacher a feeling of competence in the range of actions undertaken to confirm that he/she exactly knows who they are devoted for and why. In the perspective of understanding, a teacher should recognize and define both his/her own and student’s potential, strengths and limitations. The perspective of being together means togetherness in educational practice. There is a point of existence in which a student and a teacher need one another to continue further development. Out of these two it is the teacher who is responsible for COGNITION, UNDERSTANDING and mutual support in BEING TOGETHER in educational dialogue. In the process of educational dialogue perceived this way a teacher offers his/her hand and tells the student: “I am with you”, and the student answers: “I need you for my development”. Thanks to such meeting they can cooperate, they know, that they need each other. Such awareness brings them even closer and makes their meeting more meaningful [8]. A teacher stops performing a function of the only source of support. Rather he/she improves both student’s and his/her own cognition and understanding of other partners of the dialogue such as peers, teachers and other people.

Dialogue in education allows to stay different from others, to keep to own identity. This is the starting point of true togetherness and mutual enriching, which is a natural consequence of educational dialogue. Also, inspiration emerges as another result of such attitude. Also a teacher, as a professional, should have trust in him/herself and in students. While approaching to the definition of educational dialogue its basic determinants should be emphasized [9]. The first and also basic one is person’s “being in relation” to the world, people and things. The second one is “achieving true meeting” as pedagogic stance with accepting the form of togetherness in which shaping personal relation with another human being takes place in dyad You - Me, with full recognition of his/her individuality and uniqueness. The third indicator is relation You - Me recognizing self-agency of both a teacher and a student. From above assumptions it emerges that educational dialogue is a construct embracing complex dealings of teachers towards students, of students towards teachers and of both of these groups towards other partners of the dialogue. It is unique experiencing self and others, it is
being with oneself and others. It is cognitive closeness, meeting of minds while keeping to own uniqueness while connecting mentally with another person. It is discovering own and other people’s humaneness with full acceptance of the partner and full offering of oneself. It is activating own and other person’s potential, awareness of this person, going into relation with this person while staying completely authentic. It is building reality of a man with a man. It is often a discussion with oneself other person’s potential, awareness of this person, going into relation with this person while staying uniqueness while connecting mentally with another person. It is discovering own and other people’s being with oneself and others. It is cognitive closeness, meeting of minds while keeping to own to face without reflective, carefully planned support of parents and competency and consistency on the side of specialists and teachers. Education of students with hearing impairment in inclusive education is still pretty problematic though. Educational dialogue model can be a chance for preparing children and youth with hearing impairment to satisfactory participation in social-cultural life and in integration with people hearing properly [11]. The model, whose assumption is Cognition, Understanding and Being Together based on educational dialogue allows to treat a child or a young person with impaired hearing as a subject and make him/her a partner in the process of upbringing, education and rehabilitation [12].

Children and youth with hearing loss are very diverse group. There are a lot of factors, which determine possibilities of development and improvement of linguistic, communicative and cultural competences. K. Krakowiak differentiated four main groups of persons in case of which quantitative and qualitative differences in language sound perception become predictors of language development. The first group consists of people hearing functionally. Such people are able to receive speech by aural way and without the necessity of support of sight sense. Group of persons with hearing impairment consists of such who – while receiving verbal message – prefer auditory channel. Still, in order to understand speech fully they support themselves with sight and touch senses. Within such children speech develops spontaneously but with considerable delay. The third group consists of people hearing badly. In this case, despite hearing aid or cochlear implant speech does not develop spontaneously and methods supporting the development of language (cued speech, auditory-verbal) are necessary. The fourth group consists of deaf people, who – because of the large degree of hearing loss – do not learn a language. In this case application of special methods of shaping language (cued speech) or sign language is fundamental. Similarly, as it was in the previous group intensive therapeutic undertakings should be offered [13].

About 95% children with hearing loss are brought up in families, where all family members hear properly so disabled children do not have any experience in communicating with hearing loss person [14]. For hearing parents who are inexperienced with this issue, parenting can be a real emotional challenge. The base for shaping correct social competences is found in proper relations in family. Parental concentration on child’s disability is frequent cause of stress connected with making decisions concerning child’s development. These factors make parenting very difficult. Results of studies make it possible to enumerate some major factors of stress within properly hearing parents of children with hearing impairment [15], [16]. These are, among others, financial conditions, age in which a child was diagnosed, the degree of hearing loss, disorders in language development, way of communicating, mis-behaviors of children, and the way of perceiving social support. The factor which - in the biggest degree - influences shaping relations between a child and his parents is delay of language development [17]. A child without language cannot express its needs or understand messages, this is the cause of frustration and problems with emotional control, attentional focus or behavior. In such cases systemic approach is necessary. The focus of such undertaking lies not only in actions directed at improving child’s abilities but – first of all – in work with the family [18]. Finding out about its needs should be the priority of specialists. Knowledge about expectations, readiness and chances of engaging parents in the process of rehabilitation [19] allows to focus on the most important aspect of actions, which is shaping correct bonds between family members and children with hearing impairment. It is worth remembering that the engagement of parents in the process of therapy is one of the most important factors deciding about its effectiveness [20]. Therefore, the main aim of specialists should be helping parents to make them more confident in contacts with their own child and increase their self-agency in their parenting [21].
Next area which plays important role in the development of a child with hearing loss are such institutions as kindergarten and school. The period of kindergarten is very important phase in life of whole family but – first of all – in the life of a child with hearing disability. It is time when first confrontations with performing social competences take place. The first experiences of contact with hearing properly peers and adults who come from outside the closest family influence shaping later relations in considerable way. In this place it is worth referring to studies [22] whose results seem to be surprising. It emerged that kindergarten children with hearing loss more frequently attempted at interacting than healthy children. However, these attempts were ignored or rejected by hearing properly children. It was observed that lack of success in initiating contact by children with hearing loss was connected with little success in enforcing reaction and improper interpretation of these attempts by hearing well peers. Increasing efficiency of attempted interactions by children with hearing loss should become one of main aims of actions which should be undertaken by specialists and teachers in kindergartens [23]. In this case it is necessary to sensitize hearing well children on the specificity of communication applied by their peers with hearing loss as well as teaching them a variety and meaning of messages applied by them.

School is the next stage in life of child with hearing loss, which gives opportunity of experiencing contacts with hearing properly peers. Not satisfying social contacts influence shaping low self-esteem and increase sense of isolation. Academic investigations indicate that hearing disabled students perceive themselves as less competent in cognitive, physical, emotional, social and communicative areas as well as school functioning [24]. Therefore, if social integration is to become aim of actions equaling chances in the range of educational and social functioning of this group of students, hearing students should be prepared to co-existence with their auditory disabled peers. The basis to creation of effective communication, socialization and identification of students with hearing loss should be common efforts of communities of healthy, auditory disabled and deaf learners [25]. One of forms, which is getting numerous, positive opinions is organizing tutoring with the hearing well participants. It allows to get to know mutually better and gain mutual acceptance [26], [27]. Specialists and teachers in agreement with parents and the child itself are obliged to supervise organization of the most favorable conditions of socio-emotional development.

As it emerges from above considerations, teachers and therapists are persons who are assigned a special role in creation of environment optimal for child’s development and in line with guidelines of educational dialogue model.

2 METHODOLOGY

The aim of the present study is conducting analysis of the process of organizing educationally-therapeutic support for a child with impaired hearing and for its family in line with guidelines of the educational dialogue model.

The following research questions have been assigned to above mentioned aim:

1 What actions aimed at recognizing auditory disabled child’s need and the needs of its family were undertaken?

2 What actions aimed at optimization of conditions of child’s individual development were undertaken?

3 In what way did persons working with the child – therapists and teachers – modify own behaviors and moves in order to create climate aimed at supporting child’s development?

The main method of the present investigation is a case study, supporting techniques were following: documentation analysis, observation of the educational-therapeutic process and conversation.

Study tools. The tool used in the study was observation sheet and Charter of Communicative Behaviors of a Child with Hearing Impairment K. Krakowiak, M. Panasiuk [29].

3 RESULTS

3.1 Case study

Olga is the only child born to hearing parents. Childbirth took place at expected time, it was from the first pregnancy. She scored 10 in Apgar test. She was infected staphylococci. She was dosed first
choice drug Gentamicin. In third month of life she went down with pneumonia which was cured with Gentamicin and Colistin simultaneously.

After her illness parents observed that she became quieter and she slept much. Alarmed with lack of child’s reaction to sounds coming from around, they turned to a doctor for medical advice. At the age of 9 months Ola was directed to Institute of Mother and Child for orientational examination of hearing sense and balance system. After examinations it appeared that she suffers from considerable sensorineural hearing loss. In ABR (Auditory Brainstem Response) examination which was conducted on the same day during sleep cycle, no reaction for specific stimuli frequency within the limits of capability of apparatus (100 dB) was recorded.

At the age of 9 months the girl started wearing a hearing aids. At the beginning she did not accept them, she took them off and threw away. After 4 months she stopped protesting. Next examination of hearing sense was conducted at the age of 1 year and 3 months. It was conducted in a diagnostic-medical-rehabilitative center for people with hearing loss (The Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing) in Warsaw. The examination conducted in wake cycle showed considerable hearing loss in both ears (Right Ear and Left Ear for 500 Hz – 90 dB, for 2-4 Hz – 90 dB).

Parents took their daughter to psychological-pedagogical counselling center right after equipping her with hearing aids. Group of specialists specializing in work with children with hearing loss, a psychologist and a pedagogue – together with girl’s parents developed a program of therapy directed on the development of communication with the use of voice language. At the beginning classes with speech and language therapist were devoted to general development activities and intensive hearing training. The child had weak hearing abilities therefore methods of reading speech from the moves of mouth had to be introduced. Parents were offered and trained the method of cued speech and - starting from third year of life - the development of child’s language system started to be assisted by Cued Speech.

As a result of therapy, the girl learned to read speech from the moves of mouth, but there was no progress in the development of voice language. Probably growing impairment of hearing loss was to blame for this. From mother’s report it was revealed that next examination of hearing confirmed the previous result of ABR (Auditory Brainstem Response) however audiograms were not preserved. At the age of 4 and 2 months Ola started attending kindergarten of inclusive education and devoted for children with hearing impairment. Through first three months she was unhappy to go there, she was crying. Gradually and more willingly she started making contact with children, she herself initiated child’s plays. The teachers in kindergarten did not have any experience in work with a child with considerable hearing loss and with using Cued Speech. In close cooperation with psychological-pedagogical counselling institution they started work on improvement of their skills as well as broadening their knowledge concerning recognizing needs and therapy of a child with hearing loss. All the teachers working with the child completed a course of Cued Speech Method and used it in everyday contact with the girl. Common meetings of therapists from the counselling institution, teachers from kindergarten and child’s parents became a regular practice. On the basis of progress made by the girl, the evaluation of therapeutic-educational actions was conducted. The following procedure was planned to complete this task:

1. Observation of the girl.
2. Conversations with parents about child’s functioning in family life
3. Utilization of cyclical diagnosis conducted in the counselling institution as basis of planning of therapeutic-educational actions.

At the age of 4 years and 2 months she was examined in The Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing). The examination was aimed at eliminating counter-indications to cochlear implant and qualification to operation. Implanting took place when the child was 6. Audiometric examination conducted in free acoustic field conducted with cochlear implant (6 years and 9 months) showed, that the curve reflecting the state of child’s hearing was in the frequency band 250-4000 Hz on the level 41 dB.

Charter of Assessment of Communicative Behaviors of a Child with Hearing Loss was normally used for diagnosis in the counselling institution. In case of Ola, above mentioned examination was conducted three times to obtain assessment of communicative behaviors.

Quantitative analysis of results obtained by Ola:

I examination – time of observation (from being 3 years and 4 months – to 4 years and 3 months)
II examination – time of observation (from being 4 years and 3 months – to 5 years and 11 months)

Ill examination – time of observation (from being 5 years and 11 months – to being 7 years old)

1 Overall assessment of communicative skills with 150 points possible to obtain:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Σ0 = 66</th>
<th>Σ0 = 83</th>
<th>Σ0 = 103</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>II - 55%</td>
<td>III - 68.67%</td>
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Arithmetic average of achieved points for 5 points possible to obtain:

|   | Mo = 2,2 | II - Mo = 2,7 | III - Mo = 3,43 |

2 The assessment of voice behaviors for 60 points possible to get:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Σfn = 25</th>
<th>Σfn = 36</th>
<th>Σfn = 51</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>II - 60%</td>
<td>III - 85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arithmetic average of achieved points for 5 points possible to obtain:

|   | Mfn = 2,1 | II - Mfn = 3 | III - Mfn = 4,25 |

3 Assessment of gesture-mimic behaviors for 60 points possible to get:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Σgm = 29</th>
<th>Σgm = 30</th>
<th>Σgm = 33</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>II - 50%</td>
<td>III - 55%</td>
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Arithmetic average for 5 points possible to obtain:

|   | Mgm = 2,42 | II - Mgm = 2,5 | III - Mgm = 2,75 |

4 Coefficient of preferences of intercommunicating amounts to (Wp = 1 – means lack of preferences and balance between voice and gesture-mimic communication; Wp > 1 – means voice preference; Wp < 1 – means gesture-mimic preference):

|   | Wp = 0,8 | II - Wp = 1,2 | III - Wp = 1,54 |

The comparison of these results of examinations indicates that overall score of girl’s communicative ability with environment was gradually increasing. First examination presents (Σ0 = 66; 44%) serious limitations in communication with other people. Results of the second examination present themselves slightly more optimistically (Σ0 = 83; 55%) similarly to the third one (Σ0 = 103; 68.67%). Ola was successful in communicating with people from the closest environment. Also, the coefficient of the preferences of communicating was changed. In child’s communicative behaviors forms of voice message were dominating over gesture-mimic messages. The result of third examination could have been influenced by cochlear implant. Ola more willingly used voice way of communicating with other people and the fact of listening to her own voice was visibly pleasurable for her. Arithmetic averages (Mfn = 2,1 and Mgm = 2,42) of the first examination indicate that advancement of both voice speech and gesture-mimic communication were on prelinguistic level. The second examination (Mfn = 3) shows that within the range of voice communication Ola found herself on the level of three-year-old child, and the third examination (Mfn = 4,25) brought her closer to the level of communicating via voice speech of five-year-old child.

Forms of gesture-mimic communication in all of these investigations remain on similar level and indicate the domination of prelinguistic forms of gesture-mimic messages. On the basis of diagnosis results, conclusion can be drawn that the development of girl’s communication will evolve in the direction of sound speech. Considerable increase of communicative abilities indicates effectiveness of rehabilitation and prognosticates well for further development of girls’ communicative and linguistic competence.

3.2 Primary school

On the basis of the present study as well as the observation of the girl, parents together with the group of specialists and teachers made a decision concerning choice of farther form of education. They decided that Ola would be attending special class for children with hearing loss in public school. Such
choice was made because of girl’s low level of language. It would not allow her to fulfill demands of normal, open-access class. She started attending primary school on regular basis at the age of 7.

It was time, when Ola only started to utter first, not yet precise sound language messages. Therapeutic-educational process had to be planned on the basis of functional assessment of communicative behaviors, including the area of cooperation in the process of communication with other people and the way of expressing her attitude towards reality. The process of shaping language system went ahead with the use of Cued Speech Method.

The stimulation of girl’s linguistic development was tightly connected with her cognitive activity, which was stimulated during everyday communicative interactions. To make it possible, support of an adult person was necessary. Such person had to have the skill of directing child’s actions, and should have broad knowledge about her interests and abilities. Such knowledge can be only obtained thanks to active participation in girl’s life and life of people from her surroundings. These conditions were met within the chosen form of education which was small, 4 person class, in which the teacher was able to assess Ola’s readiness to establish interactions. On the basis of information gained from Ola’s parents and own observations such person was able to plan actions which were aimed at shaping linguistic, communicative and cultural competences.

Acquiring foundations to full linguistic development took place also during regular meetings with speech therapist in the counselling institution. The support of child’s language development was directed on stimulation of cognitive linguistic activity such as enrichment of vocabulary and broadening knowledge about surrounding reality. It was combined with shaping communicative and social function – getting acquainted with social, situational and pragmatic rules. For this aim to be achieved, situations in which Ola had a chance of stress-free participation in interactions and communicative encounters were arranged. She played the role of both recipient and initiator. The realization of established aims was possible thanks to contacts which were conducted in the setting of a dyad. This setting fostered arising spontaneous dialogical interaction based situations. Efforts were made to provide the girl with the biggest possible amount of recurring situations aiming at making her aware of the interdependence of cause and result as well as the importance of placing things in time and space. These situations were next analyzed with the use of linguistic means available for the girl.

Actions undertaken by all persons working with Ola – specialists, teachers and parents gave expected results. Girl’s language system developed to such a level that she was able to express thoughts in free-flowing way as well as to state reasons and justify opinions.

### 3.3 Middle school

For the girl time spent in middle school appeared to be challenging. Together with her friend with hearing loss she started new stage in education in integrative class. The class consisted of 15 students, with 13 of them hearing properly. All the teachers who were directed to work with students with hearing loss had been prepared properly earlier – they finished a course of education of the deaf and dumb and a course of Cued Speech. However, for all of them it was completely new experience. Practical work with students with hearing loss appeared essential.

Because of completely new conditions of learning – inclusive education, both Ola and her friend with hearing loss were given assistance of supporting teachers. These persons supported the girls only on the lessons of Polish language and Mathematics. During lessons of the rest of the regular subjects the girls could only count on the help of regular teachers. The girls also participated in extra classes. They were aimed at improving linguistic system and work on texts (including literary type). The analysis and interpretation of literary texts and writing own ones accordingly was extremely difficult and time-consuming task. It demanded elaboration of the text both from the lexical perspective (new notions, stylistic means of expressing opinion, metaphorical expressions, and the like) as well as from stylistic-grammatical one.

In order to analyze and interpret cultural texts, knowledge about surrounding reality and linguistic skill enabling feeling the reality of literary fiction was essential. Low capability of utilizing cultural context, recognizing literal and nonliteral meanings as well as making use of stylistic means, such as metaphor, allegory, oxymoron, personification were - in case of Ola – the cause of understanding texts mainly on literal level. In case of using sources in the form of historical texts, the girl encountered difficulties caused by applied vocabulary and specific structure of syntax and stylistic measures. Due to this fact, analysis of source texts was conducted only under the supervision of the teacher.
The difficulties appeared also in case of formulating and justifying opinions concerning historical events or conducting assessment of moves undertaken by historical figures. Similarly, remembering content from subject called Social Studies was a real challenge for Ola. Her past linguistic experience hardly embraced social and political subject area – unlike in cases of children hearing properly, who – involuntarily – were participants of conversations among adults on social-political matters and had chances of following events via media. For that reason, realization of subject area demanding referring to examples, information gathering and conducting analysis of content from mass media was particularly difficult. Also, linguistic skills allowing to understand specialist notions and separating less important information from more important were necessary for mastering knowledge from the range of the remaining subjects. For Ola acquiring knowledge during middle school was time of intensive improvement of linguistic, communicative and cultural competences.

Progress which was observed with Ola in time of the primary school and middle school were the result of actions realized accordingly with the model of educational dialogue. While focusing on getting to know the girl, teachers – on an ongoing basis – gathered knowledge concerning girl’s strengths (her developmental achievements, psychophysical abilities, interests, the level of knowledge and skills) and difficulties associated with development and education (her psychophysical limitations, educational-emotional problems). Systematic contact with parents supported the atmosphere of cooperation and mutual understanding. The second factor, which undoubtedly contributed to girl’s developmental progress was teachers’ attitude focused on pursuit to perfection of their knowledge and work with learners with hearing loss. The knowledge of teachers concerning functioning of individual students as well as whole class was utilized to plan didactic and therapeutic actions in order to fulfill the needs of the whole class. Especially big attention was directed to shaping correct relations within peer group. The conditions which were created for Ola supported initiating relations by her with learners with hearing loss and with healthy ones.

3.4 Secondary School

As the result of high position in the final exam, Ola could start learning in the secondary school. This time there was no possibility for the girl to learn in a small class. The class consisting of over thirty learners in a regular public school did not offer favorable educational conditions for the girl with hearing loss. It should be marked that, because of the large degree and both ears hearing loss, shaping Ola’s language took place in specific conditions with the participation of third parties. The girl further demanded the organization of the process of teaching in such a way that all the factors interfering with reception of information during lessons were eliminated. Adequately created educational environment could give the chance for further educational, emotional and social development. Special educational needs consisting of the necessity of adapting both surroundings and forms, methods and means of work could not be realized in such a big group. The change of form of education appeared to be necessary. On the basis of a professional opinion issued by educational-pedagogical counselling institution the girl was allowed individual lessons, meaning one learner per one teacher. A part of subjects, especially those, whose content demanded detailed elaboration were realized by the girl individual way, the rest – together with the class. It was vital to make it possible for the girl to participate in social life of the class.

According to the diagnosis made by a group of specialists from the counselling institution and included in the above mentioned professional opinion, the level of skills in the range of initiating interpersonal contacts and adaptation to new conditions of surrounding was right. High level of motivation before setting to work was observed with the girl. Separate tasks embraced with the program of examinations were performed by Ola in changeable tempo. Within the category of carrying out mental operations on verbal material the tempo of work was relatively slower than in the case of carrying out mental operations on activities set to be done by her. These differences occurred due to specificity of functioning of a person with hearing loss and connected with slower tempo of information processing which were received via auditory sense. In spite of objective difficulties and developmental limitations, Ola performed tasks individually and she attempted at overcoming difficulties in active way. Intellectual abilities of the schoolgirl indicated good developmental potential and adequately developed cognitive abilities. Ola’s strength was effectiveness in functioning of perceptive-performing processes within the range of visual analysis and synthesis as well as visual-motor coordination. Moreover, the girl had adequately developed visual perceptivity as well as ability to learn new types of specific tasks in visual-motor way.

In the pedagogical and speech therapist’s diagnosis it was stated that the girl had slightly lower than average tempo of reading and occurrence of not numerous mistakes in the structure of unknown,
complicated phonologically words. Ola remembered the content which had been read by her before, for the questions concerning the text she gave adequate answers and – by herself – she summarized the text, including the most important information. While making interpretation of texts she needed help in the form of leading questions and indicating key information. Moreover, the girl had difficulties with understanding sense of the text which was expressed indirectly.

Ola’s level of development of communicative and linguistic competence was sufficient for comfortable usage of linguistic means within the range of argumentation, comparison, formulating judgement and assessing value. During making above mentioned operations the girl was able to refer to earlier gathered resources of knowledge and skills. She used them as context material for interpretation of new teaching contents. She was able to make right interpretation of earlier learnt and discussed metaphorical expressions as well as proverbs. In utterances and written statements, she was attempting at communicating intentions in transparent and logical manner. She used conjunctions therefore her statements were coherent, and grammatical mistakes which occurred (syntactic and inflectional), stylistic and semantic were not influencing in considerable way the factual content value of texts created by her. The process of shaping cultural competence was going slightly harder, because of the fact that both linguistic experiences and lexical resources were not sufficient for her to be able to operate linguistic means concerning above mentioned range in comfortable way.

The work with the girl demanded actions aimed at broadening the range of teaching material with news and information, which would allow her to create cultural context which – in turn – would make it possible for her to interpret text correctly and to better understand the cultural reality. Therefore it was necessary for teachers and specialists to take into account difficulties, which could concern particularly acquiring skills within the ranges: recognizing and differentiating styles (colloquial, official, artistic, academic), statements emotionally or persuasively marked, indirect intention, differentiating between fiction and a lie and – finally- acquiring vocabulary of limited range (dialect-based expressions, borrowings, archaisms, neologism, scientific term).

In the educational process, the main effort was put at improving Ola’s skills within the range of: understanding sense of utterances and written statements, recognizing and searching desired notions, phrases in dictionaries, independent utilization of available resources indicated by a teacher in order to complete and broaden knowledge and improving oral and written statements.

Time spent in secondary school, constant efforts to meet demands, attaining and remembering knowledge, striving with challenges were new experiences. They allowed Ola to become more confident. She also knew, that – in spite of hearing loss and consequent difficulties – she will manage to live in the world of hearing properly people. Thanks to considerable effort, help and support of other people, first of all specialists from pedagogic-therapeutic counselling institution and parents Ola overcame limitations caused by considerable hearing loss. Unfortunately, teachers working in the secondary school did not attempt at getting acquainted and adapting demands to girl’s needs. They also did not try to reflect on their own competences and skills.

Presently, Olga is a graduate of economics studies, she uses voice and sign languages. She has acquaintances and friends both in the environment of people with hearing loss and those hearing well.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The realization of the model of educational dialogue in work with students with special educational needs should not result from imposed obligation but natural, inner need of all participants of educational process. Only in such circumstances true educational dialogue is possible with its aim of fulfilling needs of all partners. Optimization of therapeutic-educational process demands the atmosphere of trust, in which it will be possible to utilize each student and teacher’s potentials. The present analysis aimed at showing, how big challenge, both for a student with hearing loss and a teacher is coexistence and co-organizing being together. Togetherness, creates conditions for self-realization and self-improvement both for students and educators.

REFERENCES


